

Fosse Primary School

EMOTIONAL HEALTH POLICY

Emotional Health is seen as the emotional and spiritual resilience that enables us to enjoy life and survive pain, suffering and disappointment. It is a positive sense of wellbeing and an underlying belief in our own worth and that of others.

Policy Statement

Pupils entering Fosse Primary School are children who may have current emotional health problems, may have experienced them in the past and may develop them due to their increased risk factors. Many of our pupils may be vulnerable to emotional health problems and may show signs of emotional struggle at some point.

The possible effects of emotional ill-health can be at best disruptive/debilitating or at worst devastating, even fatal. The range includes:

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disinterest in school work/social activities• Temper control problems• Lying• Bullying• Disruptive behaviour• Attention seeking behaviour• Depression• Anxiety	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Defiance• Hyperactivity• Eating Disorders• Substance disorders• Substance misuse• Crime• Mental illness• Suicide
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Consequently, at Fosse we work towards promoting emotional health in all our pupils. Working with pupils with emotional problems can be difficult, exhausting and stressful and can lead to emotional health problems in staff. Therefore, we also aim to support all staff to ensure that emotional ill-health is avoided and a healthy work-life balance is maintained.

Aims

All staff aim to:

1. Increase the **significance** of the child by:
 - raising self-esteem and confidence of pupils by giving and acknowledging every possible opportunity for success including academic achievement.
 - by ensuring each pupil knows they are cared for, valued, understood, listened to, respected, informed
 - giving time for discovery, relaxation, creativity, expression and involvement in decisions.
2. Enable pupils to feel secure by providing clear and consistent guidelines and boundaries with high but realistic expectations of behaviour and work.
3. Enable pupils to develop a sense of belonging or connection by creation of a sense of identity, trust and acceptance.
4. Enable pupils to develop strategies for dealing with emotional problems.

5. Eliminate risk factors in school such as bullying/inequality.
6. Enable pupils who have specific emotional problems or who are at risk to receive the help/support needed to return to emotional health.
7. Encourage curiosity, motivation, creativity, problem solving, thinking skills and decision making.
8. Help pupils to develop social and co-operative skills and to develop relationships with staff and peers.
9. Educate pupils in the risks/consequences of drug misuse, smoking, poor diet, truancies, and other related problems.
10. Prepare students for leaving Fosse and moving on to secondary school.
11. Enable students to evaluate and assess their own behaviour and progress.

Organisation

The variety of emotional health problems encountered in Fosse pupils means that a variety of procedures, approaches and activities are needed and are used when necessary/appropriate.

These fall into two categories.

- Maintenance of emotional health
- Helping to solve emotional health problems

Maintenance of emotional health problems is integral to the ethos and organization of the whole school. It is approached in a number of ways:

- Building self esteem and confidence in the child by continual recognition and celebration of success both curricular and extra-curricular, by providing a secure environment and by clear and consistent expectations. See Behaviour policy, Curricular policies, Anti Bullying policy, Equal Opportunities policy, Inclusion policy, Safeguarding policy, Health and Safety policy, Drug Education policy.
- Activities aimed at developing social and co-operative skills in all curricular subjects but also additionally in Team Building exercises, Spiritual growth and review activities in Residential Visits.

A variety of approaches are used to help our pupils maintain or regain emotional health.

- Counselling for children in need as decided by Headteacher, parents and child.
- Use of Single Page Profile
- Use of staff in bereavement counselling
- Circle time where a whole class has interaction problems
- Behaviour support
- Team building activities
- Anger management work

- Home visits
- Use of external agencies such as Social Care and Safeguarding, Educational Welfare Officer, Family Support Service, ADHD Solutions
- Use of external agencies (National Sources of Advice on offering support to children and their families)
- Use of child protection procedures
- Availability of advice from leaflets and help lines from staff
- Input from Educational Psychologist
- Input from school nurse who sees Head teacher and SENCO before visits to prioritise pupil need
- Support in referral to / attendance at CAMHS e.g. Westcotes
- Time out of class with SENCO / Teaching Assistant

Staff

The Governor Body recognises the valuable contribution made by the staff to the school, and at the same time acknowledges that occupational stress is a factor in schools, and that it is essential to tackle it both at the organisational and individual level.

