



Fremington Primary Mental Health Strategy

*Supported by Devon's Early Help 4 Mental Health Programme and the
Schools Development Support Agency*



Rationale

National view

“Evidence tells us that good mental health is essential for children to learn and achieve” *Heads Together ‘Whole School Approach’*

As a nation we are increasingly aware of the numbers of children young people and adults who experience periods of mental ill health, and the fact that this can limit their opportunities to reach their potential and contribute to society.

National NHS and Government policies are now being formed to begin to address this situation through improvements to education.

The National Institute for Health Care Excellence is clear in its advice to schools, that developing a ‘Whole School Approach’ to promoting mental health has shown clear benefits in contributing to the wellbeing of students. This approach goes beyond teaching and learning and pervades all aspects of the life of the school (Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing).

Local view

When we asked our parents what they most wanted for their children at school we learned their overriding priority was for their children to be happy, safe and well educated through a love of learning with hope for their future.

When we asked our students they let us know that they would like to learn more about how to manage stress, difficult feelings, and how to know about their mental health in the same way as they are learning about their physical health.

When we asked our teachers, they let us know that they would value learning more about how they can directly influence and impact on a mentally healthier environment within which young people can work, learn and thrive.

When we asked our stakeholders, which include Governors, they fully support this evolving strategy and its policy. They let us know that they are behind a whole school approach and this is a high priority and fundamental to any learning environment.

Definition of Mental Health and wellbeing;

We use the World Health Organisation’s definition of 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 productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”.

The Aims and Intentions of our Mental Health Strategy

We aim to;

- Remain informed, inspired and influenced by national policy guidance within the DfE and Public Health England.
- Ensure a whole school approach to development and delivery.
- Ensure a whole community contribution to development and delivery, including students and their families, stakeholders, partner agencies in statutory and charitable organisations and the local extended community.
- Connect with our partner schools in our local community to share good practice.
- To hold the Mental Health Strategy as a standard agenda item on Senior Leadership Team and Governor Meetings.

We will;

- Ensure that this Mental Health Strategy and its Policies complement all other current school strategies and policies.
- Review the Mental Health Strategy annually.
- Ensure there is clear learning on our curriculum regarding emotional wellbeing and mental health across all key stages.
- Produce a summary of implemented delivery, outcome and next step developments annually.
- Ensure our Mental Health Policy connected to this strategy is available on our website.

Here at Devon School we embrace our role, alongside our families, the community and with our wider partners, in contributing to the developing emotional wellbeing of our students and their learning about being healthy, from a physical and mental health perspective.

“Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school approach” suggest using an Eight Principles Approach.

We have chosen to use this Eight Principle approach to develop our school Mental Health Policy and evidence it in action.

However, in line with the EH4MH added value, our Eight Principles include our links with our community and national contributions to our children’s developing mental health and wellbeing.

We have chosen an additional section that aims to highlight our chosen forms of **communication** and information sharing.

This policy is developed in response to our pledge in the Mental Health Strategy. It is guided by Public Health England’s key documents outlined at the end of this document.

