

# The Mead Infant and Nursery School

## Wellbeing Policy



**Proud to Belong**

This Policy was adopted by The Governing Body in the Summer Term 2019 and is reviewed annually.

**Reviewed by:** The Headteacher and the Full Governing Body

**Next Review:** Summer Term 2021

## **Wellbeing**

### **The Mead Infant and Nursery School Vision for Mental Health and Wellbeing:**

*The Mead family is committed to nurturing the well-being and positive mental health of all its members.*

*Together, members support each other to be happy, resilient, resourceful and respectful so that everyone can flourish in every aspect of learning and life.*

### **Rationale**

As the Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families states 'talking about mental health and wellbeing doesn't have to be difficult. Mental health is something we all have.'

Key evidence in Public Health England's paper 'The link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment' highlights the value for schools of promoting wellbeing using a whole school approach because 'pupils with better health and wellbeing are likely to achieve better academically.'

Recent research has also shown the huge impact problems with mental health can have on quality of life, relationships and academic progress. Consequently, the DfE has stated that 'in order to help children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy'.

The Mead Infant and Nursery School also recognises that staff are the school's most important resource and are valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a caring, purposeful learning community. The school recognises that there is a direct correlation between the wellbeing of staff and the wellbeing of pupils, and that the culture and ethos of a school are determined by the extent to which staff work towards a shared vision.

This is why the school has the following aims:

#### **AIMS - for whole school community**

- to understand everyone has mental health, why it is important to their wellbeing and learning and that it is important to promote and nurture positive mental health,
- to talk about mental health and wellbeing as part of everyday school life safely, with people who are trusted, so preventing stigma around mental health issues,
- to feel valued and safe so that everyone can minimise stress and build resilience, towards everyday problems by working together,
- Provide appropriate support when problems become bigger,

leading to the following **outcomes**:

**Children will:**

- learn well as their emotional and mental health needs are met
- have a well-developed self-esteem so they can participate fully in school life
- demonstrate empathy towards others as part of a caring ethos
- develop resilience so they can face challenges and resolve issues
- know where to get help and support they need if they are unhappy or concerned

**Staff will:**

- have wellbeing needs met so they are highly motivated to maintain and extend the high standards of learning at the school
- manage a healthy work/life balance
- be confident to identify emotional needs and have a wide knowledge of strategies to implement
- be confident to raise concerns about others' wellbeing and understand where to seek further advice
- Know where to get the help and support they need if they are unhappy or concerned

**School will:**

- have robust leadership and management processes embedded so that high standards of well-being are assured
- have strong links with parents and carers,
- have strong links other local schools and outside agencies

