

MENTAL HEALTH and WELL-BEING POLICY

Rationale:

The community of Upper Plenty Primary School acknowledge the importance that positive mental health and well-being contributes to good health and overall development.

UPPS is committed to:

- Ensuring the school environment is safe, inclusive and empowering for children, families, volunteers and staff
- Embedding social and emotional learning in the educational program
- Building a partnership between families, children and staff in mental health initiatives
- Utilising community partnerships, resources and services to support this policy

Definition:

Mental Health in early childhood can be understood as a young child's ability to:

- experience, regulate and express emotions
- form close and secure interpersonal relationships
- explore the environment and learn

all in the context of family, community and cultural expectations for young children.

Aims:

- To develop a community that:
 - values their individual mental health and well-being
 - is aware of ways to improve their overall health and well-being
 - are provided with the programs and support that will enable each individual to perform both mentally and physically at their very best.
- To provide a safe environment where the importance of mental health and physical well-being of staff, students and the wider community is acknowledged

Implementation:

- Staff, students and families will have to opportunity to be active participants in the development and implementation of this policy
- The school will provide a safe, inclusive and empowering social environment through the implementation of the school values program and inclusion of social and educational learning in the school curriculum.
- A range of outdoor and indoor spaces will be provided enabling access and active participation for every student to engage in physical, explorative and creative experiences
- The school will provide access to the community to facilities and resources where appropriate
- The school will promote a welcoming and inclusive environment that promotes a sense of belonging and connectedness for all students, families and staff members
- The school will provide opportunities for children to make choices, accept challenges, take considered risk, manage change and cope with frustrations and the unexpected
- Staff and families will be encouraged to access resources, tools and professional learning to enhance their knowledge and capacity to promote mental health and well-being
- The school will develop protocols for referral to local mental health services
- A Health & Well-Being Officer role will be filled each year with the purpose of supporting staff health (mental and physical) and well-being across the school.

- All staff will be provided with the opportunity to negotiate role descriptions and personal professional development plans that cater for their individual needs.
- Communication processes throughout the school will be reviewed regularly, with all staff consulted on decisions that affect their daily working lives.
- Staff will be encouraged to pursue employment opportunities such as professional development.
- Staff will be provided with an environment that encourages continuous reflection and support for innovative ideas for improvement.
- Staff will be encouraged to participate as role models reflecting the sound Healthy Living Policy.
- An active Occupational Health and Safety Officer will ensure that staff working conditions comply with acceptable standards, codes of conduct and practices.
- All staff will be provided with information regarding inoculations against influenza and hepatitis and any other viruses which the department recommends.
- A staff social committee will organise regular social events.
- Specialised ergonomic office furniture will be purchased if requested by any staff.
- Public recognition will be given to recognise the achievements and efforts of staff, students and the community
- The annual Staff Opinion Survey, Attitudes to School Survey and Parent Opinion Survey will be analysed by the Leadership Committee, Staff and School Council as appropriate with recommendations being made to the principal for consideration.

Evaluation:

- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school's three-year review cycle.

This policy was last ratified by School Council on....

December 2013