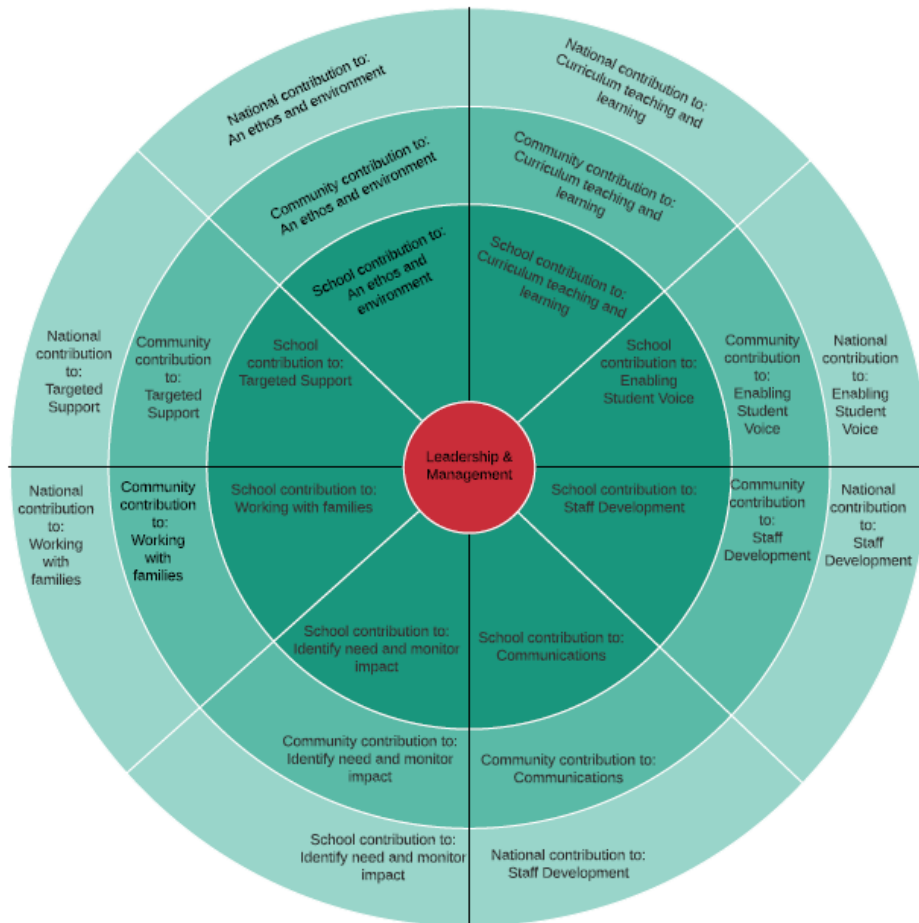
Principle 1:

Leadership and Management

At the core of these Eight Principles is Leadership and Management. Their commitment and drive are key in embedding this policy at the heart of our school.

At Fremington Primary and Nursery School our SENCO is Melissa New, Safeguarding Lead Melissa New and Mental Health Champion is Julie Williams whose role is to lead the development of our Whole School Mental Health Strategy. She has established a Mental Health working group, with support and oversight by the Senior Leadership Team and Board of Governors. We have now appointed a specific role of Mental Health Champion within our Governing Team.

Below is the EH4MH's 8 Principle approach including the added value of considering community and national contributions to each principle, and with the additional **Communication** Principle.



Community and National Support

Senior Management have been working closely with our partners in the specialist NHS & DCC funded **Early Help 4 Mental Health** team and the Schools Development Support Agency programme: *“Building a whole school approach to mental health.”*

Principle 2:

School Ethos and Environment

At Fremington Primary School, children and young people come first, and our priority is to deliver high quality teaching and learning, within a culture of celebrating individual effort and progress. This is within an environment that celebrates diversity and promotes respect for all. We want every child to be successful, and to reach for success from the first day they join us, leaving the school with a love of learning that lasts throughout life.

We recognise that in order to embed this ethos, we need to promote an environment that focusses on the whole school's emotional wellbeing. We have considered this through both the physical environment of the school and the emotional culture that is promoted throughout the school.

Our Whole School Approach does this by;

School

The sharing of our mission statement, which is:

Wellbeing

At Fremington Community Primary & Nursery School we work together to create a school that is caring, inclusive and celebrates learning for life.

Community

We are kind and caring, coming together to celebrate differences, where everyone has a sense of belonging.

Skills for Learning

We have curiosity and motivation to become active, independent thinkers who are not afraid to make mistakes and embrace opportunity.

Curriculum

We foster the love of learning for a lifetime: we want to equip our children with the skills and knowledge for the future through a rich, diverse and creative curriculum.

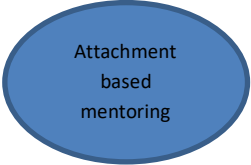
Our school values reflect this: aspiration, empathy, challenge, team work, embracing diversity, resilience, kindness, creativity

Our school policies including: Behaviour, Anti-Bullying, Inclusion, Safeguarding.

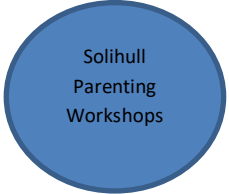
We create a sense of belonging by celebrating individual and team achievements, both inside and outside school events.

These are examples of how it looks within our school;





Attachment
based
mentoring



Solihull
Parenting
Workshops

Promotion of Mental Health, in Mental Health Week.

Mental Health Ambassadors.

