



Georgeham School Mental Health Policy and Strategy

*Supported by Devon's Early Help 4 Mental Health Programme and the
Schools Development Support Agency 2018*



Rationale

National view

“Evidence tells us that good mental health is essential for children to learn and achieve” *Heads Together ‘Whole School Approach’*

As a nation we are increasingly aware of the numbers of children, young people and adults who experience periods of mental ill health, and the fact that this can limit their opportunities to reach their potential and contribute to society.

National NHS and Government policies are now being formed to begin to address this situation through improvements to education.

The National Institute for Health Care Excellence is clear in its advice to schools, that developing a ‘Whole School Approach’ to promoting mental health has shown clear benefits in contributing to the wellbeing of students. This approach goes beyond teaching and learning and pervades all aspects of the life of the school (promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing).

Definition of Mental Health and wellbeing:

We use the World Health Organisation’s definition of mental health and wellbeing:

“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”.

The Aims and Intentions of our Mental Health Strategy

We aim to:

- Remain informed, inspired and influenced by national policy guidance within the DfE, Diocese/Church of England, and Public Health England.
- Ensure a whole school approach to development and delivery.
- Ensure a whole community contribution to development and delivery, including students and their families, stakeholders, partner agencies in statutory and charitable organisations and the local extended community.
- Connect with schools in our community to share good practice.
- To hold the Mental Health Strategy as a standard agenda item on Senior Leadership Team and Governor Meetings.

We will:

- Ensure that this Mental Health Strategy and its Policies complement all other current school strategies and policies.
- Review the Mental Health Policy and Strategy annually.
- Ensure there is clear learning on our curriculum regarding emotional well-being and mental health across all key stages, including our Nursery.
- Produce a summary of implemented delivery, outcome and next step developments as part of the SEND and Mental Health SIP 3 year plan.
- Ensure our Mental Health Policy and Strategy is available on our website.

At Georgeham School we embrace our role, alongside our families, the community and with our wider partners, in contributing to the developing emotional well-being of our pupils and their learning about being healthy, from a physical and mental health perspective.

“Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school approach” suggest using an Eight Principles Approach.

In collaboration with Early Help 4 Mental Health (EH4MH) team, we have chosen to use this Eight Principle approach to develop our school Mental Health Policy and evidence it in action.

However, in line with the EH4MH added value, our Eight Principles include our links with our community and national contributions to our children’s developing mental health and well-being.

We have chosen an additional section that aims to highlight our chosen forms of **communication** and information sharing.

This policy is developed in response to our pledge in the Mental Health Strategy. It is guided by Public Health England’s key documents outlined at the end of this document.

