UNIQUE ACADEMY

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Nourishing the fitrah of each unique child

Mental Health and Well-being Policy

"For indeed, with every hardship, there is relief. Indeed, with every hardship, there is relief."
(Qur'an, 94:5-6)

Adopted: January 2025	Review date: January 2026	Pastoral Care Coordinator: Hawwa Mbombo

Mental Health and Well Being Policy

In enforcing the Government's Green Paper, 'Transforming children and young people's mental health provision' this policy sets out to build a whole school environment which will support children's mental wellbeing, allowing them to fully enrage and reach their full potential. This fully aligns with our values and ethos to develop a respectful school community with clear expectations of accepted discipline and behaviour and is linked with our Behaviour, Anti – bullying as well as Safeguarding and Child Protection policies.

Aims

We aim to ensure that our school:
- Is a place where children, staff and parents feel valued
- Reduces the stigma attached to mental health issues and enables pupils to talk openly about their concerns
- Makes children feel safe and gives them a sense of belonging
- Embeds the skills pupils need to develop social relationships
- Helps children to develop good coping mechanisms to manage life challenges
- To facilitate learning and achievement

Objectives

- To create an ethos that supports mental health resilience
- To create an environment where students, staff and parents feel safe, nurtured and supported
- To provide a space that models a good community, by working with parents and support agencies.

Definition Of Mental Health And Well Being

"A state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community." (World Health Organisation)

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that*: "in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy.''*

Why Mental Well Being Is Important

Mental health is a critical factor in general wellbeing, which can affect children's achievement. We take a whole school approach in promoting mental health where children understand their purpose in the world and for them to thrive, be happy and be resilient learners. Well-being also considers staff and we endeavour to support staff in performing their duties.

Roles and responsibilities

Trustees

Trustees will:
- Take overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy
- Ensure that the school is operating to promote mental health and that other policies which support mental health are in place
- Ensure that the policy is easily assessed and published on the school's web-site

Headteacher:
- Ensure a whole school approach to mental health
- Ensure that staff understand and implement the policy
- As much as possible, to ensure that all staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance and lead by example in this regard
- Create an environment that is nurturing, secure, and supportive
- Create opportunities for employees to discuss concerns confidentially
- Provide personal and professional development such as stress management, team building
- Keeping detailed records of any significant mental health concerns
- Conduct risk assessment for work-related stress
- Liaising with external services where there are any significant mental health concerns
- Ensuring that the school shares information on mental health with all pupils.
- Report to the Trustees about the school's well-being provision
- Ensure appropriate referrals

All members of school staff will:
- Understand their responsibility in promoting positive mental health and be aware of some risk factors for mental health
- Treating all pupils with empathy, respect and kindness
- Listening to the views of pupils and making sure that they have opportunities to contribute to the decision-making process
- Encouraging pupils to disclose concerns or seek help when necessary
- Reporting any wellbeing or mental health concerns to their line manager
- Be vigilant in observing behaviour patterns which might be linked to mental health such as, anger, irritability persistent sadness, withdrawal and out control behaviour

Supporting Individual Pupils

All members of staff will work together to identify and monitor mental health concerns. Open communication between members of staff will help to create a 'first line' in supporting individual pupils and responding to disclosures.

Staff will record information accurately and regularly using the schools '**welfare/concerns form'** in order to track concerns and report this to their line manager.

In addition, senior leaders will meet regularly to discuss any ongoing concerns and make suitable arrangements as required.

Identifying risk factors:

- Unstable home life or family breakdown
- Physical illness
- A parent with mental illness
- A loss
- Bullying
- Difficulty learning
- Any form of abuse
- Domestic violence
- Low self esteem
- Loss of a protective factor

Staff will be encouraged to look out for:

- erratic, unaccountable behaviour (e.g. leaving lessons suddenly)
- parents confirm changes in sleeping habits
- disengagement from work or extracurricular activities
- unexpected or disproportionate reactions to ordinary situations
- aggressive out of control or compulsive behaviour
- a drop in academic achievement
- a drop in attendance
- isolation from peers
- dysfunctionality in family life
- changes in appetite
- irritability
- persistent sadness or worry

Interventions and Strategies

Whole school approaches
- Providing smooth transitions
- Prevention through early intervention of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including liaising with a specialist
- Using Leuven scales to identify children in EYFS who need support
- Campaigns and assembles to raise awareness of mental health issues through wellbeing week/ day
- Displays around school to promote mental health
- Dedicating time to celebrate pupils' academic and extracurricular achievements
- Using displays and bulletins to signpost pupils to sources of support
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and work effectively with parents
- Regular meetings for staff to raise concerns
- Staff appraisal to support and monitor emotional wellbeing

In the classroom
- Problem solving activities
- Comments boxes - where children can anonymously share concerns
- Monitor behaviour, attendance and sanctions
- Buddy system

- Be alert to behavioural and emotional changes
- Enforce classroom code of conduct
- PSHE curriculum will include lessons on mental health and wellbeing, as well as the importance of relationships and self care; getting sufficient sleep, eating well and activities
- PSHE will help to build resilience by: helping children to have a positive self view, how to manage difficulties and how to make appropriate and good choices.

Teachers support mental health by:
- Understanding that children are our *Amaanah*
- Being compassionate, calm, caring and non-judgemental
- Raising self-esteem through praise
- Helping children to manage feelings and build self esteem
- Attending to their own self care and managing their time

Referrals

The main specialist team for mental health are the **Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service** (CAMHS). They can be accessed through referral by the school, GP or a self-referral.

Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and talk to the Headteacher.

COVID-19

We anticipate that children will still be feeling the impact of the lock down and the continuous outbreak of the virus. We recognise that children will have a range of emotions such as anxiety and fear and some might have risk factors such as a loss. Our aim is to be vigilant in monitoring and observing government's guidelines throughout the pandemic, support children during this period of pandemic by helping them to understand how they are feeling and to give them the support they might need.

Whole School
- Questionnaire to parents to identity children risk factors
- Early intervention
- Creating an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues
- Opportunities for parents and staff to express concerns to the Headteacher
- Keep parents updated on mental health issues through workshops, parenting classes etc
- Establish and maintain links with external mental health agencies
- A recovery curriculum that is flexible and promotes creativity and physical activities
- Maintaining government guideline on safety and reducing spread of the virus
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In school
- Opportunities for shared experiences during Halaqah lessons
- Providing a safe space for children and teachers to express concerns
- Providing a nurturing environment
- Monitoring staff wellbeing and support them to develop their own skills and resilience
- Including families and engaging with anxious parents
- Identify these with symptoms and follow procedure

In classroom
- Creating a safe environment to reduce risk (Infection Control Policy)
- Maintaining routine and structure
- Developing friendship groups
- Monitoring emotions
- Providing mindfulness exercises to help pupils for a relaxed day
- PSHE- build emotional resilience

Useful links

- [Young Minds](#) is one of the UK's leading charities for children and young people's mental health.
- [Place2Be](#) is one of the UK's leading children's mental health charities.
- [Mind](#) is the UK's leading mental health charity, offering a great deal of useful information on children's mental health.
- [Children's Mental Health Week](#) is an annual opportunity to encourage children, young people and adults to celebrate their uniqueness.
- [Child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS)](#) provide support to children and young people with a wide range of behavioural and emotional issues.

Signed by

_____*H. Mbombo*_____   **Headteacher**   **Date: 01/01/2025**

This policy will be reviewed annually.