**Parents will:**

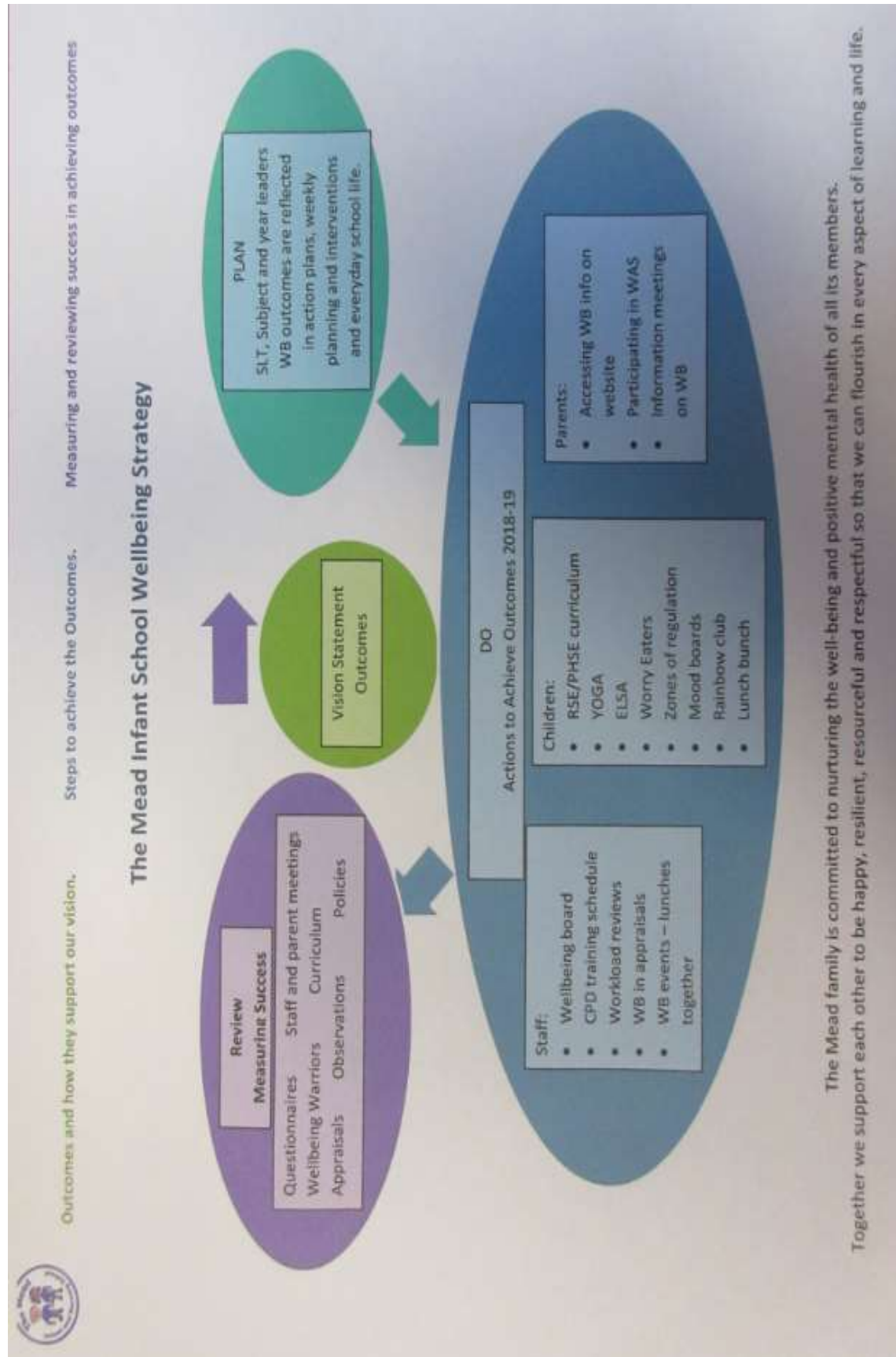
- understand the importance of well-being for their children's development
- know how to promote their children's well-being
- know where to get advice and support both from school and from other agencies

**Strategy (see model next page)**

The Outcomes set out above are at the centre of The Mead Infant and Nursery School's strategy to promote wellbeing and positive mental health.

The process begins with questions to stakeholders in appraisals and questionnaires which will be reviewed annually by the Wellbeing Warrior team and SLT. Results are used to inform the school development plan, subject action plans (notably RSE, PSHE, SEN) and training needs.

The model highlights broad based interventions for each group of stakeholders.



