William Barnes Primary School

Mental Health & Well-Being Policy

Adopted Date:	21st November 2022
Signature of Headteacher:	**Karen Wrixon**
Signature of Governing Body:	**Chris Jones**
Next Review Date:	**November 2024**

1. **Why Mental Health and Well-Being is Important**

At William Barnes, we aim to promote positive mental health and well-being for our whole school community; pupils, staff, parents and carers, and recognise how important mental health and emotional well-being 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 can affect their learning and achievement. Persistent mental health problems may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice identifies Social, Emotional and Mental Health as one of the four areas of Special Educational Need.

All children go through ups and downs through their school career and some face significant life events. About 10% of children aged 5 to 16 have a diagnosable mental health need and these can have an enormous impact on their quality of life, relationships and academic achievement.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their pupils 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 pupils well-being and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that they are able to manage times of change and stress, be resilient, are supported to reach their potential and access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that pupils 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.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and be a school where
- all pupils are valued
- pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe

· pupils feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma

- positive mental health is promoted and valued
- bullying is not tolerated

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

2. Purpose of the Policy
This policy sets out

- how we promote positive mental health
- how we prevent mental health problems
- how we identify and support pupils with mental health needs
- how we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent mental health problems getting worse
- key information about some common mental health problems
- where parents, staff and pupils can get advice and support

3. Definition of Mental Health and Well-Being
We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing:

… 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.

Mental health and well-being 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
- learn and achieve

4. Links to other Policies
This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Inclusion, Looked After Children, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour and Discipline, Personal Social Health Education (PSHE), Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

Links with the Behaviour and Discipline Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need. We consider behaviour to be a message.

5. A Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health
We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils become more resilient, be happy and successful and prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses seven aspects:

1. creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands
2. helping pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to
3. helping pupils to be resilient learners
4. teaching pupils social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
5. early identification of pupils who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services
6. effectively working with parents and carers
7. supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health issues. We aim to be a 'talking school' with an 'Open Door Policy'.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

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 pupils 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 a physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They 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.

The school's Mental Health Leader works closely with the head teacher, SENDCO, ELSA's, STEP's leader and Designated Safeguarding Team. The mental Health Leader:
- leads on and works with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health
- provides advice and support to staff and organises training and updates
- keeps staff up-to-date with information about what support is available
- liaises with the PSHE Leader on teaching about mental health
- is the first point of contact and communicates with mental health services
- leads on and makes referrals to services

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 pupils with mental health needs and their families. Some examples of support includes:

- Safeguarding/Child Protection Team

- Support staff to manage mental health needs of pupils

· SENDCO who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including pupils whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision.

• School nurse

• CAMHS core meetings to support staff to manage mental health needs of pupils

7. Supporting Pupils' Positive Mental Health

We believe we have a key role in promoting pupils' positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches including;

- • Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health
- • Support for vulnerable children, for example, Speech and Language (SALT) support small group
- • Transition meetings with parent/carers, pupils and relevant staff
- • Yearly Transition Passports for vulnerable children
- • Transition Passports available for all staff to be aware of vulnerable children's needs
- • Key Adults might support secondary school visits with vulnerable pupils Class Activities
- • Worry boxes • Kindness/Compliment Boards
- • Daily Mindfulness activities in class
- • Classroom scripts and signposting Whole School
- • PSHE (JIGSAW) resources
- • Anna Freud Schools in Mind resources
- • JIGSAW Assembly themes
- • Using the Power of Reading to explore themes and learn about emotions, difference, loss, bullying, change and resilience
- • Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support both within the school and outside the school
- • Lunch Club/Nurture support
- • Sanctuary for those children who are finding the classroom overwhelming
- • Forest school sessions

Teaching about Mental Health and Emotional Well-being

• Through PSHE we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help pupils to be more resilient, understand about mental health and help reduce the stigma of mental health problems.

Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children learn to explore feelings through JIGSAW topics:
- • It's Good to be Me • New Beginnings • Say 'No' to Bullying • Changes • Going for Goals • Relationships
- • Daily group or whole class 'I Can Problem Solve' sessions

Our approach is to:
- • provide a safe environment to enable pupils to express themselves and be listened to
- • ensure the welfare and safety of pupils as paramount
- • identify appropriate support for pupils based on their needs

- involve parents and carers when their child needs support
- involve pupils in the care and support they have
- monitor, review and evaluate the support with pupils and keep parents and carers updated

8. 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:

