



WEST TOWN LANE
ACADEMY

WWW.WTL.ACADEMY
0117 377 2295

WEST TOWN LANE ACADEMY

WHERE LEARNING IS AN ADVENTURE

Social, Emotional, Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Children's rights and responsibilities:

Article 12 - Every child has the right to express their views, feelings and wishes in all matters affecting them, and to have their views considered and taken seriously.

Article 19 - Governments should ensure that children are properly cared for, and protect them from violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 23 - A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and, as far as possible, independence and to play an active part in the community.

Article 24 - Every child has the right to the best possible health.

Article 27 - Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical and social needs and support their development.

Rationale;

This policy is designed to ensure the wellbeing of all pupils at West Town Lane Academy. Positive wellbeing is essential to successful teaching and learning and we believe that prioritising children's social, emotional and mental health needs will lay the foundations for success. We are a 'Rights Respecting School' and teach children to respect individual's rights all around the world and to understand their own personal responsibility to allow others their rights.

Our Academy recognises its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010, Education Act 2011 and all sections relating to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. West Town Lane Academy is strongly committed to protecting and safeguarding children, and expects all staff, parents and volunteers to embrace this commitment. An incident relating to mental health and/or wellbeing should be considered a safeguarding concern under the Children Act 1989, when there is 'reasonable cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm' and should be reported following the school's safeguarding and child protection policy.

Purpose:

To promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school

To create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion

To foster a positive atmosphere in school, where pupils feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly

To allow pupils to participate in forming our approach to mental health by promoting pupil voice

To give pupils the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others

To spread awareness of the varieties of ways mental health issues can manifest

To support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues

To provide support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues

To provide support and access to resources to pupils experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them

Registered Address:

West Town Lane Academy
Brislington, Bristol, BS4 5DT

Signs that may indicate that a child is suffering ill mental health:

All staff will be alert to the signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in mood or energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

Vulnerable Groups

Staff are aware that some pupils are particularly vulnerable to Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) difficulties. These 'vulnerable groups' are more likely to experience a range of adverse circumstances that increase the risk of mental health problems.

With an awareness of the increased likelihood of SEMH difficulties in pupils in vulnerable groups staff remain vigilant to early signs of difficulties.

Vulnerable groups include the following:

- Pupils who have experienced abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse contextual circumstances
- Children in need
- Children in Care (CiC)
- Children Previously in Care (CPiC)
- Children with SEND
- Socio-economically disadvantaged pupils, including those in receipt of, or previously in receipt of, free school meals and the pupil premium

These circumstances can have a far-reaching impact on behaviour and emotional states. These factors will be considered if there is ever discussing the possible exclusion of vulnerable pupils.

Developing Pupil Awareness and Supporting Pupils' SEMH Needs

The PSHE and RSE curriculum at West Town Lane Academy (WTLA) develops an awareness and understanding of SEMH needs. Through our RADAR values (Respect, Adventure, Determination, Achievement and Resilience) we teach and promote strategies that support resilience and provide opportunities to develop the skills that are required to overcome challenges. Lessons and assemblies are used throughout the school year to specifically teach content relating to and raise awareness of Mental Health and Wellbeing and parents are provided with resources to support their child/ren at home. We also promote a culture of positive mental health by:

- Providing opportunities for pupil voice
- Assigning roles of responsibility – Rights Action Group, Anti-bullying Ambassadors, Eco Warriors, House Captains, Healthy Heroes
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements
- Offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities

Children are taught to recognise that short-term stress and worry is a normal part of life and that most people will face mild or transitory changes that induce short-term mental health effects. Staff are taught to differentiate between 'normal' stress and more persistent mental health problems.

We have a strong Safeguarding culture at WTLA and understand the link between Safeguarding and Mental Health; children are encouraged and feel confident to speak out to a trusted adult who will know how to respond and staff know to report concerns for a child's SEMH to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL) : **Sarah Franklin** or one of the Deputy DSLs: **Adrian Robbins, Ellie Whiddington, Emma Hendy**.

Responding to concerns for a pupil's mental health

When the school suspects that a pupil is experiencing mental health difficulties, the following graduated response is employed:

- An assessment is undertaken to establish a clear analysis of the pupil's needs
- A plan is set out to determine how the pupil will be supported
- Action is taken to provide that support
- Regular reviews are undertaken to assess the effectiveness of the provision, and changes are made as necessary

Staff members will discuss concerns regarding SEMH difficulties with the parents of pupils who have SEMH difficulties, and take any concerns expressed by parents, other pupils, colleagues and the pupil in question seriously. Where we require support from outside agencies, appropriate referrals will be made so that we can work in collaboration with other professionals to ensure the best outcome for the individual. Any concerns relating to SEMH will be recorded on CPOMS along with the appropriate action.

Conclusion

At WTLA, children's wellbeing is of the utmost importance to us. Children should enjoy coming to school and so enjoy learning. We will always act promptly where concerns are raised over a child's mental health and wellbeing and pupils and families will be supported.

This Policy should be read in conjunction with our Behaviour Policy, SEND Policy, Safeguarding Policy and PSHE Policy.

February 2025