## **Pupil wellbeing**

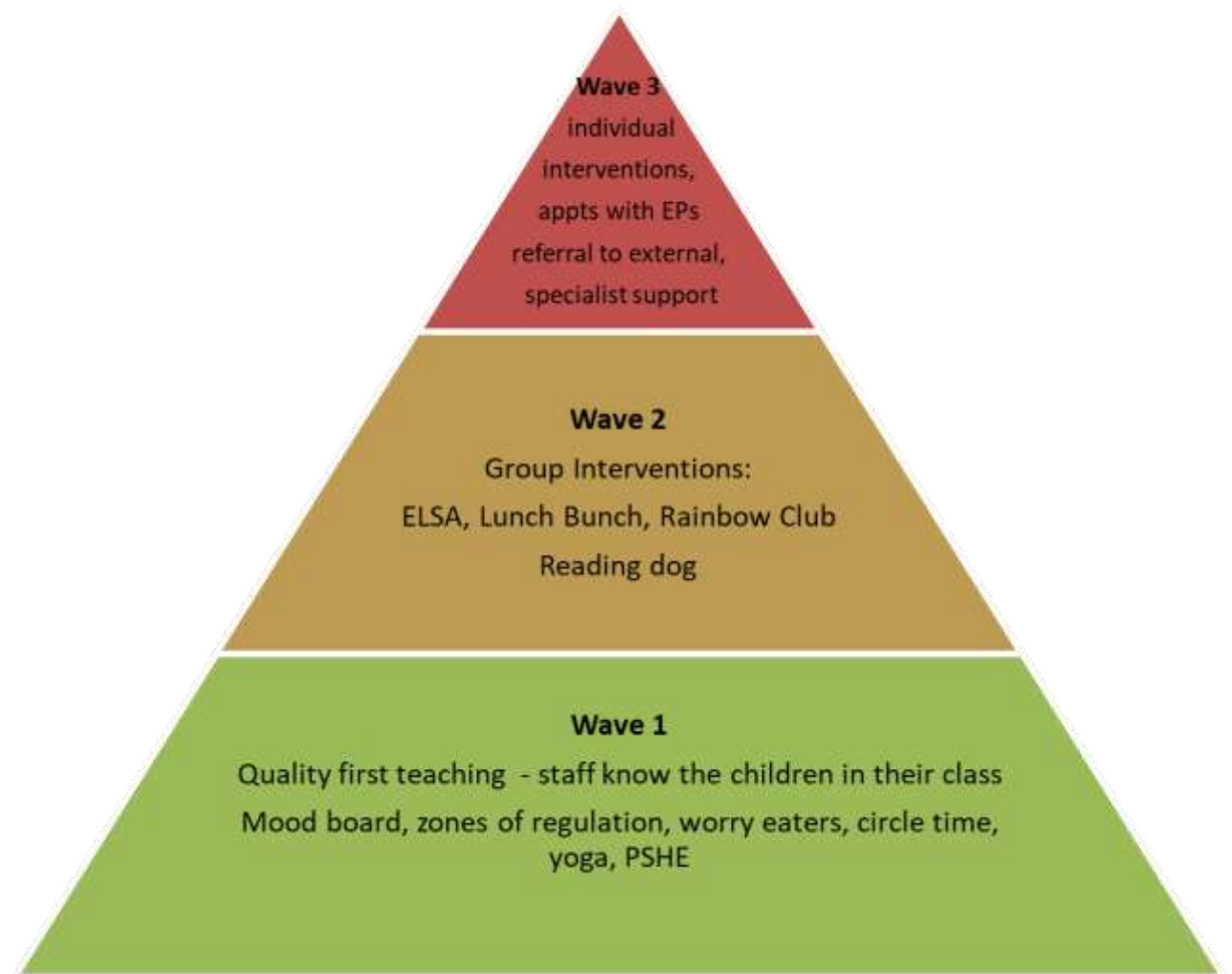
Developing every child's skills to manage their own and others' wellbeing is at the core of the school's ethos and is embedded in daily classroom practice and in PSHE/RSE curricula. – Wave 1.

Promoting positive mental health and being able to identify social /emotional needs is the responsibility of all staff. Class teachers and Teaching Assistants know their children well and are aware of warning signs. If staff are concerned, they refer the child to the SEND leader who will determine whether Wave 2 interventions would be helpful.

For children who require more support than group interventions Wave 3 interventions are put in place. In such cases, and in co-operation with parents, the SENCO may approach outside agencies such as educational psychology, behavioural support, family centres and CAMHS for further advice if needed.

In addition to the SENCO the school has a trained ELSA and two TAs trained in talking and drawing therapy.

### **Outline of specific interventions.**



## Wave 1

- **Yoga**

Once a week, children and the staff accompanying them have the opportunity to join a specialist teacher, Rowan Perkin, in a yoga and relaxation session. The techniques taught are then used on a daily basis, for example to help children transition from play into lessons.

- **Worry Eaters**

There are colourful 'worry eaters' in every classroom. At any time of the day, children can write down their worries on a piece of paper, pop it in the worry eater and close its mouth to say goodbye to their worry. A member of staff will follow up with the child to make sure their worry is addressed if a name is attributed to it.