- Identify individuals that might need support
- being an Attachment Aware School
- being a Growth Mindset school
- adopting the 'STEPS' approach to behaviour
- working with the School Office staff who are often the first point of contact with families seeking support
- induction meetings for pupils / families joining after the Reception year
- analysing behaviour, exclusions, visits to first aiders, attendance and incident Forms
- pupil surveys at the beginning of every school term
- staff report concerns about individual pupils to the SENCO and Designated Safeguarding Team
- worry boxes in each class for pupils to raise concerns which are checked by the class teacher
- opportunities in staff meetings for staff to raise concerns about individual children
- gathering information from a previous school at transfer or transition
- parental meetings
- enabling pupils to raise concerns to class teacher and support staff
- enabling parents and carers to raise concerns through the school class teacher or to any member of staff - we have an 'Open Door Policy'
- drop-ins with School Nurse
- check ins with mental health first aider, ELSA's
- JIGSAW Parenting Programme workshop

. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and talk to the Mental Health Lead/SENCO or Designated Safeguarding Team.

These signs might include:
- non-verbal behaviour
- isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits
- lowering academic achievement
- talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- an increase in lateness or absenteeism
- not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE
- drug or alcohol misuse
- physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- wearing long sleeves in hot weather

· repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Staff are aware that mental health needs such as anxiety might appear as noncompliant, 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. A risk assessment and plan will be made.

Verbal Disclosures by Pupils
We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgmental to pupils who verbally disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of pupils is paramount and staff listen rather than advise.

Non-Verbal Disclosures by Pupils
Staff also recognise persistent and unusual non-verbal disclosures in behaviours that may be an unmet need or message.

Confidentiality
All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps.

Assessment, Interventions and Support
All concerns are reported to the Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Team and recorded. We then implement our assessment system based on levels of need to ensure that pupils get the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

We recognise that just like physical health, mental health and emotional well-being can vary at any given time and is fluid and changes, there are no absolutes.

Need The level of need is based on discussions at the regular Inclusion meetings/panel with key members of staff	Intervention and Support – the kinds of intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents and pupils	Monitoring
Highest need	CAMHS-assessment, 1:1 or family support or treatment, consultation with school staff and other agencies 1:1 support Educational Psychologist involvement External agency support that provides 1:1 support and group work If the school, professionals and/or parents conclude that a statutory education, health and care assessment is	All pupils needing targeted individualised support will have an Individual Care Plan drawn up setting out – • The needs of the pupils • How the pupil will be supported • Actions to provide that support • Any special requirements

	required, we refer to the SEND policy and SEN School Information Report.	Pupils and parents/carers will be involved in the plan. The plan and interventions are
Some need	Access to in school Nurture Lunch Club, ELSA'S referral, mental health check ins with mental health first aider.	monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess the impact e.g. through a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire Multi-agency meetings and regular reviews and feedback with parents/carers Early Help Referral and Children's Services if appropriate Discussion, advice and support in Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) core hours for key staff An electronic log is kept and there are monthly safeguarding team meetings
Low need	General support e.g. Mental Health first aider check in, class teacher/TA	

9. **Working with Specialist Services to get swift access to the right Specialist Support and Treatment**

In some case a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, school refusal and other complex needs.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Mental health Lead/SENCO/Head teacher following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

Specialist Service
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
School Nurse
Child Psychologist Services
Early Help Referral
Dorset Mind
Family Support worker

10. **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 their children with mental health needs.

To support parents and carers:
• we provide information and signposting to organisations on our websites on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.
• we run a JIGSAW Parenting programme.
• have an Open Door Policy.
• supporting parents and carers with children with mental health needs through sensitive and supportive regular meetings and signposting.

When a concern has been raised the school will:
• contact parents and carers and meet with them
• in most case parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as child protection issues.
• offer information to take away and places to seek further information
• be available for follow up calls
• make a record of the meeting
• agree an Action Plan
• 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

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger.

11. Involving Pupils
• we seek pupils' views and feedback about our approach and whole school mental health activities through Pupil Voice, surveys, class questions and suggestion boxes
• Year 6 anti-bullying groups to be set up.

12. 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 pupils and know what to do and where to get help.

Those staff with a specific responsibility have more specialised training and where possible access to supervision from mental health professionals.
Staff training to raise awareness of Mental Health and emotional well-being topics have been accessed through 'Jigsaw' and 'Attachment and Emotional Coaching Training'.
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. Staff have access to Dorset support service.

13. Monitoring and Evaluation

This policy was made in collaboration with the Senior Leadership Team and the Governors. Its effectiveness will be monitored by the SLT and Mental Health Leader. This policy will be reviewed every two years or sooner if deemed necessary.