Presentations to students and families, school displays and the modelling of the 10-a-day choices for mental health.

A whole school Thrive approach and use of the Family Room and student support area, that allows students to take some time out of learning.

We promote Growth Mindset language and the '10 a day for good mental health' through ***Normal Magic***, and enable student's learning to foster resilience and self-efficacy.

We have a whole school focus on anti-bullying week. These initiatives consider how bullying impacts on mental health.

We encourage outdoor learning opportunities through forest school, outdoor education days, outdoor classrooms, residential trips. We believe this supports confidence, self-esteem, community and team building, a sense of achievement, pride and fun, all of which impact positively on mental health.

Community

These are some examples of how it looks within our school that we are proud of;

We have forged links with our local faith community, who in turn contribute to assemblies, as well as linking with both groups and individual students.

We have also made links with local elderly members of the community in a residential home.

Nationally

We are actively embracing the 'Time to Change' campaign to bring an end to the stigma and discrimination faced by people who experience mental health problems.

Principle 3:

Curriculum Teaching and Learning

We know that school-based programmes of social and emotional learning have the potential to help young people acquire the skills they need to make good academic progress as well as benefit pupil health and wellbeing (*Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional health and Wellbeing*). With this in mind we have sought to enhance knowledge and skills around mental health across the curriculum as well as through targeted subjects such as PSHE.

These are examples of how it looks within our school;

School

We use the Thrive approach across the whole school (www.thriveapproach.com) and have several fully trained practitioners who are able to provide bespoke support to children.

We provide training for staff to support Mental Health, as well as developing systems to support families on an informal basis. As a school we celebrate Children's Mental Health Week.

We have a growth mindset approach and develop children's skills of resilience and seeing failure as a way that we learn.

Exercise – There is a strong link between good physical and mental health. In our PE lessons we explore this with our students. We also promote 'ten a day' physical activity time.

We provide Forest School sessions to support children who have low self-esteem, as well as all of our Year 3 children.

Impact Days provide students with whole day's experiences of mental health awareness. For example we celebrate world Mental Health Day and children's mental health week, which includes assemblies as well as in-class activities and sessions.

We provide a range of after school clubs to promote exercise and wellbeing for children including surf club, golf, gymnastics, choir, guitar, football, chess club and more.

We provide mental health education through our PSHE curriculum; we have purchased a new scheme of work, Jigsaw, which supports wellbeing in addition to the curriculum. as well as bespoke support from our Mental Health Champion, Julie Williams. We have purchased the Boxhall profile tool to support us in analyzing

children social, emotional and mental health with suggested activities. We use outside agencies such as Babcock SEMH team. In addition to this we use support from our School Community Nursing Team.

Community

Wherever possible we incorporate the resources of community services to enhance our curriculum's delivery of mental health promotion. For example we invite the fire service, beach lifeguards and RNLI into school to talk to the children about staying safe.

We take part in inter school sports events such as multi-skills, tennis and athletics.

We have a Year 6 residential that focuses on broadening children's horizons through experiencing life in a big city. Our Year 4 children attend a residential that promotes team building and resilience in the face of challenge.

Nationally

Although not directly embedded in curriculum content, each class is given time to take a break-teachers are aware that children need time to move and refresh themselves. This has had a very beneficial impact on student engagement in lessons. 'Take ten' exercise sessions, Go Noodle, Fun fit and 'Time to move' all support children's physical activity.

Principle 4:

Student voice

Involving students in decisions that impact on them can benefit their emotional health and wellbeing by helping them to feel part of the school and wider community and to have some control over their lives (*Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing*). We are committed to providing structures that allow students to play an active role in developing a mentally healthy school.

These are examples of how it looks within our school;

School

Schools Health & Education Unit (SHEU) or other well-being surveys give us a clear picture of key children's mental health.

House Captains Team.

Pastoral staff make a strong contribution to senior leaderships' understanding of student need by being an advocate for children. There is a Pastoral team including the PSHE Lead, SENCo, Children and family support practitioner, DSO and Head teacher, which meets termly.

Our House Captains promote mental health amongst the student population.

Our school promotes students in all clubs and activities to have a voice in how the clubs run, how the clubs inter-face with the school, and students can promote the clubs within the school.