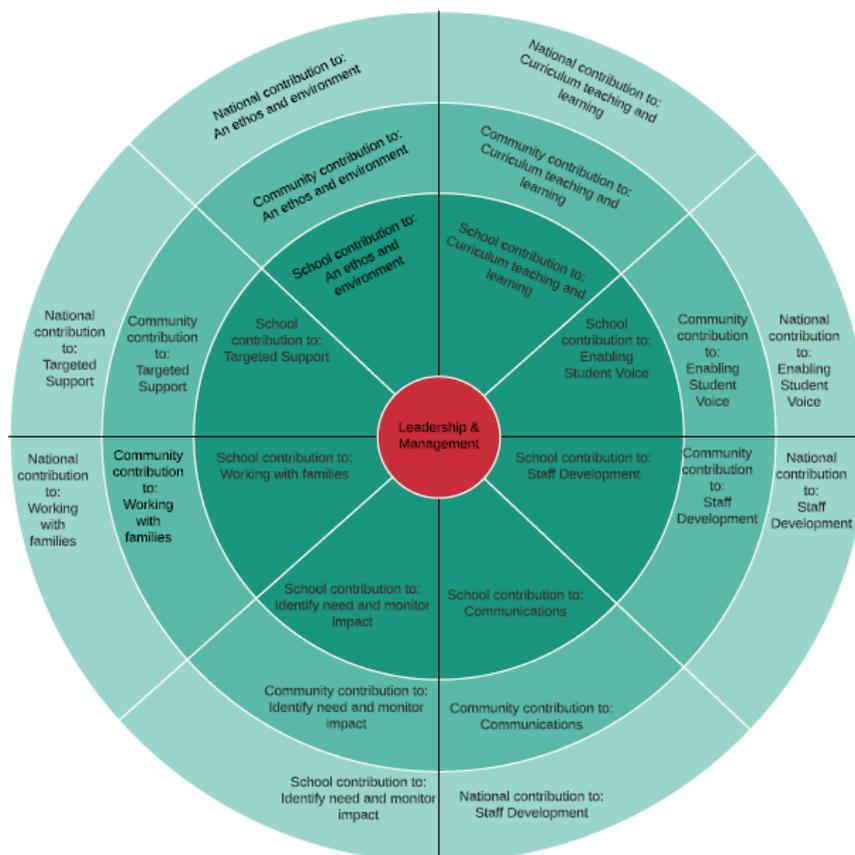
Principle 1

Leadership and Management

At the core of these Eight Principles is Leadership and Management. Their commitment and drive are key in embedding this policy at the heart of our school.

At Georgeham School, Lucy Rinvoluceri (SENCo and Mental Health Champion) alongside Julian Thomas (Head Teacher and Safeguarding Officer) are leading the development of our Whole School Mental Health Strategy. They have consulted with staff, students (school council) and governors. From this we have now appointed a specific role of Mental Health Champion within our governing team.

Below is the EH4MH's 8 Principle approach including the added value of considering community and national contributions to each principle, and with the additional **Communication** Principle.



Community and National Support

Senior Management have been working closely with our partners in the specialist NHS & DCC funded **Early Help 4 Mental Health** team and the Schools Development Support Agency programme: *"Building a whole school approach to mental health."*

Principle 2

School Ethos and Environment

At Georgeham School, children and young people come first, and our priority is to deliver high quality teaching and learning, within a culture of celebrating individual effort and progress. This is within an environment that celebrates diversity and promotes respect for all. Our aim is for every child to feel valued and understand their own self-worth and to reach for success from the first day they join us, leaving the school with a love of learning that lasts throughout their lifetime.

We recognise that in order to embed this ethos, we need to promote an environment that focusses on the whole school's emotional wellbeing. We have considered this through both the physical environment of the school and the emotional culture that is promoted throughout the school.

Our Whole School Approach does this by:

School

Our Vision for Georgeham – *Small School Huge Horizons*

Our vision is to provide outstanding teaching and learning delivered by skilled and enthusiastic staff in a wonderful setting. This will enable all pupils to reach their maximum potential and become lifelong learners who will live healthy lives, which are socially and intellectually fulfilling.

Our Ethos at Georgeham

The school's vision statement of "Small School, Huge Horizons" very much reflects our belief that every child in our school can achieve anything and that despite our small scale and geographical extremity we are important within our country and the wider world. Our six core values (We are...Ambitious, Kind, a Community, Adventurous, Curious and Confident) underpin our commitment to providing guiding principles for a life-long well-being and personal development in a nurturing, caring and stimulating environment where individuals feel valued as part of a community; where endeavour is encouraged and fostered; where promotion of high morale and good behaviour is considered important and where children become increasingly aware of, and responsible for, their own learning. Working in partnership with parents our aim is for children to be confident, thinking people, capable of independence and caring.

Our school policies include: Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Inclusion, Safeguarding and Accessibility.

We create a sense of belonging by celebrating individual and team achievements, both inside and outside school events.

These are examples of how it looks within our:

School

Promotion of Mental Health, in Mental Health Week.

Display on Mental Health and '5-a-day' in our entrance hall for parents and children to see daily to visually remind them to balance their mental health.

A whole school Thrive approach on a bespoke ad-hoc basis for all children and use of the Thrive Balcony area that allows pupils to take some time out of learning and to meet their emotional needs.

'Drawing 4 Talking' one-to-one support sessions with a significant adult.

We promote Growth Mindset language throughout our curriculum and the '10 a day for good mental health' through our Normal Magic training, enabling pupils to build resilience and self-efficacy.

We encourage outdoor learning opportunities through outdoor education days, outdoor classrooms, the daily mile and residential trips. We believe this supports confidence, self-esteem, community and team building, a sense of achievement, pride and fun, all of which impact positively on mental health.

We actively promote a thoughtful approach to our environment by reducing the use of plastics within school and we were the first Plastic Free School in the Country showing our commitment to Small School Big Horizons.

Community

These are some examples of how it looks within our school that we are proud of:

We have a strong link with our local faith community, who in turn contribute to assemblies, 'Open the Book' drama to bring the bible stories alive, alongside our involvement in Church services from Christingle to Easter.

