

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Broomfield Primary School



Policy adopted: May 2023

Policy review date: May 2025

Signed _____ Headteacher

_____ Governor

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Policy Statement

Mental health is a state of well-being 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. (World Health Organisation).

At Broomfield, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all pupils, their families, members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows pupils' voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

Policy Aims

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors. It was developed through discussion with the PSHE Subject Lead responsible for the teaching of monitoring of Health Education, along with the SENDCO, staff, pupils, governors and with the support of the Headteacher.

Other policies linked to emotional wellbeing are:

Behaviour
Anti-Bullying
RSE (Relationships and Sex Education)
Child Protection
Equality
Safeguarding

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents
- Instill a culture of staff and pupil welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

Key staff members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

SENDCO: Katerina Chapman

ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant): Rosie Lawson

PSHE Subject Lead: Charlotte Parish

Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL): Alex Allison, Lorraine Jex, Katerina Chapman

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil, in the first instance they should speak to the SENDCo or the Mental Health Lead.

If there is a concern that the pupil is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, a Designated Safeguarding Lead should be informed and the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a medical emergency a first-aider is contacted and relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to EWMHS (Emotional and Wellbeing Mental Health Services) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the SENDCo or DSL.

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals.

This can include:

- Details of a pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency

The role of the school and specific staff

Teaching about Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

At Broomfield we use the Cambridgeshire Primary Personal Development Programme as the main platform for teaching about the characteristics of good physical health and mental wellbeing. The DfE guidance requires us to teach objectives under the following topics;

- Mental Wellbeing
- Internet Safety and Harms
- Physical Health and Fitness
- Healthy Eating
- Drug, Alcohol and Tobacco
- Health and Prevention
- Basic First Aid
- The Changing Adolescent Body (Puberty)

The emotional health and wellbeing curriculum will take into account the age, needs and

feelings of pupils but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We also make use of the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which aims to help rather than harm.

<https://pshe-association.org.uk/guidance/ks1-4/mental-health-guidance>

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the support and specialist services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Through our communication channels (newsletters, website, twitter), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure pupils and parents/carers understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why should they access it
- What is likely to happen next

Sources of Support at School and in the Local Community

We will identify and assess in line with the Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT), children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress or behavioural problems

We will discuss options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers and agree an Individual Care Plan if necessary. We will provide specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional and behavioural problems.

Emotional Literacy Support (ELSA) may be offered to children by our trained support assistant.

Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS), are a group of providers specialising in children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. These partners deliver accessible support to children, young people and their families, whilst working with professionals to reduce the range of mental health issues through prevention, intervention, training and participation.

<https://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/service/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs/>

Mental health information, advice and support for young people and their families can also be found on the Leicestershire County Council website.

<https://www.leicestershire.gov.uk/education-and-children/social-care-and-supporting-families/children-and-family-wellbeing-service/mental-health-and-wellbeing-support-for-children-and-families>

Warning Signs

Staff may 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 alert a designated safeguarding lead.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with the school nurse in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and they are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

Managing Disclosures

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgmental. It is vital that our actions do not harm the child further or prejudice further enquiries.

Staff at our school will:

- Listen to the child, if you are shocked by what is being said, try not to show it
- Accept what the child says
- Stay calm, the pace will be dictated by the child without them being pressed for detail by asking leading questions such as “what did s/he do next?”. The staff’s role is to listen – not to investigate.
- Use open ended questions such as “Is there anything else you want to tell me?” or “yes?” or “and”.
- Not criticise the perpetrator incase the child has a relationship with them
- Not compromise confidentiality but will reassure the child that they have done the right thing, explain who they will have to tell (The DSL) and why; and, depending on the child’s age, what the next stage will be. It is important that the member of staff avoids making promises they cannot keep

Initial response to a report from a child is incredibly important especially when disclosures relate to sexual violence or harassment. Our staff understand how difficult this may be for the child and may not always be verbally or directly.

All safeguarding concerns must be escalated and discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately who will follow the procedures as set out in the ‘Child Protection’ policy

Working with Parents/Carers

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, staff need to be sensitive in their approach.

Before disclosing to parents staff should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, other member of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child’s issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. Staff should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

Staff should always highlight further sources of information and give them further information to read as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news being shared. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

Staff should always provide a clear means of contacting school with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agreed are added to the pupil’s record and

an Individual Care Plan created if appropriate.

Supporting Parents

Parents are very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents staff will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, twitter, newsletters etc.)
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get help about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make this policy easily accessible to parents
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parent.

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 pupils safe.

The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

<https://www.minded.org.uk/>

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our appraisal management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, the school will host training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is May 2025.

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of the PSHE Subject Lead and/or Headteacher.