Version: 1

**Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

**Introduction**

Reepham Pre-school are committed to support the mental health and wellbeing of the children in our care, parent/carers, staff, volunteers, committee and students on placement/work experience (pre-school family).

Our ethos is to create a supportive and caring environment for children, staff etc and the families we come into contact with.

We understand that life challenges everyone in various ways and anyone of us may need some additional help to cope with this at different times in our lives. We believe that mental health is very important.

Reepham Pre-school has a ‘duty of care’ to provide a safe environment for staff and children under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974.

**Scope**

To outline our aims to promote positive mental health within our setting.

**Aims**

* To describe strategies we use to help children to understand and express their emotions better.
* To explain how we provide a safe environment where children feel comfortable to share their worries and concerns.
* To provide each child with a Key Worker who will strive to create a supportive bond with the child and their family.
* To show ways in which we foster good relationships.
* To describe methods we use to develop confidence and self-esteem in the children within our care.
* To show ways that we help children develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks.
* To highlight how we support adults in our setting to feel valued and supported.
* To describe how our staff notice any signs of possible mental health issues with anyone who is part of the pre-school family.
* To explain how the pre-school will bring awareness to mental health issues and break down stigmas previously associated with mental heath issues.
* To describe how we will model ways of being non judgmental.

**Definition:**

The World Health Organisation uses the following definition to describe 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 proactively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”.

1

**What we will do for children:**

* Provide activities and opportunities for children to explore and express their feelings and emotions.
* Promote positive behaviours with positive reinforcements.
* Model and encourage good relationships.
* Value and celebrate children’s work and achievements.
* Provide a quiet area for children to relax and reflect.
* To look for any signs of bullying and stop it immediately.
* Teach respect and kindness to each other.
* Listen to what children have to say and involve them wherever possible in decision-making.
* Teach/promote healthy eating, good hygiene, safety and the need for good sleep.
* Share with parent/carers current advice regarding healthy eating, safety, health check ups, hygiene, sleeping, Internet access, time on technology and so forth.
* Support children during difficult times, such as transitions, settling in, separation anxiety, bereavement of someone close, breakdown in family (i.e. Divorce or separation) and so forth.

**What we will do for adults:**

* Give thought and consideration when communicating with each other.
* Accepting and valuing people’s feelings.
* Be approachable and non-judgemental.
* Treat each other with respect and speaking well of each other.
* Show encouragement and endorsement. This can be between each other, at staff appraisals and with parent/carers at progress meetings.
* Support staff (volunteers etc) that are struggling with mental health.
* Offering help, to each other and parents/carers.
* Raise awareness of mental health issues and the signs to look for.
* Staff Training.
* Be confident to start a conversation with someone we are concerned about.
* Having a ‘can do’ approach.
* Giving staff a voice via Supervisions and being involved in the decisions wherever possible.
* Staff giving each other proper time for a tea break, or some needed time out of the room. (Ratios permitting)
* Staff to provide cover within the team for appointments. (Ratios permitting)
* Support adults during difficult times such as transitions, settling in, separation anxiety, bereavement of someone close, breakdown in family (i.e. Divorce or separation) and so forth.

**Key Staff**

All adults in the setting have a responsibility to promote the mental health of children and each other, although certain staff have specific roles.

Designated Safeguarding Person: Debbie Land/Amanda Woods

SENCO: Claire Evans

Mental Health Officer: Amanda Woods

2

If anyone is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of anyone within the preschool family they should speak to: Yvonne Jones.

**Links to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

Characteristics of Effective Learning

Playing and Exploring – Being willing to ‘have a go’

Active Learning – Keeping on trying

Enjoying achieving what they set out to do

**Personal, Social and Emotional Development:**

Making Relationships – Demonstrates friendly behaviour, initiating conversations and forming good relationships with peers and familiar adults.

Self-confidence and self-awareness – Welcomes and values praise for what they have done. Also – shows confidence in asking adults for help.

Managing feelings and behaviour – Can usually tolerate delay when needs are not immediately met, and understands wishes may not always be met.

**Physical Development:**

Health and self-care- Shows some understanding that food practices with regard to exercise, eating, sleeping and hygiene can contribute to good health.

**\*Resources for education staff**

www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk – Checklist for schools to achieve a whole school approach to mental wellbeing.

www.pshe-association.org.uk – Teacher guidance: preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing.

www.minded.org.uk – Great source of online training and resources.

www.kidsskills.org – Supporting children to learn new skills rather than fix problems www.elsanetwork.org/resources/free-resources - Emotional literacy resources

www.cwmt.org.uk – Charlie Waller Memorial Trust Depression let’s get talking.

