Much Birch C of E Primary School
Mental Health Policy



'We will flourish and reach our God given potential'

I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit. **John 15:5**

All members of our whole school community are able to realise their God-given potential, enabling them to become equal, caring and active citizens whilst upholding true Christian values. We treat others, as we would like to be treated, with dignity and respect. Everyone is encouraged to flourish with hope and high aspirations

Updated 3 years

Review date: September 2028

Head teacher Mrs B Davies

Chair of Governors Rev. Mark

Mission Statement and Values
Much Birch School aims to provide every child with the opportunity to develop their full potential through an inspiring and creative curriculum which will develop and create a life-long love for learning in an inclusive, supportive Christian community. At Much Birch we nurture the whole child, and each child is valued and able to thrive.

Much Birch CE Primary School recognises that all children and young people need the foundation of positive mental health to benefit fully from all of the opportunities available to them.

Everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable. At times, anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop good mental health.

- 1 in 10 children and young people aged 1 – 15 years have a clinically recognisable mental disorder in any one year

- 1 in 4 adults will experience mental health difficulties; at least half of these difficulties can be traced back to childhood

The mental health of children and young people, adults in schools, parents and carers and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of development, learning, achievement and experiences.

All children and young people 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.

We recognise these needs and rights. We are committed to raising awareness, increasing understanding and ensuring that all schools can and do make a difference by providing a place where all children and young people feel safe, secure and able to achieve and experience success and well-being.

We offer a learning environment that promotes and enhances positive mental health. A consistent approach means that the school environment and school ethos all promote the mental health of the whole school community.
Healthy relationships underpin positive mental health and have a significant impact.

Aims
The implementation of this policy for promoting positive mental health at Much Birch aims to:

- Give a cohesive and co-ordinated approach to mental health
- Underpins all policies and practices currently used in school
- Raise awareness as to how the whole school community can look after their own mental health and that of others
- De-stigmatise mental health

- Support the whole school community and provide opportunities that enable everyone to reach their potential
- Strengthen relationships and provide opportunities for different ways of working
- Provide foundations for life-long learning
- Promote and strengthen resilience throughout the whole school community and empower everyone to face life's challenges

Mentally Healthy Environment at Much Birch

Our mentally healthy environment has:

- A clear and agreed ethos and culture that accords value and respect to all
- A commitment to being responsive to children and young people's needs
- Clearly defined mental health/well-being links in school policies
- Clear guidelines for internal and external referrals
- Strong links with external agencies to provide access to support and information
- The expectation that there is support and involvement and an ethos that 'mental health is everyone's business'

Children and young people:

- Have opportunities to participate in activities that encourage belonging
- Have opportunities to participate in decision making
- Have opportunities to celebrate academic and non-academic achievements
- Have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed
- Have opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Have opportunities to reflect
- Have access to appropriate support that meets their needs
- Have a right to be in an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for
- Are surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours, interactions and ways of relating at all times

Staff:

- Have their individual needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way
- Have a range of strategies that support their mental health, e.g. a named person to speak to, signposting
- Have recognition of their work-life balance
- Have the mental health and well-being of the staff reviewed regularly
- Feel valued and have opportunities to contribute to decision making processes
- Celebrate and recognise success
- Are able to carry out roles and responsibilities effectively
- Are provided with reasonable opportunities for CPD both personally and professionally
- Have their unique talents and skills recognised and opportunities are provided for development
- Have time to reflect
- Can access proactive strategies and systems to support them at times of emotional needs in both the short term and the long term

Parents/carers:

- Are recognised for their significant contribution to children and young people's mental health
- Are welcomed, included and work in partnership with schools and agencies
- Are provided with opportunities where they can ask for help when needed
- Are signposted to appropriate agencies for support
- Are clear about their roles and expectations of their responsibilities in working in partnership with schools
- Opinions are sought and valued and responded to
- Strengths and difficulties are recognised, acknowledged and challenged appropriately
- A mentally healthy environment is a place where the whole school community:

Whole school community:

- Is involved in promoting positive mental health
- Is valued for the role it plays in promoting positive mental health
- Contributes towards the ethos of the school

Our healthy learning environment provides opportunities that promote positive mental health, through the standard curriculum and extended provision, eg Circle Time, RSE sessions, play, nurture groups, differentiated learning activities, individual timetables, parents/carers groups, challenging stereotypes, etc.

Measuring Impact

This policy offers opportunities to measure the impact in a variety of ways:

- School policies
- The school's ethos
- Child/Staff/Volunteer well being
- Staff/Governor/class and school council meetings
- Feedback from the whole school community via questionnaires and verbally, formally and informally
- The number of external referrals, Health Service, Social Care
- Training and development internally, for example 'Safeguarding, Mental Health and Wellbeing' inset
- Hello yellow day for Young Minds UK
- Induction and professional development of Staff and Volunteers

This policy promotes positive mental health. It is a working document and has been developed in consultation with the whole school community.

This policy will be reviewed every three years.