

Promoting Positive Mental Health at Spaghetti Bridge

At Spaghetti Bridge, we are aware that the world is becoming an ever-more complex and fragmented place and that this is having a significant impact on the mental health of children and young people. This means that children and young people today are finding it increasingly difficult to develop a sense of self that will allow them to “Become themselves and change the world”, which is at the core of our mission. We have therefore intentionally designed our Enterprise Learning Approach to have the experiences and guidance to develop this sense of self and of their place in the world.

We believe, following the work of [Frank Martella and Michael F. Steger \(2016\)](#), that one of the keys to developing positive mental health is having a sense of coherence, purpose and significance in one’s life. By “coherence”, we mean that we want our students to have lives that have a sense of comprehensibility and in which their experiences and beliefs fit together in a way that makes sense to them. By “purpose”, we mean that they are provided with the opportunity to develop a sense of direction, with aims, goals and dreams that are particular and meaningful to them. By “significance”, we want them to acquire a sense that their lives are intrinsically valuable, both to themselves and to others, and that they matter as important members of their community and wider society. This includes their knowing that they can make a difference in their world and have a positive impact on others.

As part of this process, children and young people need to develop a sense of “earned prestige” as articulated by [David Yeager \(2025\)](#). This means that students should be given the opportunity to feel a sense of social status that is derived from their making meaningful contributions, demonstrating confidence and skill, and earning respect from others who they respect in turn.

Alongside this, we believe that children and young people need to take responsible risks and experience disappointments while having a secure base of psychological and physical safety from which to learn from these experiences and try new approaches. This helps them to develop mental and emotional resilience and mitigates the anxiety that can arise from an ongoing fear of failure and of getting things wrong.

This then culminates in a sense of agency and autonomy for children and young people, which is a key component of positive mental health and resilience.

Finally, given this framework on which to map their meaningful achievements, successes and recovery from setbacks, children and young people will then develop

the sense of confidence and self-belief that will provide the foundation for future learning and growth.

This is why we have explicitly designed our Enterprise Learning approach to provide the experiences and relationships that will support the development of our students' sense of self and how this relates to their wider coherence, significance, and purpose within the modern world. As a result, they acquire the positive mental health that will help them to thrive in the world of today and in an even more uncertain future.

References

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