

BOURN CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY ACADEMY

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY



Designated Safeguarding Lead: Laura Latham (Head Teacher)
Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead: Judith Balls
Lead First Aiders: Jo Ford, Karen Cox
SENDCo: Karen Falkner

**Source: Church of England
HR/Admin & Communications
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1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 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 Organization)
- 1.2 At Bourn Primary Academy our Christian vision shapes all we do, with our values of hope, courage, justice, forgiveness and friendship affecting how we relate and interact with others and how we view ourselves. Our aim to have life in all its fullness recognises that this is a gift we receive, rather than something to energetically strive after.
- 1.3 In addition, the School aims to promote positive mental health for every member of our Staff and pupil body. The School pursues this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.
- 1.4 In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, the School aims to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures a safe and stable environment can be promoted for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This document describes the School's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.
- 2.2 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Supporting Children with Medical Needs policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.
- 2.3 This 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 poor mental health and wellbeing;
- provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues;
- provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers.

3. Lead Members of Staff

- 3.1 Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:
- Designated Safeguarding Lead;
 - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead;
 - Lead First Aiders;
- 3.2 Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to Designated Safeguarding Lead, who is the Head Teacher. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed.
- 3.3 If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.
- 3.4 Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the SENDCo. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided on their website:
<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-camhs/>

4. Individual Care Plans

- 4.1 It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:
- details of a pupil's condition;
 - special requirements and precautions;
 - medication and any side effects;
 - what to do, and whom to contact in an emergency;
 - the role the school can play.
- 4.2 See the School's policy on Supporting Children with Medical Needs for more information on individual care plans.

5. Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

- 5.1 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 PSHE curriculum.
- 5.2 The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort being taught, 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.
- 5.3 The School follows the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that mental health and emotional wellbeing issues are taught in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

6. Signposting

- 6.1 Accessible sources of support are displayed in communal areas, and sources of support are regularly highlighted to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever a source of support is highlighted, staff will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:
- what help is available;
 - who it is aimed at;
 - how to access it;
 - why to access it;
 - what is likely to happen next.
- 6.2 Further sources of support are available on our website.

7. Warning Signs

- 7.1 School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil 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 to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, who is the Head Teacher.
- 7.2 Possible warning signs 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 P.E. 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.

8. Managing Disclosures

- 8.1 A pupil 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.
- 8.2 If a pupil 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.
- 8.3 Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'
- 8.4 All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the pupil's confidential file. This written record will include:
- date;
 - the name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made;
 - main points from the conversation;
 - agreed next steps.
- 8.5 This information should be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

9. Confidentiality

- 9.1 The School wants to be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary to pass concerns about a pupil on, then this should be discussed with the pupil, explaining:
- who the School will talk to;
 - what is going to be said;
 - why they need to be told.
- 9.2 The School should never share information about a pupil without first telling them. Ideally, the child's consent would be received, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and/or a parent, particularly if a pupil is in danger of harm.
- 9.3 It is always important to inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead of disclosures. This helps to safeguard the member of staff's own emotional wellbeing as they are no longer solely responsible for the pupil. It ensures continuity of care in the member of staff's absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. This should be explained to the pupil. The discussion can include asking them who would be the most appropriate and helpful person to share this information with.

- 9.4 Parents should be informed if there are concerns about the child's mental health and wellbeing, and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the School contacts parents. Pupils should always be given the option of the School informing parents for them, or with them.
- 9.5 If a child gives the School reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should be informed, unless there is an immediate risk to the child in which case procedures in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy should be followed.

10. Working with Parents/Carers

- 10.1 Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, the School will be sensitive in its approach. Before disclosing to parents/carers, the following questions should be considered (on a case-by-case basis).
- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
 - Where should the meeting happen? At School, at home or somewhere neutral?
 - Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, other members of staff.
 - What are the aims of the meeting?
- 10.2 It can be shocking and upsetting for parents/carers to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. The member of Staff informing the parents/carers should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.
- 10.3 Further sources of information should always be highlighted and parents/carers should be given leaflets to take away, where possible, as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that is being shared. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.
- 10.4 The member of staff should always provide clear means of being contacted with further questions and they should consider booking a follow-up meeting or phone call right away as parents/carers often have many questions as they process the information. Each meeting should be finished with agreed next steps. There should always be a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

11. Working with All Parents/Carers

- 11.1 Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the School about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents/carers the School will:
- highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website;
 - make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents on the School's website;
 - share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings.

12. Supporting Peers

- 12.1 When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, it should be considered, on a case-by-case basis, which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one-to-one or group settings, and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering, and their parents/carers, with whom the following will be discussed:
- what it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told;
 - how friends can best support;
 - things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset;
 - warning signs that their friend needs help (e.g. signs of relapse).
- 12.2 Additionally, peers will want to have highlighted:
- where and how to access support for themselves;
 - safe sources of further information about their friend's condition;
 - healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling.

13. Training

- 13.1 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.
- 13.2 The MindEd Hub learning portal (<https://www.minded.org.uk/>) provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.
- 13.3 Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more pupils.
- 13.4 Where the need to do so becomes evident, the School will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

14. Policy Review

- 14.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every 2 years as a minimum by the HR/Admin and Communications Committee.