



Dorothy Barley Infant School

Mental Health and Well-being Policy

This policy was written on:

This policy was ratified/reviewed by Governors on:

Date: November 2019

Date: November 2019

By: C.James

Policy will be reviewed on: November 2020

Frequency of review: annually

This policy has been written in line with the following guidance:

- *Unicef Article 3 – The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.*
- *Article 6 – Every child has the right to life*
- *Article 12 – Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.*
- *Article 19 – Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.*
- *Article 26 – Governments must provide extra money for the child of families in need.*
- *Article 33 - 36- Government must protect children from all others forms of bad treatment.*
- *Article 39 – Children neglected, abused, exploited, tortured or who are victims of war must receive special help to help them to recover their health, dignity and self-respect.*

Why mental health and wellbeing is important At Dorothy Barley Infant School.

We aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and will affect their learning and achievement. All children go through ups and downs during their time at school and some face significant life events.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy". Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community. Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

We aim to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- All children feel safe and valued.
- Children have a sense of belonging to our community.
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Bullying is not tolerated.

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

This policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health.
- How we seek to prevent mental health problems.
- How we identify and support children with mental health needs.
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent or address mental health problems
- Where parents, staff and children can get further advice and support.

Definition of mental health and wellbeing

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing "a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community".

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:

- feel confident in themselves.
- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.

- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- cope with the stresses of everyday life.
- manage times of stress and be able to deal with change so that they learn and achieve.

5. Links to other policies

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying, SEND and Equalities. Links with the School's Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

Whole school approach to promoting positive mental health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise. This encompasses the following aspects:

Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.

Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.

Helping children to be resilient learners.

Actively teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.

Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.

Effectively working with parents and carers.

Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issue and aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health.

Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, bullying, family breakdown, including experience of domestic abuse or being or having been a looked after child.

They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

Our Inclusion Lead and our PSHEC and safeguarding leads work with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

- Our Inclusion Lead also leads on mental health, provides advice and support to staff and organises training/updates.
- She is the first point of contact with mental health services, and makes individual referrals to them. We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the School environment, or with advice from external professionals.

Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to children with mental health needs and their families.

Sources of relevant support include:

- Our own Senior Leadership Team
- Our Safeguarding/Child Protection Leads
- Our Year group leads
- Our trained Nurture staff
- Our Senco
- Our Achievement for All Lead
- Our School Nurse
- Our Art Therapist
- CAMHS

Supporting children' positive mental health

We believe that our School has a key role in promoting children positive mental health and helping to prevent current and future mental health and wellbeing issues.

Our School has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

- Referral to our Art Therapist.
- Selection via the Boxall Profile for inclusion in our Nurture class □ Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health.
- Playground Buddies – supporting their peers.
- Transition programmes from year group to year group
- Transition Programme from year group to year group and Junior schools which includes all Year 2 children having transition lessons.

Class activities

- Star of the week assemblies where children can be praised for certain duties, tasks or kind things they have done and have them celebrated with the rest of the school
- Weekly circle times to help children learn personal, social and emotional, communication and problem solving skills.
- Displays and information around the School about positive mental health and where to go for help and support
- Staff mental health leaflets and a dedicated anonymous helpline provided by the school.
- Teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing Through PSHCE we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help children to be more resilient, understand about mental health and be less affected by the stigma of mental health problems.

EYFS & Key Stage 1 children learn:

- Who to go to if they are worried.
- To recognise, name and describe feelings including good and not so good feeling □ Simple strategies for managing feelings.
- How their behaviour affects other people.
- About empathy and understanding other people's feelings.
- To cooperate and problem solve.
- To motivate themselves and persevere.
- How to calm down.

- About change and loss and the associated feelings (including moving home, losing toys, pets or friends).
- About different types of teasing and bullying, that these are wrong and unacceptable.
- How to resist teasing or bullying, if they experience or witness it, whom to go to and how to get help.

Identifying, referring and supporting children with mental health needs Our approach:

- Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to.
- Ensure the welfare and safety of children are paramount.
- Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs.
- Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.
- Involve children in the care and support they have.
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated.

Early Identification

- Our identification system involves a range of processes.
- We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse.
- We do this in different ways including:
 - Analysing behaviour, exclusions, visits to the medical room/school nurse, attendance and sanctions.
 - Using Leuven scales to identify children in EYFS who need support.
 - Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons.
 - Regular Pupil Progress meetings that review learning but where staff can also raise mental health concerns.
- A parental information and health questionnaire on entry to the School.
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer.
- Home visits on entry to EYFS.
- Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff.
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff.

Signs to watch out for might include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits.
- Falling academic achievement.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE.
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development. If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the School's child protection procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency then the School's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

Disclosures by children and confidentiality

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to children who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of our children is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff make it clear to children that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health Lead or the Safeguarding Lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil. All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file on Safeguard.

When a mental wellbeing need is identified we aim to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

Working with specialist services

In some cases a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders. School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Mental Health Lead or the SENCO following the assessment process and in consultation with parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the family and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

SEND and mental health

Persistent mental health problems may lead to children having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age. In some cases the child may benefit from being identified as having a special educational need (SEN).

Involving parents and carers promoting mental health

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting children who have mental health needs. We ask parents to inform us of any mental health needs their child has and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child's mental health and wellbeing, based on a list of risk factors pertaining to the child or family.

To support parents and carers:

- We organise a range of workshops

Supporting parents and carers with children with mental health needs

We are aware that parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health problem and we will be sensitive and supportive

We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available. When a concern has been raised, the School will:

- Contact parents and carers and meet with them (In almost all cases, parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.)
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- Be available for follow up.
- Make a record of the meeting.
- Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child.
- Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions provided.
- Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and children may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern is the children, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

Supporting and training staff

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in children and know what to do and where to get help.

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing. We have reduced the number of meetings. We have carried out a review of marking.

Staff have access to EAP counselling service.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The mental health and wellbeing policy is on the school website and hard copies are available to parents and carers from the school office.

All mental health professionals are given a copy before they begin working with the school as well as external agencies involved in our mental health work.

The policy is reviewed every two years by the Mental Health Lead and involves staff with a responsibility for mental health, including specialist services supporting the school and governors.