We have also made links with the local community and provided a community tea to celebrate their support of our school.

Nationally

We are embracing the 'Time to Change' campaign to bring an end to the stigma and discrimination faced by people who experience mental health problems.

We share national mental health websites such as Anna Freud 'Schools in Mind'.

Principle 3

Curriculum Teaching and Learning

We know that school-based programmes of social and emotional learning have the potential to help young people acquire the skills they need to make good academic progress as well as benefit pupil health and wellbeing (*Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional health and Wellbeing*). With this in mind we have sought to enhance knowledge and skills around mental health across the curriculum as well as through targeted subjects such as PSHE.

These are examples of how it looks within our:

School

We use the Thrive approach across the whole school (www.thriveapproach.com) and run Thrive intervention groups with both KS1 and KS2 pupils.

Exercise – There is a strong link between good physical and mental health. In our PE lessons we explore this with our pupils. We also promote running on our running track in both KS1 and KS2. We run a number of after school sport clubs such as football, tag-rugby, and netball.

We provide mental health education through our PSHE curriculum.

KS1 has its own vegetable garden and KS2 has plant tubs that they can nurture, enhancing the school environment for all pupils and adults to enjoy.

Learning to keep ourselves safe in PSHE and Sex Education.

Meditation/Mindfulness exercises are used in classes including the Nursery, supported by “Go Noodle”, “Cosmic Kids” etc.

We encourage a growth mindset in our classrooms and school. This has a positive impact on self-esteem and resilience.

Regular assemblies to promote good mental health.

Staff deliver ‘normal magic’ for the classroom – water available always whilst in class, feeling part of the class/school ‘family’.

Display on Mental health and ‘5-a-day’ in entrance hall for parents and children to see daily to visually remind them to balance their mental health.

‘We are bucket fillers’ principles shared with children in younger classes and in assembly.

Continual public praise within class and assemblies.

Community

Wherever possible we incorporate the resources of community services to enhance our curriculum's delivery of mental health promotion.

We are proud of our partnership with EH4MH, a local health service, and their support in developing our school's mental health awareness. Their training and introduction of 'Normal Magic' has been a successful part of enhancing students' understanding of how to look after their own mental health.

Nationally

We promote helpful resources for managing stress and introduced pupils and parents to initiatives such as Headspace, Calm and Breath apps and Go Noodle. Although not directly embedded in curriculum content, each class is given time to take a break and recharge their emotional batteries. This has had a very beneficial impact on student engagement in lessons; the running track, dance take 10, golden time, mindfulness, Thrive approach, lunch and play breaks.

Principle 4

Pupil voice

Involving children in decisions that impact on them can benefit their emotional health and well-being by helping them to feel part of the school and wider community and to have some control over their lives (*Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing*). We are committed to providing structures that allow children to play an active role in developing a mentally healthy school.

These are examples of how it looks within our:

School

Thrive trained TA and class teachers make a strong contribution to whole school understanding of pupils' needs by being an advocate for pupils.

Our 'Buddy Bench' facilitates pupils finding a voice and a friend at break times.

Our school encourages pupils in all clubs and activities to have a voice in how the clubs operate and pupils can promote the clubs within the school.

Pupil led class assemblies and involvement in whole school assemblies, including leading prayers.

Within Circle time /Family group PSHE lessons staff create an environment that encourages all pupils to share their views and experiences.

School Council meet regularly with the Head teacher each term to discuss events and possible changes to enhance school life for all.

Pupils are encouraged to have a voice to share their opinions at Team Around the Family (TAF) meetings; younger pupils who would rather not come to the meeting are encouraged to complete a 'Listen To Me' sheet - supported by a TA - which can be shared at the TAF meeting to ensure their voice is heard.

Community

We encourage our pupils and their families to participate in other focussed or general groups relevant to their needs, such as: FiG or other local Bereavement organisation group, 'Wave' project, Devon Young Carers, North Devon Autism Forum, CAMHS, etc. We are supported by Devon Early Help to signpost our pupils and families to any necessary support.

Nationally

We access information from Anna Freud 'Schools in Mind' (www.annafreud.org) and Young Minds (www.youngminds.org.uk) for young people's views relating to their mental health and support.