Definition of stress is “a process that can occur when there is a mismatch between the perceived pressure of the work situation and an individual’s capacity to cope.” (Education Service Advisory Committee / Health and Safety Commission - ‘Managing occupational stress: a guide for managers and teachers in the schools sector.’) The school professional staff have defined stress as “a process that can occur, when there is an inability to meet the demands of work whilst maintaining performance levels.”

All staff have access to the Amica counselling helpline service on Leicester 254 4388.

Governors and staff will adopt a whole school approach to stress management in an atmosphere in which: causes of stress are identified and addressed; support is given to staff experiencing debilitating levels of stress which it is recognised is not due to incompetence or weakness; and a preventative approach is taken towards potentially stressful policies for staff and pupils.

The Governing Body will monitor the following to give an indication of organisational stress levels:

(as appropriate)

- Absences due to sickness
- Staff turnover rates
- Early retirement/retirement on medical grounds
- Class size
- Incidents of violence
- Number of complaints
- Number of exclusions
- Annual employee HSE Stress Questionnaires – sharing outcomes with the whole staff

Ways of identifying, tackling and monitoring causes of stress will be established, with all staff being encouraged to participate fully and frankly. Appropriate Action Plans will be initiated and it is recognised that stress management issues are a matter for on-going evaluation.

Leadership management styles will take full account of the need and benefit to the school of preventing harmful stress. In determining and communicating management policies, management will be committed to identifying with staff problem areas in order that they can be addressed and changes be introduced where feasible.

The Governing Body and management recognise the importance of effective communication with staff, keeping them involved and informed in relation to problems addressed, strategies adopted successes and failures.

Staff who may be suffering adversely from stress will be supported and treated sensitively and fairly, with encouragement to obtain counselling or medical treatment. Help and advice relating to underlying causes of stress will be offered in confidence.

The Governing Body and management recognise the importance of procuring a good "person/job fit". This will be borne in mind during selection procedures and personnel specifications and during interviews. The best match will be sought of individual skills to the duties of the post.

The Governing Body and management recognise the importance of appropriate professional support for all staff, particularly those newly appointed or whose role has changed; and of the appropriate ongoing training and career development for all staff.

Full use of the appraisal and Performance Management interviews will be made to allow for the expression of concerns over job description, training needs, and to give recognition of achievement.

In addition, at the end of the academic year, all members of staff will be given the chance to answer questions, give feedback, give their views and make suggestions about their job; the environment they work in, the relationships they have, efficiency, job satisfaction etc.

Please see attached examples of questionnaires which will be updated annually to ensure their value and relevance. Any issues arising will be addressed appropriately. (see previous paragraphs).

Appropriate consideration will be given to stress related poor performance in the school's disciplinary policies procedures.

Staff will be given access to counselling facilities and the school will consider other occupational health facilities as appropriate.

Violence at work - the Governing Body will adopt the approach suggested by the LA in the draft supplementary section to the Health & Safety policy on Stress Management.

Staff will be supported in their actions and performance by the aims and objectives of the school and the Behaviour Policy.

Good relationships with the local community will be sought and established, and maximum use made of any resources the community has to offer.

The Governing Body is aware that stress related issues extend to the pupils, and seeks to address this through reducing stress in the school environment.

The school have promoted emotional wellbeing through circle time activities since September 2010

Relationship to other areas

Emotional health relates to all areas of school both curricular and extra-curricular, both pupils and staff. It is particularly related to PSHCE. Without good emotional health children are unable to learn to their potential.

Assessment and recording

The emotional health of pupils is assessed continuously by all staff on an informal basis. It is also assessed before each Annual review. The Single Page Profile and Vulnerability Audit will also be used to assess children's emotional health

Monitoring and evaluation

The SMT evaluates the success of the Emotional Health Policy as part of ongoing evaluation for teachers and policy review. The Governing Body is also responsible for monitoring the Emotional Health of children and staff.

Responsibilities

The Inclusion Manager and PSHCE team are responsible for leading development and INSET in Emotional well being.

All staff are responsible for implementing the procedures and activities necessary to promoting pupil emotional health.

Relation to other policies:

This policy relates to the Behaviour, Safeguarding, Anti Bullying, Equal Opportunities, Inclusion, Race Equality, Inclusion, all curricular policies, EPR and Drugs Education Policies.

