**KILLYLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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**PUPIL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY**

**February 2018**

**OUR VISION:**

We want our pupils to achieve their fullest potential in a safe, happy and stimulating environment supported by the whole school community.

**OUR MISSION:**

Within Killylea Primary School, we will:

* provide a high-quality, inclusive and meaningful education for all our pupils within the intimacy of a small school setting
* ensure that the child’s needs are at the heart of all we do
* provide individualised learning goals to ensure pupils reach their fullest potential and support pupils where necessary with targeted interventions
* engage our pupils through active, real-life contexts for learning and support them to become successful independent learners, critical thinkers and future productive members of an ever-changing world
* promote high standards and expectations
* provide a wide and varied range of activities to all our pupils to enrich them holistically.
* build meaningful relationships through effective two-way communication and working partnerships to ensure that Killylea Primary School is at the heart of the local community

**RATIONALE FOR THIS POLICY:**

Mental health is “*a state of well-being in which an individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to their community.”* [WHO, Definition of Mental Health, 2001]

A recent official survey identified that 10% of children aged 5–16 had a clinically diagnosed mental disorder. [[Mental Health of Children and Young People in Great Britain](http://www.hscic.gov.uk/pubs/mentalhealth04), 2004]. Despite having one of the most advanced health systems in the word, child health outcomes in Northern Ireland are amongst the poorest in Western Europe. The Northern Ireland Young Life and Times survey reported that 29% of 16 year old respondents had serious personal emotional or mental health problems, with a much higher percentage (43%) from ‘not well off backgrounds’ doing so.

Research shows that schools matter greatly in terms of children’s emotional health, well-being and resilience, as well as their academic achievement. The effects can be long-lasting and can be an important part of a child’s supportive and protective processes. Early intervention in childhood can help reduce physical and mental health problems and prevent social dysfunction being passed from one generation to the next.

We believe at Killylea Primary School that we have a valuable role to play in identifying and meeting the needs of pupils with respect to emotional health and well-being and that school-based activities have the potential to make significant and lasting positive impacts on our pupil’s well-being.

**AIMS OF THIS POLICY:**

To ensure that the children, staff, parents and wider community at Killylea Primary School acquire and develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing now and in the future.

**RESPONSIBILITIES:**

All members of the school community have a responsibility to:

* ensure everyone feels happy, safe, respected and included in the school environment
* promote positive behaviour in the classroom, playground and wider school community
* ensure the safety and wellbeing of everyone by following robust policies and practice
* contribute to the maintenance and development of a positive school ethos
* provide positive role modelling in relation to a healthy lifestyle.

All members of the school community have a right to be given opportunities to:

* develop their self-awareness, self-worth and respect for others
* meet challenges, manage change and build relationships
* experience personal achievement and build resilience and confidence
* understand and develop their physical, mental and spiritual wellbeing and social skills
* understand what they eat, how active they are and decisions they make about and relationships affect their physical and mental wellbeing
* participate in a wide range of activities which promote a healthy lifestyle
* understand that adults in their school community have a responsibility to look after pupils, listen to their concerns and, where necessary, involve others
* learn about where to find help and resources to inform choices
* assess and manage risk and understand the impact of risk-taking behaviour
* reflect on their strengths and skills to help pupils make informed choices when planning their next steps
* acknowledge diversity and understand that it is everyone’s responsibility to challenge discrimination

Everyone within our learning community shares a responsibility for creating and maintaining a positive ethos in which pupils are:

* nurtured
* active
* respected
* responsible
* included
* safe
* healthy
* achieving

**STRENGTHENING PUPILS’ MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

For young people to be successful, happy and enjoy positive relationships with others there are five social and emotional skills they need:

* Confidence
* Persistence
* Organisation
* Getting Along
* Resilience

If there is a delay in one or more of these skills, young people can experience behavioural, emotional or learning difficulties.

**PROMOTION & SUPPORT OF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING WITHIN SCHOOL:**

We focus on preventing or reducing problems such as emotional difficulties and aggressive behaviour, as well as efforts to promote emotional health more broadly and to address the underlying social and emotional skills.