- **Zones of Regulation Mood Board**

As part of the PSHCE curriculum children are encouraged to use a 'Zones of Regulation' mood board. Children can move their names onto the colours green, blue, yellow or red to indicate how they are feeling during the day. An adult will then speak to the child about why they are feeling a certain way and which strategies they could use to feel better

- **What Would Roo Do?**

At The Mead, the Winnie the Pooh character 'Roo' is used to help children to sort out worries or upsets with their friends. Staff talk about the different problems that can occur in the playground and get children to ask themselves, 'What Would Roo do?' Posters throughout the school give them solutions to use in different situations.

- **Wellbeing Book Corners**

Each class in the school has a variety of 'wellbeing' books which will help children to recognise the feelings they might be experiencing at different times.

- **PSHCE**

As part of the curriculum children learn about healthy relationships and ways to make others feel valued. They also learn how we are all connected to others in the school, community and country (as part of British Values).

## Wave 2

If a teacher or parent is concerned that a child needs more intervention to support their wellbeing and social /emotional health they make a referral to the SENCO. The following interventions are available:

- **Rainbow Club**

This is a group where children can work on a variety of skills that will help them to feel more confident, develop positive friendships and cope in social situations.

The group meets twice a week during the school day. After the session the children all have lunch together in the school hall

- **The Lunch Bunch**

This is a lunchtime club for children who may need a break from running around, playing and noise in the playground. Children are able to join designated teachers for some quiet activities inside.

- **Reading Dog**

For children who may benefit from a confidence boost when reading, the school has a weekly visit from a trained therapy dog who listens to them read.

### **Wave 3**

For children who require more support than group interventions the following are available in school.

- **ELSA**

The Mead has a designated Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA), who is a member of staff trained to support children in the development and management of their emotional feelings. Her aim is to remove any barriers to learning and to ensure children are happy in school and at home. The ELSA can also help children to talk through their emotions in situations such as bereavement and divorce

- **Zones of Regulation Tool Kit**

For some children, personalised 'Zones of Regulation' toolkits can help them to manage their emotions, giving them strategies to help them to move back into the 'green zone' where they are happy and ready to learn.

These strategies can help them manage their emotions at home and at play too.

- **Drawing and Talking**

Drawing enables a child to express, in a visual form, worries and concerns from deep in the mind that they may not be able to talk about. Drawings enable symbolic and safe expression of deep worries and feelings that may seem dangerous or scary to a child. Over time, with an empathic adult giving a child attention and talking with them in a gentle, thoughtful and supportive way, a child can create a story through pictures that sorts things out - a symbolic resolution. Drawing and Talking is a weekly session with a trained member of staff. This therapy is not about analysing the pictures but is about supporting the child in identifying their concerns and anxieties and being able to move on.

### **Staff wellbeing:**

The school embraces practices that support staff health and wellbeing, to minimise the harmful effects of stress and ensure that there is cohesion in working towards health and wellbeing for all staff. This section of the policy provides an overview of the basis on which everyone can contribute, and expect to be treated.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

The senior leadership team (SLT), governing body and school staff will work towards an ethos where health and wellbeing are held central to school practice.

### **The governing body is responsible for:**

- fulfilling its duty of care as an employer
- monitoring the workload of the head teacher
- receiving any concerns from members of staff
- ensuring that the resources are in place to keep staff workload at healthy levels
- considering how its own members are treated and valued
- ensuring that demands are not placed on individual members of staff that interfere unfairly with their work-life balance
- operating a sensitive performance management policy
- ensuring that other school policies and procedures take account of staff wellbeing
- overseeing that change management is operated in a fair and reasonable way.

### **The head teacher is responsible for:**

- providing personal and professional development such as team building, management of change, stress management, assertiveness, communication
- providing a non-judgemental and confidential support system such as mentoring for staff
- monitoring the workload of members of staff and being alert to signs of stress
- listening to the views of members of staff and providing a range of strategies for involving staff in school decision making processes
- ensuring that the efforts and successes of staff are acknowledged and celebrated
- prioritising reforms and innovations
- ensuring that staff are equipped with the right training to do the job confidently
- ensuring that staff feel valued and that time is set aside for them
- planning the year's timetable considerably bearing in mind staff commitments
- providing a set budget for staff facilities, environment and welfare
- making special arrangements, where possible, to enable staff to combine the demands of family life and work life
- ensuring that there are effective methods of communication
- ensuring support services are made available or signposted on behalf of members of staff where additional specialist support is needed
- maintaining contact with staff during long absences
- conducting risk assessments for work-related stress
- relevant time protected for staff such as PPA, staff meeting time for reports etc.



