

Mental health information for Holywell C of E Primary school.

We are developing our Mental Health provision here at Holywell all the time and are pleased to share that our Senior Mental Health Lead is Nicky Oliver, and our Emotional Well-being officer is Katherine Mullee. Both Nicky and Katherine have accessed a wide range of recent, high-quality training and have experience of supporting children with a wide range of worries. If you are worried about your child please speak to your class teacher and they will be able to refer to Nicky or Katherine. Our teachers have all had recent mental health training and all classrooms have a mental health display for children to use to discuss feelings.

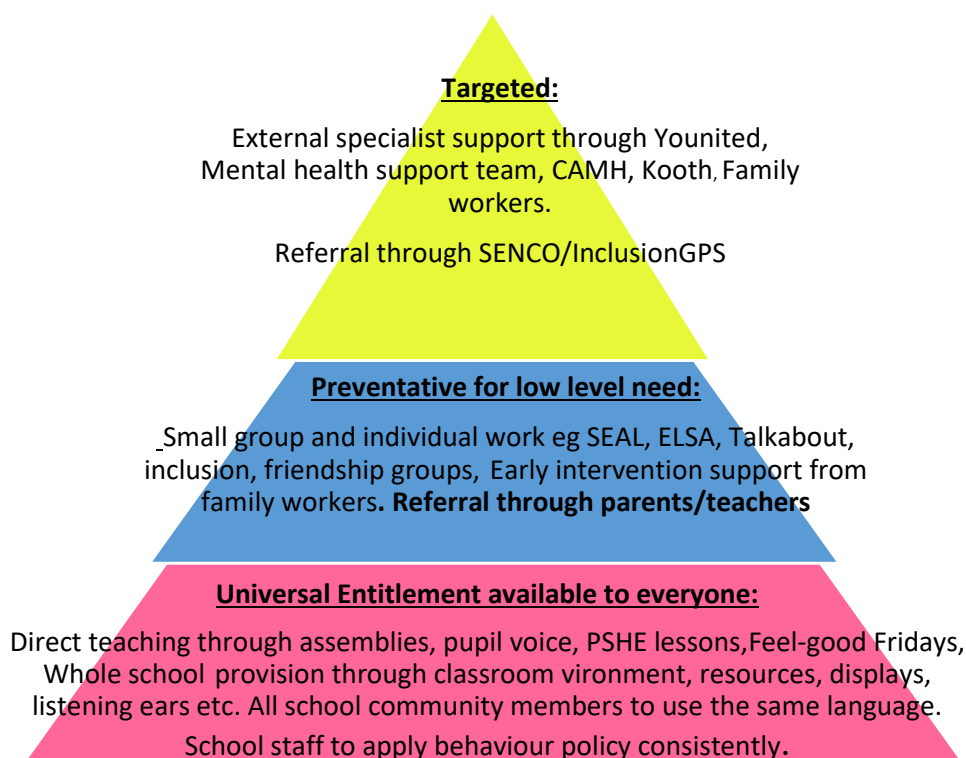
We have a Mental Health Policy which describes how we approach mental health and well-being for pupils and staff. This is available using the link in the mental health section of our website.

We have many resources available in school to support children and we are able to access experts from the NHS Mental Health Support Team – this team offers a variety of parent-led workshops and on occasion, direct consultations and work with families. At a primary level this team does not work directly with children as evidence shows that parent led work is more effective. The team use the principles set out in this book which is a great start for you to start to understand how to support your child/ren.



In addition to the NHS Mental Health Support Team we are able to refer to our school Education Inclusion Family Advisor Zoe Hope and she is contactable directly on 07795 300979 or by email zoe.hope@cambridgeshire.gov.uk Please look out for her monthly newsletter detailing workshops for parents to attend and tips and tricks for supporting children.

The diagram below shows the three tiers of support we can offer:



Key questions:

What is mental health?

Mental health is a positive concept and depends on:

How we think feel and behave

How we cope with ups and downs / negative events

How we feel about ourselves and our life

How we see ourselves and our future

How stress affects us

Our self-esteem and confidence

There are conflicting views on what causes poor mental health or mental illness but it is generally understood to be caused by either genetics, (if a parent is predisposed to mental health issues), environmental difficulties (living in poverty, poor sanitation, crime for example) and by a build-up of overwhelming external stressors or experiences that become too much to cope with.

It is worth remembering that we all need some level of anxiety in our lives or we would lack motivation and there are many things that is perfectly normal to be afraid of eg heights, tests or exams, spiders or the dark but it is when a worry begins to affect the normal pace of life and children begin to avoid the situations that make them anxious that it may become more anxiety based.

What approach do we use towards mental health?

That most children have good mental health most of the time!

- Mental health exists within a state of flux – ever changing
- We can largely control it (gives pupils sense of agency)
- Moves along a continuum and is influenced by a range of factors (social, biological, psychological)
- Children need to be taught that they can change some of these factors and draw on resources to help them – empowers pupils

Teaching will mainly focus on what contributes to, and helps maintain positive mental health and well-being.

We are just beginning this year to focus on mental health teaching as a separate subject (we already teach a wide range of concepts and strategies through our PSHE and RSE curriculum) through Feel-Good Fridays where children will be taught specifically about their own mental health and how to influence it as well as plan and take part in activities in their individual classes to enhance mental health.

We will:

- support children to understand that things they value, enjoy or are good at can all support mental wellbeing. Positive relationships, eating and sleeping well can also help.

- teach children to identify and name degrees of emotions eg 1 – fear, joy, disgust, surprise, anger, sadness & happiness. 2. Pride, shame, dismay, jealousy, embarrassment, empathy.
- teach children that all humans experience these in different situations – we NEED to feel these and it is OK to do so.
- build children’s vocabulary and model appropriate responses to events and acceptable ways to express emotions.
- teach children to recognise triggers, that the behaviour of others can affect their wellbeing, that their own behavior and emotions can affect others.
- encourage physical activity / social activity and well being – what children can do themselves
- teach children that feelings change from minute to minute, we experience different emotions throughout the day.
- teach children how to support themselves and others.

Here are some useful websites:

[Childhood fears: Helping your child with fears and worries - BBC Tiny Happy People](#)

[Children’s mental health – Every Mind Matters – NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[WEBSITES | CAMHS Resources \(camhs-resources.co.uk\)](#)

[Child Stress – Parenting NI](#)

[Parents Helpline | Mental Health Help for Your Child | YoungMinds](#)



[Parents Helpline | Mental Health Help for Your Child | YoungMinds](#)
Parents Helpline for detailed advice, emotional support and signposting for a child or young person up to the age of 25. You can call us for free on 0800 5544 from 9:30am – 4pm, Monday – Friday. [www.youngminds.org.uk](#)

[Child Stress – Parenting NI](#) We think of childhood as being a carefree time, but children can also experience stress. Look at some of the Family Wellness Project resources to help understand child stress and activities you can do with your child. [www.parentingni.org](#)

[WEBSITES | CAMHS Resources](#) This is a collection of websites that provide information and support to young people and their families. If you click on the image it will open the website in a new window. [www.camhs-resources.co.uk](#)

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/make-it-count-guide-for-parents-and-carers>