Within school we use a range of resources and strategies as preventative and strengthening measures. These include:

* PDMU lessons
* Circle Time
* Paired and group work
* Assemblies
* Anti-Bullying Week
* Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
* School and Eco Council
* Breakfast Club
* Afterschool provision – Stay Late Club, Chatterbox Club
* Variety of extra-curricular activities
* Free 2 hours of extra-curricular activities for pupils on Free School Meals
* Pupil Surveys
* Roots of Empathy programme
* Daily Huff and Puff
* Healthy Kids Club
* Weekly Superstars Assembly
* Golden Rules & Golden Time [along our Positive Behaviour Policy]
* Solution focussed problem solving
* Playground Buddies
* Monthly Attendance certificates
* School Prefects
* NSPCC workshops
* Action Mental Health workshops and pupil booklets e.g. Healthy Me
* Helping Hands Programme, Women’s Aid
* Shared Education programme
* Parent and Toddler Group
* Links with Tiny Tots Playgroup
* Links with post primary schools

When children have been identified with specific difficulties or issues we will work alongside the pupil[s], parents/carers and peers using a range of intervention strategies. These might include:

* Friendship Circle
* Sensory Motor Group
* Key adult
* Emotional Literacy sessions
* Strength Building Intervention Programme
* Helping Hands Programme
* Individual Education Plan [IEP]

**USE OF EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS:**

When we have exhausted our within school provision and pupil response is limited we may access external support from the following:

* Pupil Personal Development Service, EA - an early intervention team and seeks to respond appropriately to the identified need which is impacting on a pupil’s emotional health and well-being in school.
* RISE NI [Regional Integrated Support for Education]
* Behaviour Support Team, EA
* Barnardos
* Education Psychology

**BUILDING PUPIL RESILIENCE:**

From September 2017 we have implemented a new Resilience building programme for pupils in P3-P7 to develop their skills to “bounce back” from adversity.

Developing resilience is one of the key elements in positive mental health and well-being. We recognise that all of us will encounter setbacks, failures and disappointments in life at some stage. Emotional resilience is being able to bounce back or recover from events or situations which may seem overwhelming at first.

Pupils are taught the following strategies:

* Jigsaw of Perspective – helps children put their problem in perspective of all the good things in their life
* Lucky Dip of Distraction – tool to take their mind off any anxieties
* Planning Pen – working through a problem one step at a time
* Helpful Thinking Helmet – encourages children to replace negative thoughts with more helpful and accurate thoughts
* Key of Character Strength – identify and use own character strengths
* Mindfulness Switch – paying attention to the present moment non-judgementally

Parents are supplied with a “Parents Hand-out – Tools of Resilience”, to help support work within school.

**STAFF DEVELOPMENT:**

Staff has recently accessed relevant training from:

* Action Mental Health
* Pupil Personal Development Service, EA “Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing in Children and Young People”.
* Women’s Aid, Helping Hands Programme

**LINKS WITH OTHER POLICIES:**

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

* Pastoral Care
* Child Protection
* Anti-Bullying
* E-safety
* Intimate Care
* Healthy Eating
* Attendance
* Health and Safety
* Relationship and Sexuality

**MONITORING AND POLICY REVIEW:**

This policy was developed to guide and support staff in dealing with an increasing concern for the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils.

The Principal, will monitor implementation of this policy alongside the indicators of effective practice as described in the ETI self-evaluation framework Care and Welfare.

Killylea Primary School’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy will be reviewed every two years to ensure its effectiveness. Pupils’ views are gathered each year through completion of a “Happiness” survey and outcomes are discussed within School Council and Staff Meetings. The policy was shared with parents and governors during development to seek their views.

The policy will also be formally evaluated and reviewed in line with any new Department of Education Guidelines or Reports and in keeping with any additional Educational best practices or procedures.

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| **KILLYLEA PRIMARY SCHOOL** **PUPIL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY** |
| POLICY DATE:  | 26th February 2018 |
| PRINCIPAL’S SIGNATURE: | P.Lowry |
| CHAIRPERSON, Board of Governors, SIGNATURE: | Rev B Atkins |
| REVIEW DATE:  | February 2020 |

2