Principle 5

Identifying Need and Monitoring Impact

In line with our ethos of celebrating diversity and the successes of the individual, we are keen to identify need in order to provide the appropriate supportive environment for pupils to thrive. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent them from developing.

These are examples of how it looks within our:

School

We regularly seek and encourage feedback from our families and pupils through an 'open door' policy, TAF meetings and open evening questionnaires.

All staff are given regular training on how to identify signs that a pupil may be experiencing a mental health difficulty.

We openly encourage pupils to let staff know when they have concerns, the Staff and the Thrive trained TA build up a close rapport with all vulnerable pupils. Children are able to talk on an ad-hoc basis whenever they want and go off to the Thrive Balcony for drawing for talking activities or just "Me Time".

Identified children are given a Pupil Profile where they express what they find difficult and what helps them and are also able to choose a mentor.

We are exploring a number of whole school profile surveys, such as EduKit and the SHUE (The School Health and Education Unit). These help highlight any particular trends within the school population that may need attention.

Community

As a school we work closely in partnership with our community colleagues to ensure we are actively identifying pupil mental health needs and monitoring the effectiveness of our actions and support. As part of our commitment to supporting pupils we have access to Cath Murch, our Educational Psychologist, and can make referrals to CAMHS and FiG.

National

Our Mental Health Champion is aware of and seeking training in 'Measuring and Monitoring Children and Young People's Mental Wellbeing: A toolkit for schools and colleges' (Anna Freud Centre, Public Health England and Evidence Based Practice Unit) for information on appropriate tools to measure impact of interventions.

Principle 6

Working with Families

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers. We recognise the important role the family plays in influencing the emotional health and well-being of pupils in the school.

We also recognise that working in partnership may sometimes mean providing support and resources to those families that are struggling with meeting life's challenges.

These are some examples of how this looks in our:

School

Ifracombe Children's Centre, 'Action for Children.'

A weekly school newsletter emailed to all parent/carers.

Georgeham School Parent Teachers Association (Friends of Georgeham School - FROGS) Facebook page.

Georgeham C of E Primary School Facebook page.

The 10-a-day for mental health display in our school foyer (following training in school by EH4MH)

'Meet and greet' pupils and parents at the school gate – rota for the start/end of the school day shared amongst all staff including head teacher.

Termly parent evenings and open afternoons.

Evidence shows that being part of a community and feeling a sense of belonging is good for our mental health. We have a very active parent group called FROGS which hosts social events for pupils and families both inside and outside of the school, and fundraises to enhance the social and emotional learning experience of all pupils at Georgeham School.

Community and National

We provide information to parents and help signpost them to appropriate local and national support and advice through information on our website and display boards which is regularly updated, for example, DIAS (Devon Information, Advice and Support), as well as offering advice support for families via Devon Early Help.

'Crydda' newsletter and Georgeham School website.

The Wave Project is based in our school – a charitable organisation providing surfing lessons nationally to vulnerable pupils.

We support a child from an African orphanage based in Swaziland and have regular “non uniform days” to fund this. Two members of staff have been out to support this charity.

We have worked collaboratively with a local charity - the Pickwell Foundation - to support the integration of a Syrian refugee family into our small community.

We were the first “Plastic Free School” in the country, promoting looking after our planet and appreciating the world around us.

We are also a “Surfers Against Sewage” school and take part in and organise regular beach cleans.

Principle 7

Staff Development, Health & Wellbeing

'Wellbeing in schools starts with the staff; they are the front line of this work...' (NCB Framework for promoting well-being and responding to mental health in schools).

At Georgeham School we place the well-being and development of staff as a high priority, believing all school staff play a vital role in developing and supporting the emotional health and well-being of the pupils.

Principle 7 is split into two sections; the first is how staff are provided with the knowledge and understanding of the children's well-being and the second looks at how the school supports the development of staff well-being.

These are examples of how it looks in our school:

Staff training

All staff have received training in mental health delivered by EH4MH and Babcock Educational Psychology Team. This is greatly helping the school develop a much deeper understanding of mental health which is helping us break down stigma and bring about whole school culture change.

Staff well-being

As a staff and with our governing body, we promote and organise a range of activities (meals out at the end of term, Governor meetings in the local pubs) which encourages team building through having fun together.

Until recently, we had access to a member of the EH4MH team whom we could book a consultation or supervision session with. Unfortunately this is currently unavailable.

We encourage 'Time to Talk' for staff, pupils and families, which encourages the importance of being able to talk about what is going well and any struggles.

