

Emotional Health and Wellbeing Policy



Reviewed: September 2020

Next Planned Review: Autumn 2023

At Old Park we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

In our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everyone's business and that we all have a role to play.

At our school we:

- Help children to understand their emotions and feelings better.
- Help children feel comfortable sharing their concerns or worries.
- Help children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- Promote self esteem and ensure children know that they count.
- Encourage children to be more confident and 'dare to be different'
- Help children to develop emotional resilience.
- Effective working with parents and carers.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including losses, bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder.

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

This policy should be read in conjunction with –

- SEND policy
- Behaviour and Anti-bullying policy
- PSHE and SMSC policies.
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Peer on Peer Policy

Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Mandie Haywood- Headteacher /Safeguarding
- Jackie Gray –Inclusion Manager
- Kelly Ryder –Deputy Inclusion manager and Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities
- Targeted use of SEAL resources.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes' and 'worry eaters'
- Managing emotions resources such as 'the incredible 5 point scale'
- ELSA support 1:1 ,groups/sharing resources
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- The Boxall Profile
- Emotional literacy scales
- Plan Do Review

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

School can referral to specialist services as needed.

School may collect evidence to present a child to the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Panel where a group of professionals can offer advice and strategies to the school to support the individual.

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

All staff will complete termly wellbeing trackers on their pupils aimed at identifying a range of possible difficulties including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Bereavement / Loss

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated child protection and safeguarding officer or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate. Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Managing disclosures

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on CPOMs electronic confidential file. This record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with key staff who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice of next steps.

Working with Families

In order to support their children we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
- Share information with parents to access further support. Ensure that all adults are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to families
- Share ideas about how adults can support positive mental health in their homes and with their children.
- Keep families informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Behaviour support
- Paediatricians
- Bee U Education Health and Wellbeing Service
- Counselling services
- Family support workers/ Social workers
- Strengthening Families workers
- Therapists

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep students safe.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in September 2023.(This policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate.)