

Red Oaks' Strategic Plan for Pupils' Social, Emotional and Mental Health in response to Covid-19 pandemic (2020-21)

"The common thread that runs through the current lived experiences of our children, is loss. From loss emanates three significant dynamics that will impact majorly on the mental health of our children. Anxiety, trauma and bereavement are powerful forces. For them all to appear at once in an untimely and unplanned fashion is significant for the developing child. Our children are vulnerable at this time, and their mental-health fragile. And on top of that, they are witnessing a sea of adult anxiety, which they unwittingly are absorbing." (Carpenter and Carpenter, 2020).

Universal School Provision:

Promotion of Mental health and Well-being integrated into the school day: Virtual transition resources available for all pupils eg photo transition book and Meet your Teacher videos plus Social Stories, Covid-19 pamphlets, risk assessments on website. Calming music, mindfulness activities and breathing techniques in each class on at least a daily basis. Jigsaw display on class doors celebrating new skills learned and personal qualities developed during lockdown. Adults model emotional regulation and use emotional coaching language/strategies. Regular brain breaks and shorter lessons. Small targets/goals. Weekly emotional literacy support for FS2 pupils delivered by an ELSA during PPA. Whole School Happiness Project - September onwards. Co-construct and review daily/weekly "Bubble/class" rules/charter inc "What to do if I'm feeling worried." Drop-in Box in each class/bubble - "I wish my teacher knew..." and Grief Jar. Regular check-ins - verbal and non-verbal using class emotional register. Growth mindset language..."not at the moment/not yet/one day in the future," Adults model optimism.

"Provision of information or signposting to online advice or external support organisations: Mental Health section on the website regularly updated, with newsletters, links to advice/support agencies. A Contact Us email link to the Pastoral Manager for signposting support with a response time of 72 hours plus information on Counselling support for Parents **Activities to reduce Mental Health stigma:** Whole school World Mental Health Day October 2020 **An ethos and environment that promotes mutual care and concern including a respect for diversity:** Weekly virtual Values assemblies, sharing "Bubble/Class" activities, virtual celebration assemblies inc local heroes and "What have we done/learned this week to support our well-being...?" **Peer mentoring/support:** Introduce and train a pilot group of Y6 pupils (Trailblazer T5/T6) **Mental Health in the Curriculum:** Deliver and monitor Pause for Thoughts in every PSHE lesson. Thread Anna Freud Strategies for Wellbeing through the KS2 curriculum.

Term 2 review: The transition into school was very smooth largely due to all the virtual resources and staff reaching out and planning for vulnerable pupils. The whole school happiness project has yet to start. The Pastoral Manager is attending a webinar on staff wellbeing by Dr Pooky Knightsmith in Jan 2021. World Mental Health day was recognised with mindfulness activities in class. Helping Hands will promote sharing well-being activities/strategies in virtual assemblies as part of the Children's SIP.

Engagement of Parents/Carers in promoting positive mental health and wellbeing among pupils:

Sharing information about Mental Health Plan and Provision: Strategic plan published on website and reviewed three times annually. **Provision of written information and advice about supporting pupils' mental health:** Regular attachments/information in newsletters. **Face to Face sessions for parents/carers about children's mental health:** Trailblazer Early Mental Health Practitioner to provide sessions for parents: "How parental anxiety effects children" and "How to support your child face their fears." **Interventions for pupils that include parents/carers:** Pastoral Manager and ELSA to deliver Family Jigsaw programme. **Term 2 review:** written information has been published on newsletters/website. No face to face training with parents from the Trailblazer service has been held due to Covid as with the Family Jigsaw programme.

Identifying Mental Health Needs:

Universal screening for all pupils to identify those in need: Questionnaire (pandemic specific) developed for screening pupils via Google Forms in July and September. Analysis at cohort and individual level. Outcomes to inform targeted support for individual pupils. A triage approach involving practitioners will be introduced to prioritise and ensure appropriate, effective and timely support.

Term 2 review: Screening has been undertaken and analysed for pupils in Y1-6. The first triage meeting was held 19.10.2020. Pupils in the more "sad, lonely, angry and left out" categories were prioritised for immediate follow up and intervention. Referrals were made into TaMHs and Trailblazer as appropriate and other

pupils were identified for ELSA or Pastoral Manger interventions. The end of T2 Triage meeting was held 14.12.2020 to again refer new cases, discuss, and close cases. This is proving to be a highly successful process.

Targeted support For Individual Pupils:

Provision from September: ELSA 2.5 days per week, TaMHS 1 day per week, Pastoral Manger 4 days per week, Trailblazer Early Mental Health Practitioner 1 day per week. **Activities and approaches:** Following triage, pupils will receive one of the following: counselling 1:1 inc Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, skills sessions (coping, problem solving, mindfulness), themed support ie anxiety, anger management, nurture. There will be on-going support programmes for specific individuals working with external therapists. Specific personalised resources to support transition inc 1:1 Covid risk assessment and Stress Reduction Plans.

Term 2 review: In the past few weeks, ELSA support has been impacted due to significant staff absences related to Covid and the need to keep classes open in a safe and healthy manner. The ELSA is using a range of tools to support pupils including art therapy and in T3 she will run a friendship group for 5-6 pupils in Y4. TaMHS support has continued, 1 day per week. Due to Covid safety measures only 5 pupils can be seen in a day. Trailblazer support is not being provided in school but face to face sessions are being offered off site, as well as remote therapy. There is on-going support for children working with external therapists and for the few children that require one a Stress Reduction Plan is in place. The Pastoral Manger liaises with these professionals and supports these children weekly. A referral has also been made into the SEMH Outreach team.

Transition is a process - not a day, not a week but a period of change