Free resources for schools.

www.saferinternet.org.uk – Links to the publication ‘So you got naked online’ a resource to support young people about sexting as well as sexting guidance for schools.

www.wearecamhslincs.nhs.uk – Lincolnshire CAMHS advice and support for children and young people, parents and professionals.

**Resources for young people**

www.kooth.com – Online support for young people age 11-19 in Lincolnshire.

www.rcpsych.ac.uk/expertadvice – Self-help and information about common mental health disorders for children and young people, families and professionals.

www.youngminds.org.uk – Lots of advice for children and young people.

www.getselfhelp.co.uk – Loads of cognitive behavioural therapy resources and self-help information for all ages.

www.wearecamhslincs.nhs.uk – Lincolnshire CAMHS advice and support for children and young people, parents and professionals www.childline.org.uk – Helpline 0800 1111

www.moodjuice.scot.nhs.uk – self-help guides

**Digital apps**

Calm Harm – NHS recommended app to help people resist or manage the urge to self-harm Mindful Gnats – designed to teach young people simple mindfulness and relaxation skills

**Resources for parents**

Youngminds.org.uk – Parent help line

www.kidsskills.org – Supporting children to learn new skills rather than fix problems.

www.wearecamhslincs.nhs.uk - Lincolnshire CAMHS advice and support for children and young people, parents and professionals.\*

(\* to \* Copied from NHS Lincolnshire Partnership Publication Healthy Minds Lincolnshire Toolkit for Educational Staff)

**Resources for Adults to get support**

[www.mind.org.uk – Mental Health Charity](http://www.mind.org.uk – Mental Health Charity)

[www.relate.org.uk – Relationship support](http://www.relate.org.uk – Relationship support)

[www.samaritans.org - Support for suicidal thoughts and general mental health issues](http://www.samaritans.org  - Support for suicidal thoughts and general mental health issues)

Samaritans Call 116 123

[www.educationsupport.org.uk](http://www.educationsupport.org.uk) - Charity that supports all educational staff

Confidential support line 08000 562 561

[www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](https://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk/)

**Identifying needs and warning signs**

All staff will be trained to recognise warning signs that are common to mental health problems. This will enable them to offer help and support to those individuals. Warning signs will always be taken seriously and should be communicated to the designated safeguarding officer or mental health officer

as appropriate.

4

Signs to look for both physical and behavioral:

* Physical signs of harm.
* Changes in eating and sleeping habits.
* Increased isolation, becoming distant and withdrawn.
* Dishevelled, unkempt appearance.
* Change in mood.
* Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide.
* Signs of drug and/or alcohol abuse.
* Changes to usual behaviour, negative behaviour patterns.
* Feelings of failure, uselessness and loss of hope.
* Secretive behaviour.
* Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. large winter coat in summer.
* Alternating between manic activity and being lethargic and uninterested.

Other possible indicators:

* Attendance and absenteeism.
* Punctuality, lateness and/or missing appointments.
* Changes in attention and learning.
* Family and relationship problems.
* Financial difficulties.
* Bereavement.
* Long term health issues.
* Being a carer for a family member.

Remember a parent/carers mental health can seriously affect their ability to care for and/or keep their child/ren safe.

**Managing Disclosures**

Anyone raising any concerns regarding mental health issues, either about themselves or a member of the pre-school family, will be listened to, and be responded to in a supportive, caring and non-judgemental way.

Disclosures will be recorded confidentially and only shared with the appropriate authorities if it is necessary to keep a child safe, in line with the settings Safeguarding Policy.

**Records are made to include:**

* The persons name, full address, date of birth.
* The date and time of the disclosure/observation.
* The exact record of the disclosure (in the persons own words).
* The name of the person to whom disclosure was made.
* The name of any third party present.
* For Safeguarding disclosures see Safeguarding Policy.

**Action**

After disclosure a plan of action will be decided and implemented. If the concern is regarding a child then the parents/carers will be informed and possible actions discussed and agreed before any action is taken. Where disclosure is regarding an adult they will be spoken to in a caring and sympathetic way and a plan of action agreed. Actions taken will be recorded and the situation reviewed regularly until the setting is satisfied that the situation is under control.

5

**Other Relevant Policies**

Confidentiality Social Networking Non-collection of Children

Safeguarding Children Data Protection Anti-Bullying

Parent Partnership ICT and Mobile Phone Use Staff Induction

Staff Recruitment and Selection Whistle Blowing

Settling in Behaviour Management Code of Conduct

This policy has been adopted by Reepham Pre-school

Signed on behalf of the setting by:

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….. Committee

…………………………………………………………………………………………………….. Manager

Date: …………………………………………………………

Review Date: …………………………………………..

6