We have an active and vibrant curriculum and have a focus 'multicultural week' or enrichment week each year, giving students opportunities for hearing and encouraging student's voices in drama, singing, debating, dance and visual art projects.

House Captain led assemblies with vertical tiering.

We offer a 'meet and greet' for identified children who struggle with coming in to school.

Children are part of the interview panel for new teachers.

Within Circle time, staff create an environment that encourages all students to share their views and experiences and these are valued and feed into school improvement.

Community

We encourage our children to participate in other focussed or general groups relevant to their needs, such as: young carers (carewise) Balloons or other local Bereavement organisation group such Peter's Dragon and FIG, DV support through 'Free to Be Me' and attachment based mentoring.

Nationally

Pupils contribute to Ofsted surveys during the inspection process.

Principle 5:

Identifying Need and Monitoring Impact

In line with our ethos of celebrating diversity and the successes of the individual, we are keen to identify need in order to provide the appropriate supportive environment for children to thrive. We aim to identify children and young people with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent them from developing.

These are examples of how it looks within our school;

School

Our school consulted with the EH4MH team who were able to support staff to provide some targeted information and resources to the student year group that helped them find positive ways of managing their emotions.

We also work with the local hospice to support key staff and children in dealing with terminal illness in their families.

We regularly seek feedback from our families and students through questionnaires.

We monitor and screen children's speech and language skills in Reception, Year 3 and Year 5, we provide Thrive sessions for identified children. We have 1:1 mentoring sessions for children with mental health problems. The SENCo provides bespoke coaching for teaching staff on how to support children in class.

The school run family drop in's 3 times per week for any parents and carers who need support. This is now being extended to pupils.

We work alongside families using Team Around the Child and Family approach, so there is a united approach from home and school which is bespoke to the individual family.

We regularly invite parents into school both formally and informally- we share and celebrate children's achievements.

As well as extra transition support for pupils, we also provide support for parents who may be anxious about their children transitioning to a new class/ school.

All staff are given regular training on how to identify signs that a student may be experiencing a mental health difficulty. We have a referral system for external agency support and support parents in online referrals.

We openly encourage students to let staff know when they have concerns, we provide a variety of ways for students to seek help; there is an open door service at lunch time to our support worker.

Community

As a school we work closely in partnership with our community colleagues to ensure we are actively identifying student mental health needs and monitoring the effectiveness of our actions and support. As part of our commitment to supporting students we employ a mental health champion.

We work closely with secondary settings to provide support for vulnerable pupils through specially organised visits and shared meeting times.

Our THRIVE practitioner works closely with THRIVE organisation to ensure assessment and monitoring are being used effectively.

National

Being part of the SHEU survey network helps the school have a better understanding of pupil's behaviour and perceptions of the school environment.

The Pastoral Team and Mental Health Champion are investigating 'Measuring and Monitoring Children and Young People's Mental Wellbeing: A toolkit for schools and colleges' (Public Health England and Evidence Based Practice Unit) for information on appropriate tools to measure impact of interventions.

Principle 6:

Working with Families

We are committed to working in partnership with parents and carers. We recognise the important role the family plays in influencing the emotional health and wellbeing of students in the school.

We also recognise that working in partnership may sometimes mean providing support and resources to those families that are struggling with meeting life's challenges.

These are some examples of how this looks in our school;

School

Parent drop in sessions three mornings a week

Parent Support Advisors and Inclusion worker

We run Solihull parent workshops on a weekly basis which are well attended and successful

A Parent/ Carer area on our website with useful online and local resources.

The 10-a-day choices for mental health parent workshops, provided in school by EH4MH.

Evidence shows that being part of a community and feeling a sense of belonging is good for our mental health. We have recently started an initiative in school where parents are operating a noticeboard in the school, this is coupled with our community room being opened once a week for parents to meet and chat with our Parent Support Advisor. Parents comments following the Solihull workshops:

"When I know my child needs a cuddle and he cannot communicate this, I ask him for a cuddle"

"To support children to learn, we need to try to understand how they are feeling."

"Children are like the sun and the moon, they shine when it's their time."

Community and National

We provide information to parents and help sign post them to appropriate support and advice through the information on our website which is regularly updated as well as offering advice sessions with our Parent Support Advisor.