The head teacher implements these responsibilities with the support of appropriate staff such as the deputy head teacher and senior leaders, who all strive to be positive role models through their own practice.

**Members of staff are responsible for:**

- treating one another with empathy, respect and kindness
- taking care of their own health and safety at work and communicating with key staff where they need support
- being committed to the ethos of staff wellbeing and keeping in mind the workload and wellbeing of colleagues
- valuing all members of staff in the school and acknowledging the important role that everyone takes
- contributing to the ethos and social aspects of school life where possible to build morale and effective team spirit

**Examples of good practice may include:**

- providing lunch and refreshments in Inset training
- carrying out team-building exercises at the start of each year
- ensuring staff are aware of Surrey County Council benefits
- giving staff the option to plan their own social activities
- holding designated health and wellbeing days
- celebrating staff achievements
- providing pastoral services – drop-ins and confidential sessions
- making refreshments available to staff
- providing creative opportunities for building morale and promoting wellbeing (e.g. croissant mornings, cake/fruit days, shared lunches).

**Support in specific circumstances**

The school will provide support and discuss options as appropriate to specific circumstances. In some cases, it may be necessary to seek external services but the school will continue to support even when external services are involved.

Staff are encouraged to arrange routine medical appointments outside of school hours. Where this is not possible, support will be given on an individual basis.

Where possible, staff are supported with their work-life balance and wellbeing outside the school. This could be through providing staff with paid leave for special events and celebrations, or time off to deal with specific family circumstances or crisis.

## **Parent/Carer Wellbeing**

The school understands how parent wellbeing and mental health can affect children and staff are there to support them. If parents or carers have a concern relating to their own or their child's wellbeing, they are encouraged to approach their child's teacher or, if they feel more comfortable, the Deputy Head or Head teacher.

Parents are supported in the following ways:

- talking about their child's wellbeing or mental health issues with Class teachers as soon as they arise
- Wellbeing section of website, including signposting to agencies offering mental health support
- Parent representation on Change Team and Wellbeing Warriors
- Promoting parent support group for children with SEN
- Highlighting the importance of wellbeing at curriculum meetings
- Providing wellbeing tips in weekly 'Coming up next week' letters
- Inviting parents to workshops on specific topics around mental health
- Discussing wellbeing issues at individual progress meetings

This policy should be read in conjunction with behaviour, anti-bullying, SEN, safeguarding and PHSE Policies.

### **Addendum to Well-being Policy 2020-21**

**NB: The vision, aims and outcomes of the school regarding wellbeing remain the same.**

The school Health and Safety policy adheres to government guidance in order to reduce risks of COVID 19 to all members of the school community.

Maintaining and developing wellbeing is an essential part of the Recovery Curriculum (introduced in September 2020). However, certain actions/interventions from the wellbeing strategy are not currently in practice because of restrictions from Covid 19 policies. Primarily these are actions that would involve mixing bubbles or having visitors to the school.

Below is a brief summary of the impact of these restrictions:

#### **Children's Wellbeing**

##### **Wave 1 interventions**

Much of Wave 1 interventions are taking place in each class and are playing a vital role in the recovery curriculum.

##### **Wave 2 Interventions**

Rainbow club and Lunch Bunch interventions are cancelled because they involve mixing bubbles.

ELSA continues to run.

##### **Wave 3 interventions**

These now generally take place via remote unless a socially distanced meeting is deemed essential.

#### **Staff Well-being**

- Discussion around personal Wellbeing remains a key part of appraisal process
- SLT remain aware of the need to monitor workload and reduce where possible
- Team-building activities are very constrained as are social events
- Staff meetings take place on Teams when there is lockdown
- Staff are encouraged to work at home after school if it is helpful to them.
- Training around wellbeing themes are also via remote

**Please refer to : Proud to Belong Recovery Curriculum  
Health and Safety Policy Addendum**