**Cairn Primary School Mental Health Policy**

**Introduction**

At Cairn Primary School we are committed to ensuring that we provide a positive, safe and supportive environment for all members of the school community. All children have the right to work and learn in an atmosphere that is safe and nurturing where they feel they can achieve their potential. Cairn Primary School is committed to working in partnership with parents in ensuring that all our pupils feel safe and happy within the school setting.

Mental health is as important to a child's safety and wellbeing as their physical health. It can impact on all aspects of their life, including their educational attainment, relationships and physical wellbeing. Mental health can also change over time, to varying degrees of seriousness, and for different reasons. At Cairn primary we are committed to ensuring pupils receive the right support at the right time to enable them to have positive mental health and strategies in place to respond to any issues.

**Aims and Objectives**

**Our aims and objectives in formulating a whole school mental health policy are:**

* To educate all pupils about mental health and discuss it openly within our school community;
* To establish appropriate procedures for assisting pupils who are experiencing mental health issues;
* To ensure that all pupils, parents and staff are aware of the schools role in regard to mental health and work in partnership with staff to promote positive mental health for all.

**What does Mental Health Mean?**

Mental health is an individual's cognitive, behavioural and emotional wellbeing (Mind, 2020). It's something we all have - including every child and young person.

We use the term ‘mental health’ to describe how pupils are feeling. Any child is at risk of developing mental health issues or having periods of time where mental health is an issue for them. At Cairn we are responsive to these needs and aim to provide both universal and more targeted support to pupils who are finding their mental health challenging.

**What will school do to help?**

We have a number of approaches in place both universally and targeted to ensure positive mental health for our pupils:

**Universal Supports (All Pupils)**

* A positive school ethos
* Staff all trained and using nurturing approaches with the pupils
* A clear mental health policy
* A programme for discussing mental health, emotions and feelings within our Health and Wellbeing structure
* A clear tracking system of pupils feelings and emotions using the well being indicators and also emotional literacy checklists
* We endeavour to ensure that all pupils know how to express their worries, i.e. using the worry monster, talking to staff, check-in boxes etc.
* We take part in mental health campaigns, both nationally and locally
* We are a Mental Health Charter Mark School
* We display mental health notices and helpline numbers clearly
* We work alongside partners to keep developing our mental health guidelines in line with current developments
* We ensure that the interest of each and every child is our primary consideration

**Targetted support (identified pupils)**

* Additional Support for pupils in need is discussed and planned with parents
* A staged Intervention programme, which outlines clear targets for pupils, is in place and is reviewed regularly
* Staff trained in specialised areas such as bereavement, bullying, suicide and Place 2 be counselling
* Targetted group work completed as part of the school day, in partnership with parents, by trained staff
* Liaising and referring to Educational Psychology and other agencies when required

**Parents can expect that:**

* There is a clear mental health policy and programme in place
* There are staff trained in mental health within the school to assist with any issues
* Additional support is available for those who need it and it is reviewed regularly
* Parents are welcomed and involved in their child’s learning
* The interests of each and every child is our main consideration
* Staff will take time to listen to your child and will value and act upon what they say

**How parents can support us:**

* Help school to meet the needs of your child by discussing your child’s needs and progress with staff regularly – at both informal and formal meetings
* Endorse and support the school mental health policy
* Let school know if anything happens in your child’s life that may affect the learning, behaviour, relationships or general wellbeing of your child
* Take an active interest, and participate in your child’s learning, and be aware of how to raise concerns if they arise
* Stress to your children the importance of communication and expressing feelings

**Useful Links:**

* **https://www.place2be.org.uk/**
* <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/>

<https://www.nhsaaa.net/services-a-to-z/c-the-child-and-adolescent-mental-health-service-camhs/>