We signpost to support from the Family Intervention (FIT team) for vulnerable families

We have links to the local church, through provision of collective worship and visits to the church

There are several online resources and information from national charities and organisations regarding mental health and well-being. Details are provided on the dedicated parent page of our school website.

Principle 7:

Staff Development, Health & Wellbeing

'Wellbeing in schools starts with the staff; they are the front line of this work...' (ncb Framework for promoting well-being and responding to mental health in schools).

At the Devon School we place the wellbeing and development of staff as a high priority, believing all school staff play a vital role in developing and supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of the students.

Principle 7 is split into two sections; the first is how staff are provided with the knowledge and understanding of students' wellbeing and the second looks at how the school supports the development of staff wellbeing.

These are examples of how it looks in our school;

Staff training

In the last year all staff have received training in mental health delivered by; Babcock Educational Psychology Team and Bis-net and the SENCo. This is greatly helping the school develop a much deeper understanding of mental health which is helping us break down stigma and bring about whole school culture change.

Staff wellbeing

We have a staff social events at the end of each term and make time for each other.

We are looking into Staff having access to the swimming pool to help them maintain their physical health.

We implement 'Time to Talk' for staff and students, which encourages the importance of being able to talk about what is going well and any struggles.

Using and modelling the 10 a day positive choices for mental health as a whole school approach (for staff and students).

Staff can access the Devon County Council Wellbeing and Counselling service.

Principle 8:

Targeted Support

The school recognises that many behavioural and emotional problems can be supported within the school, with advice from external professionals, and that some students may need more intensive support at times. The Devon School has a range of potential interventions to support individual's needs, as well as links with external agencies.

These are examples of how it looks within our school;

School

Our SENDCO team have recently introduced a system that has freed up some of their time to be available in class, to support students and staff better meet the needs of individual's emotional wellbeing. The initial feedback from staff is that this approach has been really helpful in identifying early signs of difficulties in students and being able to quickly identify specific interventions to support students in school.

An example of this is; students being identified as experiencing anxiety that is impacting on their learning, strategies being offered to the teaching staff and parents being offered the SENCo and Support worker.

To name all of our interventions would be a very long list, here are some examples that have been identified as really helpful by our student and parent voice;

Forest school.

Animal therapy/ time with school guinea pig/ hamster- potentially using a school therapy dog

School Parental Support Advisors.

Thrive approach across the school and targeted support for individuals, including a THRIVE room for children who need a space for calming down.

Lunch time mentoring / club for children having a difficult time.

Peer mentors for vulnerable children / students, overseen by staff.

Sensory equipment available to pupils who require it.

Sensory integration box in each classroom / sensory integration equipment available / sensory area in every classroom so that children can take themselves there during the lesson if needed, with a timer / different types of sensory area, e.g., 'caves,' across the school.

Take 5 – whole school resilience building programme using mindfulness, including universal & targeted needs (www.eachamazingbreath.org).

‘Just Breathe’ video for children to explain about relaxation, especially useful for primary age (from www.mindfulschools.org).

We have developed a therapeutic garden that was established in consultation with our school counsellor to provide a calming safe space for staff and students. We also have a school yurt which can be used for circle times and a calm space as well as forest schools.

Community

At the Devon School we work closely with our Community Colleagues in Health and Social Care.

Please look on our website for an extensive list of resources and initiatives we link with to offer targeted support, listed under ‘Who to talk to, if you’re worried’, below are some of those students and parents have really found helpful. We also work with local charity, Clarity, to signpost adults to high quality counselling services.

We have recently developed a partnership with Action for Children and Parent Support advisor who are co-delivering the Solihull parenting workshops programme. This has been offered to parents of children presenting with heightened levels of anxiety in school. We would like to develop this provision to support dads in the summer period.

Social, Emotional, Mental Health, Wellbeing and Behaviour Team (Previously the Behaviour Support Team) provide consultation and advice to all school staff around identified individual student’s needs.

Linking with EMTAS - Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Service.

Proud2Be - supporting LGBTpeople and their families, in South Devon and beyond, campaigning, delivering training and facilitating a youth project, a volunteer programme and groups and events throughout the year (www.proud2be.co.uk). A number of students have been actively involved with the charity.

Emotional Logic –free session from Babcock for primary and secondary schools, focusing on helping students manage feelings and move forward in their lives with strength and resilience (for more information on emotional logic as an approach visit www.emotionallogiccentre.org.uk).