Investigating Stress – Stress Action Plans

There may be occasions when an investigation of the causes of stress is necessary. For example:

- During incident investigation by line managers.
- When investigating the causes of sickness absence due to stress (particularly long term sickness absence).
- When planning a phased return to work after sickness absence.
- As a result of a proactive team/section based 'Work Pressures Risk Assessment' being carried out, which has highlighted issues concerning particular employees.

Stress Action Plan

The 'Stress Action Plan' system, described below, should be used when it is necessary to reactively investigate the causes of stress in individuals.

A 'Stress Action Plan' form is attached to this guidance. The system described is designed to facilitate a way forward. It is not a blaming opportunity, but rather a chance to reflect upon the situation and the circumstances around it, which should enable a move forward to a satisfactory outcome.

This approach is not intended to address the medical aspects of stress (e.g. clinical depression); that should be addressed through Occupational Health. However, this approach can address the personal and organisational issues that have led to the individual's perceptions of stress.

Instructions on how to use the Stress Action Plan are given below.

Stage 1

The individual employee and their manager should investigate the causes of stress together. If this is not possible (e.g. individual refuses to talk to their manager or wishes for a mediator in the process) the manager should contact Human Resources to identify an alternative party to undertake this discussion, e.g. HR, Occupational Health, another manager, Union Representative etc.

The first stage of the process is for the employee to complete the first three columns of the Stress Action Plan Form. The employee should not complete this stage with their line manager but either do it alone or with the support of another person (e.g. Personnel, Occupational Health etc.) to ensure they are being specific enough on the issues outlined below.

- **Employee's Perceptions of Stressors**

The employee should write down their perceptions/feelings about the situation (e.g. no-one listens to me, can't cope with workload, no-one interested, no support etc.). Simple statements such as 'I feel stressed' are not adequate enough to enable this approach to be successful.

- **Evidence of Perceptions**

The employee should provide examples of how they have arrived at their perceptions (e.g. instances that have led them to feel that they have no support from their manager).

- **The Future**

The employee should then write down the most significant issues in their work situation that they would want to see addressed (using examples from the evidence column) and how they would like these issues to be resolved, so they can return to the workplace and their job.

The aim of the gathering the information collected so far is to draw out:

- The employee's perception of the issues.
- The evidence that supports their perception of the problem.
- Possible solutions to the problems that can be used as the basis for agreeing a way forward.

Although their wishes cannot be guaranteed, in most cases many can be achieved or reasonable compromises reached. Approaching it in this manner means the employee plays a major part in identifying the issues involved and how they could be addressed.

Stage 2

- **Agreeing Specific Actions**

Stage 2 should involve a meeting with the individual employee, their manager and if necessary a Personnel Advisor. The purpose of this meeting is to allow open and constructive communication between the two parties and allow the employee to share their views in an open and positive way. However, once the employee has shared their information, an opportunity must be given for the manager to respond. (See 'Stress and the DDA' below.)

- **Documenting Actions and Review**

The manager should then document the actions agreed and the reasons for any inaction on the suggestions made by the employee. The manager and employee should then agree review dates (at the most one month after the creation of the Stress Action Plan) to discuss and review progress against the actions agreed.

Stress and the DDA

'Stress' is not an illness or disability in itself. However, severe or prolonged stress-related illness may lead to psychiatric and/or psychological conditions such as clinical depression, which may meet the definition of disability as set down in the Disability Discrimination Act.

If a person has a medical condition recognised by the DDA, Leicester City Council is legally obliged to make reasonable adjustments to work arrangements. 'Reasonable adjustments' might include actions such as temporary or permanent changes in responsibilities/tasks, flexible working arrangements, allowing time off for medical appointments related to their disability, etc. However, even if a person is not under the DDA, managers should still be willing to make reasonable adjustments if it means an employee can remain or return to work.

STRESS ACTION PLAN

Appendix 2

Part 1 – To be completed by the employee

Perceptions	Evidence of Perceptions	The Future	
Perceptions and feelings about the current situation	Examples and specific instances of why the feelings and perceptions exist	The most significant issues that the individual wishes to be addressed	Individual's proposals about how each of these issues should be addressed

Part 2 – To be completed by the employee’s line manager

Summary of Actions Proposed by Employee	Actions to be Taken by Management	Explanations of Reason for any Inaction	Review Date for Each Action and Details of Progress at that Date

Employee’s Signature	Date	Manager’s Signature	Date

UPDATED	June 2018
AUTHOR	Angela Blackburn
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