WALTHAMSTOW MONTESSORI SCHOOL (WMS)
MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

This policy has been adapted and personalised for Walthamstow Montessori School. It is based around the policy for promoting positive mental health in schools and DfE recommendations.

Here at WMS we recognise that in order to fulfil our Mission Statement and promote a positive ethos in school, all children need the foundations of positive mental health to be able to shine academically, personally and socially.

Mental Health is how we feel, how we think and how we behave. Mental Health Promotion for children and young people is everyone's business.

Lorna Mahoney, Principal, is the school's Mental Health Leader and has completed the Mental Health Leader qualification supported by other school staff in areas such as Grief and Bereavement counselling. The school has also applied to be a mentally healthy school as part of the Heads Together campaign.

It is about:
- Being able to form and maintain relationships with others
- Being adaptable to change and other people's expectations
- Being able to have fun
- Being open to learning
- Being able to develop a sense of right and wrong
- Being able to develop the resilience to manage ordinary setbacks

All children and young people need to:
- Be able to connect with others by participating in groups and teams
- Know they are capable and able to achieve
- Know that they count in their world and can contribute to their community
- Know they have courage and can manage risks appropriately.

Everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable. At times anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop good mental health. The mental health of children and young people, adults in school, parents and carers and the whole school community will impact on all areas of development, learning, achievement and

experiences. All children have the right to be educated in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody.

All adults have the right to work in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody. WMS recognises these needs and rights. We are committed to raising awareness, increasing understanding and ensuring that we can and do make a difference by providing an environment where all people feel safe, secure and able to achieve and experience success and wellbeing. A distinctive feature of our school is the positive, caring and supportive atmosphere we have created.

A consistent approach from our dedicated staff means that our school environment and school ethos all promote the mental health of the whole school community.

At WMS there is a mentally healthy environment where children:

- Have opportunities to participate in activities that encourage belonging (e.g. Circle Time, Drawing and Talking, Play/Art/Lego Therapy sessions)
- Have opportunities to participate in decision making (e.g. School Council, Head boy/girl, prefects, play leaders, pupil leadership team, E-safety team, buddying)
- Have opportunities to celebrate academic and non-academic achievements (e.g. VIP assembly, celebration assembly, extra curriculum awards and notifications)
- Have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed (e.g. Children leading their own learning, extra-curricular clubs, child led lunch time clubs, peer tutoring including cross phase tutoring.)
- Have opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others. (E.g. residential, school trips, first aiders and play leaders)
- Have opportunities to reflect (e.g. Circle Time, reflection corners/quiet areas in class, library time, emotional coaching and other sessions (1:1) if required
- Have access to appropriate support that meets their needs (e.g. Teacher and TA support in class, Inclusion Team, Inclusion Manager, SLT and external agencies where appropriate)
- Have a right to an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for
- Children are surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours and interactions at all times.

At WMS there is a mentally healthy environment where all staff:

- Have their individual needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way
- Have a range of systems in place to support mental well-being (e.g. performance management, briefings, training, and other services as required and identified)

- Have recognition of their work-life balance (job share/working hours)
- Feel valued and have opportunities in the decision-making processes (termly pupil progress meetings, phase planning, curriculum teams, change team and research teams)
- Success is recognised and celebrated
- Are provided with opportunities for CPD both personally and professionally
- Can access support and guidance at times of emotional need in both the short and long term

At WMS there is a mentally healthy environment where parents and carers:

- Are recognised for their significant contribution to children and young people's mental health
- Are welcomed, included and work in partnership with the school and agencies
- Are provided with opportunities to ask for help when needed and signposted to appropriate agencies for support (Inclusion manager, Inclusion team, Family Support Worker, Early Help/ CAF)
- Are clear about their role, expectations and responsibilities in working in partnership with the school (e.g. home school agreement shared annually, Parent/Carer Meetings, open door policy to discuss any concerns)
- Opinions are sought, valued and responded to
- Strengths and difficulties are recognised, acknowledged and challenged appropriately

Here at WMS we pride ourselves on the opportunities we provide to promote positive mental health for everybody, adults and children alike. Opportunities that arise from both within the curriculum and beyond, as part of our PSHE/SMSC and creative curriculum, our Class Circle-times, Pupil Leadership team, Prefects and School Council all support our drive to raise awareness of Social, Emotional and Mental well-being.

Our range of lunchtime and after school clubs, as well as our Behaviour and Antibullying policy all support and have a positive effect on the mental well-being of our children. The way our Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural (SMSC) Curriculum is delivered in school has a huge impact on positive mental health. The nurturing environment of our school, timetabled specialist support for children with additional needs, specialist Inclusion team, Nurture provision for our most vulnerable children in addition to other interventions in place as necessary, all contribute to mental wellbeing.

We place a high emphasis on the importance of physical activity and exercise in promoting mental health. Alongside a full and enriching PE curriculum we also promote

daily physical activity breaks and active playtimes. We have fitness themed days each week in each key stage; we have specialist sports coaches to support children and staff. Adult Play leaders are used to encourage team-games and healthy competitions at lunchtimes. We also have specialist lunchtime clubs for our most vulnerable children.

A variety of sports clubs run throughout the year to promote physical and mental wellbeing. Our Healthy Schools Commitment highlights our emphasis on teaching our pupils the importance of a healthy body and a healthy mind. This has a very positive impact on all our children and contributes to raising self-esteem, connecting and communicating with others.

The implementation of this policy for promoting mental health in schools:

- Underpins all policies and practices currently used in schools
- Strengthens and promotes resilience throughout the whole school community and empowers everyone to face life's challenges
- Raises awareness as to how the whole school community can look after their own mental health and that of others.
- Provides our children with the foundations for lifelong learning.

"The promotion of positive mental health for children and young people is everybody's business."

References:

• Mental Health Promotion Strategy for Children and Young People
• Bright futures: Promoting children and young people's mental health, Mental Health Foundation
• Article 28, 29, 30, 31 United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child
• Work/Life Balance National Agreement

Other useful policies linked to this one:

Behaviour Policy
Equality Policy
Anti-Bullying Policy
SEND Policy

This Policy was adopted on: 1st January 2018

Date Last Reviewed: 4th September 2026

Date to be Reviewed: 4th September 2027