



# Buglawton Primary School

***Be the Best We Can***

## Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

**Members of staff responsible:**

**Mrs S Murray (SEND Co/MHWP Lead)**

**Governor Committee:**

**Teaching and Learning**

**Link Governor/s:**

**Date approved:**

**Summer 2023**

**Date to be reviewed:**

**Summer 2025**

### Policy statement

At Buglawton Primary School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for our whole school community; all students, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows students' 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. We recognise that, in our lives, good mental health and wellbeing is just as important as physical health.

### Links to other policies

This policy is a guide to all stakeholders, outlining Buglawton Primary School approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies, such as the Safeguarding, SEND, Medical Needs, Anti-bullying, Single Equality, Staff Health and Wellbeing and Behaviour Policies. Links with the Behaviour Policy are important as behaviour may be related to an unmet mental health or wellbeing need.

### Definition of Mental Health and Wellbeing

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)

## Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and student 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 students, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Miss Kennerley:  
Head teacher, Designated  
Safeguarding Lead
- Mrs Murray:  
SEND CO, Mental Health and  
Emotional Wellbeing Lead
- Mrs Banks:  
Mental Health First Aid Champion
- Mrs Vanaudenaerde:  
PSHE Coordinator

MHFA Champions have:

- Knowledge and confidence to provide Mental Health First Aid for the most common mental health issues
- An understanding of how to help build a mentally healthy workplace, challenge stigma and support positive wellbeing

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student, in the first instance they should speak to the Mental Health First Aid Champion.

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a high -risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

When a pupil's mental health and wellbeing has been identified as a cause for concern, the case should be discussed, by the staff member concerned and the Mental Health First Aid Champion in the first instance. Decisions around forward planning provision will be supported by the Mental Health First Aider and overseen by the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead in timely, planned meetings.

## Teaching about mental health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum. Our PSHE curriculum is built around specific areas of learning:

In EYFS: Reception -to match the EYFS Personal, Social and Emotional Development Prime Area • Self-regulation • Building relationships • Managing self

In Key Stages 1 and 2 -five areas of learning across • Families and Relationships • Health and Wellbeing • Safety and the Changing Body • Citizenship • Economic Wellbeing, celebrating unique character strengths, gratitude, positive relationships and resilience.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing students who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting students to support any of their friends who are facing challenges.

## Signposting

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

Within the school (noticeboards, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, website), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure students 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 have several ways we can support staff and students in school:

1. In house nurture sessions for pupils that support emotional wellbeing; ELSA, Socially Speaking, Friendship formula, My Resilience Bucket, Cool Connections, Homunculi CBT sessions, Next Steps and Outdoor Learning.
2. Intervention through the Mental Health Support Team – for staff to consult about specific pupils, parents and carers to forward plan provision.
3. SWANs Counselling service – in school for staff and pupils.
4. Play Therapy – Cheshire Play Therapy sessions in school for pupils and staff supervision.
5. Educational Psychologist – consultations twice termly for pupils, an external agency.
6. CAMHs – for pupils, an external agency.

Level 1 and 2 require a profile to be completed; ELSA self-assessment, the strengths and difficulties questionnaire, Emotional Literacy assessment or the Boxall Profile. The student resilience questionnaire may also be used as part of the assessment process. Parents/ carers will be involved in decision making about provision for their child. A wellbeing plan may be drawn up to detail the support for the pupil, this is then monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess impact. The plan is overseen by the MHWB Lead.

All support can be accessed by talking to the class teachers who will refer to the MHWB Lead and/ or SEND Co.

## Local Support

In Cheshire, there are a range of organisations and groups offering support, including the **CAMHS partnership**, a group of providers specialising in children and young people's mental health 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://livewellservices.cheshireeast.gov.uk/Services/1075>

Further information can be found here:

<https://www.mymind.org.uk/services-and-contacts/east-cheshire/>

My Mind is a website for young people, parents, and professionals working with children & young people. Here you can find information on how to look after your mental

health, how to access help and support, and details of support services in our local area.

Other local mental health and wellbeing support:

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

Visyon is a charity that supports the emotional health of children, young people and their families in Cheshire.

## 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 the mental health first aider.

Possible warning signs (although list not exhaustive), which all staff should be aware of include:

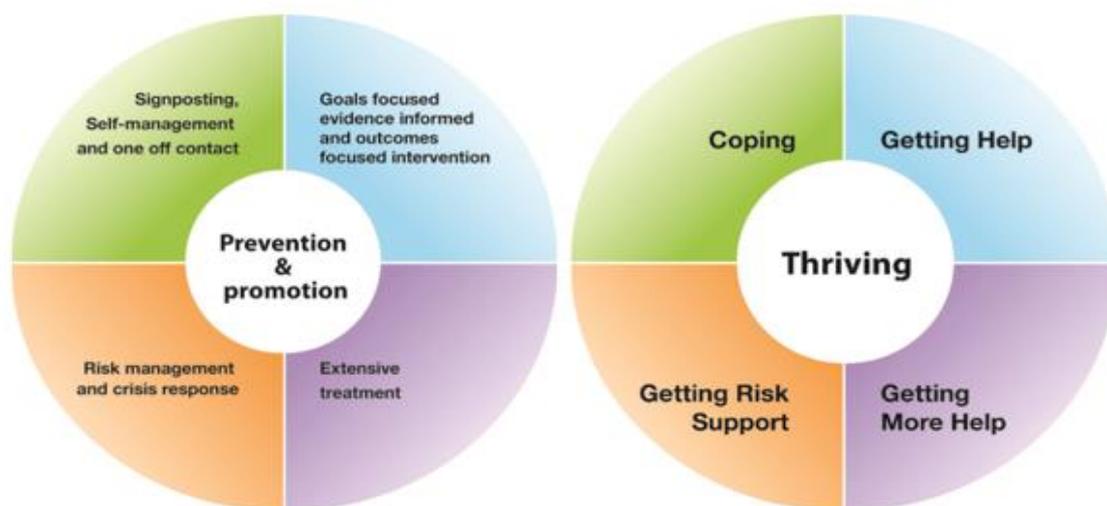
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing 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

## Targeted support

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 ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by implementing our Mental Health and Wellbeing Pathway :

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working closely with Cheshire East Council Children's Services, Cheshire East CAMHS and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;
- Identifying and assessing, in line with the Mental Health and Well Being Pathway, children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;



- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers. Agree a Wellbeing Plan as part of a 'stepped care' approach if appropriate;
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs;
- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including the Mental Health Support Team, Educational Psychologists and Cheshire East CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality;
- Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those

who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and

- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

## 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-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially on the student's personal file in CPOMs, including:

- Date
- Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information will be shared with the MHWB Lead and Safeguarding Lead.

## Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the student.

We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them
- When we're going to tell them

Ideally, consent should be gained from the student first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as students up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents may not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

## Whole school approach

### Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place?
- Who should be present – students, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

A record of the meeting and points discussed/agree are added to the pupil's record and a Wellbeing Plan created if appropriate.

## Supporting parents

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.);
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners; and

- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

## Supporting Peers

When a student 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 student who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- 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)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- 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

## 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 to enable them to keep students safe. A nominated member of staff will receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent.

We will host relevant information on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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 to developing situations with one or more students.

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

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead or Headteacher, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is [March 2025](#).

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of the Mental Health and Well Being lead.

Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.

**Signed: Miss Kennerley**  
**Headteacher**

**Signed: Mr G Hayes:**  
**Chair of Governors**