There are many national resources and services outlined on our website

Principle 9:

Communication

In the Devon School we identify that clear and robust systems of communication both within the school and into the school community, are key components to providing a mentally healthy school.

These are examples of how it looks within our school;

School

In line with our school ethos, we are always thinking of diverse ways of promoting good communication, in enabling and encouraging students and staff to feel more comfortable to communicate feelings and seek help when they need it. We use a wide variety of approaches including; non-verbal systems such as cue cards, internet communication via emails our website and social media such as class dojo and the PTFA facebook page.

We communicate within the staff group through staff and departmental meetings and emails, including having mental health as a regular item at staff meetings so that staff are aware of what support is available within school. This includes refreshers of key themes / training topics.

At Key Stage 1 we use 'Worry Monsters' to help students feel more comfortable about communicating their thoughts and fears.

Staff have received training in communication by both Mental Health England, and EH4MH.

We inform all parents of the school's obligations and responsibilities to safeguard children during their information session when their children start at the school.

Staff are aware of school processes for flagging up which students are particularly vulnerable and ensuring the right support is given in school and sought outside of school where relevant.

Community

The school website has links of 'Who to talk to' for a range of different issues, with information relevant to students and parents.

We communicate to our parents through our website, class dojo, newsletters, emails, parent teacher evenings, information evenings & the school facebook page. We also have informal parent drop ins as well as appointment slots with the family support worker.

All staff have accessed EH4MH training, which encourages ways to talk about mental health and how young people are feeling, which can be used over the breadth of young people's experiences.

National

We use resources from national organisations visually in the school, via display boards, website and newsletters.

We promote 'Take 10 Together at School' – tips for staff on how to start the conversation, by Mental Health First Aid (www.mhfaengland.org/img/Take_10_Together_at_School).

We promote Childline – help line and online resources (www.childline.org.uk).

We promote the NSPCC campaign Pantasauras/ Let's Talk Pants (www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/underwear-rule/).

Heads Together - promoting the benefits for mental health of talking about difficult things (www.headstogether.org.uk).

Time to Change – movement to end mental health discrimination (www.time-to-change.org.uk).

Our head teacher is a member of CEOP, with a named teacher as internet safety lead.

The Devon School's Mental Health policy was guided by Public Health England's key documents:

"Transforming children and young people's mental health provision: a green paper" (2017)

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-provision-a-green-paper>

"Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school approach" (2015)

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414908/Final_EHWP_draft_20_03_15.pdf

"Future in Mind" (2015)

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/blog/martin-mcshane-14/>

In Addition the Policy has been informed by;

National Children's Bureau "A Whole School Framework for Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health. School Leaders Resource"

<https://www.ncb.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/attachment/NCB%20School%20Well%20Being%20Framework%20Leaders%20Resources%20FINAL.pdf>

Heads Together, Mentally Healthy Schools; A Whole-School Approach

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/>

IPPR The Progressive Policy Think Tank, Craig Thorley, 2016

<https://www.ippr.org/news-and-media/press-releases/further-proof-of-the-crisis-in-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health>

Actions

What needs to happen?	When?	Who?	Completed
Establish regular Termly Pastoral working group meeting	Termly	JW, LK, MN, KC, CD, AP, LC, SB	
Joint Project with Young Devon-Mental Health Ambassadors- Year 5	December 2018	JW	
Deliver Solihull Parenting Course x2 a year	Spring/Summer (COVID Permitting)	JW	
To ensure support with Mental Health for staff. To make workload a point of discussion in all decisions.	ongoing	LK, MN, JW	
Signposting on the website for parents	ongoing	MN, JW	
To ensure Key Adults are on the gate to meet and greet children in the mornings- time to talk before school starts.	ongoing	LK	
New Early Help Practitioner role in school	ongoing	JW	
Developing 'meditation and mindfulness sessions with Year 6 children	Feb 2021	OB, TD, JW	
Thrive Assessments in place and interventions for key children.	ongoing	JW	
Develop Relational Practice across the whole school.	Spring/Summer 2021	MN	
Regular Virtual parent drop ins	ongoing	MN	

Forest schools- All children to access in Y3.	ongoing	SB	
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