Using and modelling the 10 a day positive choices for mental health as a whole school approach (for staff and pupils).

Staff can access the Devon County Council Well-being and Counselling service.

CAMHS Helpline: 0330 024 5321 (pre-referral SPA & Devon integrated children services)

Staff appraisals.

Principle 8

Targeted Support

Georgeham School recognises that many behavioural and emotional problems can be supported within the school, with advice from external professionals, and that some students may need more intensive support at times. Georgeham School has a range of potential interventions to support individuals' needs, as well as links with external agencies.

These are examples of how it looks within our:

School

Thrive groups.

A mindfulness group provision for one hour a week with an experienced teacher.

'Drawing 4 Talking' style individual sessions.

Thrive approach across the school and targeted support for individuals, including a THRIVE room for children who need a space for calming down.

Lunch time play-coordinator.

Peer buddy system when required overseen by break and lunchtime staff.

Take 5 – whole school resilience building programme using mindfulness, including universal & targeted needs (www.eachamazingbreath.org).

'Just Breathe' video for children to explain about relaxation, especially useful for primary age (from www.mindfulschools.org).

We have a school nature garden that was established within our school environment to provide a calming safe space for staff and pupils.

Community

At Georgeham School we work closely with our community colleagues in Health and Social Care: SPA, CAMHS, School Nurse, Devon Early Help.

Social, Emotional, Mental Health, Well-being and Behaviour Team (previously the Behaviour Support Team) provide consultation and advice to all school staff around identified individual pupil's needs.

Principle 9

Communication

In Georgeham School we identify that clear and robust systems of communication both within the school and into the school community are key components to providing a mentally healthy school.

These are examples of how it looks within our:

School

In line with our school ethos, we are always thinking of diverse ways of promoting good communication and in enabling and encouraging children and staff to feel more comfortable to communicate feelings and seek help when they need it. We use a wide variety of approaches including; non-verbal systems such as suggestion boxes, worry monsters, cue cards, internet communication via emails and social media.

We communicate through staff meetings and emails, including having mental health as a standing agenda item at staff meetings so that staff are aware of what support is available within school. This includes refreshers of key themes / training topics.

Children feel more comfortable about communicating their thoughts and fears.

Staff have received training in bereavement and normal magic from EH4MH.

We inform all parents of the school's obligations and responsibilities to safeguard children during their information session when their children start at the school.

Staff are aware of school processes for flagging up which pupils are particularly vulnerable and ensuring the right support is given in school and sought outside of school where relevant, this process of responsibility is reinforced in staff meetings and in staff handbooks.

Community

The school has a pupil led school council and staff encourage pupils to become involved in this.

We communicate to our parents through our website, newsletters, emails, parent teacher evenings, information evenings & the school FROGS Facebook page.

All staff have accessed EH4MH training, which encourages ways to talk about mental health and how children and young people are feeling, which can be used over the breadth of young people's experiences.

We promote DIAS

National

We use resources from national organisations visually in the school, via display boards, website and newsletters.

We promote '10 -a-day' for all our pupils and families.

We promote Childline – help line and online resources (www.childline.org.uk).

We promote the NSPCC campaign Pantasauras/ Let's Talk Pants (www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/underwear-rule/).

We promote the internet safety day and campaign

Heads Together - promoting the benefits for mental health of talking about difficult things (www.headstogether.org.uk).

Time to Change – movement to end mental health discrimination (www.time-to-change.org.uk).



Georgeham School's Mental Health policy was guided by Public Health England's key documents:

"Transforming children and young people's mental health provision: a green paper" (2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-provision-a-green-paper>

"Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school approach" (2015)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414908/Final EHWB draft 20 03 15.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414908/Final_EHWB_draft_20_03_15.pdf)

"Future in Mind" (2015)

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/blog/martin-mcshane-14/>

In addition, the Policy has been informed by;

National Children's Bureau "A Whole School Framework for Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health. School Leaders Resource"

<https://www.ncb.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/NCB%20School%20Well%20Being%20Framework%20Leaders%20Resources%20FINAL.pdf>

Heads Together, Mentally Healthy Schools; A Whole-School Approach

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/>

IPPR The Progressive Policy Think Tank, Craig Thorley, 2016

<https://www.ippr.org/news-and-media/press-releases/further-proof-of-the-crisis-in-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health>