

Brighter Futures Academy Trust

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

2020 - 2021



Name of policy Writer/ Amendments	Date Written/ Amended	Next Review Date
K.Lister	April 2020	April 2021

Aim

The aim of this policy is to set out the school's consistent whole school approach to supporting children's mental health and wellbeing. Our aim is that children in our school will develop their self-esteem, awareness and self-confidence to play an active part in school life and be valuable members of their communities. We are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our children and staff. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

Objectives

- To create a calm and structured school environment in order to minimise mental health problems.
- To accurately identify, at the earliest opportunity, emerging wellbeing and mental health issues.
- To recognise the range of factors which put children more at risk of developing mental health problems.
- To help children to understand their emotions and feelings better.
- To provide opportunities to reflect and promote child's voice.
- To enable school to use its best endeavours to provide appropriate support for children.
- To ensure that all staff have access to training and advice to support children's' emotional well being and mental health.
- To work in partnerships with parents/carers.
- To work collaboratively with external support agencies, where appropriate, to support the needs of individual children.
- To communicate with the Governing Body to enable them to fulfil their monitoring role with regard to this policy.

Policy links

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical policy and our SEND policy in cases where children's mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying and PSHE . It should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

Roles and responsibilities

The Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL) at Siddal Primary School:

- Rebecca Denham
- Sabrina Almas
- Carol Harper

Learning mentor/pastoral lead/ family support at Siddal Primary School:

- Carol Harper

School based social worker:

- Sabrina Almas

Special Educational Needs Coordinator at Siddal Primary School (SENCo):

- Lucy Aaron

All members of staff are responsible for:

- Promoting positive mental wellbeing.
- Encourage children to feel comfortable talking about mental health issues and reduce stigma.
- Having a clear understanding of the needs of all children.
- Implementing the whole school behaviour policy.
- Follow the agreed systems and processes, set out in this policy, to support children with their emotional wellbeing and mental health issues.

School staff cannot act as mental health experts and should not try diagnosing any conditions. However, they should ensure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems and who they should seek for advice.

What is 'good' emotional health and wellbeing in our school?

- The ability to recognise, acknowledge and manage their feelings.
- The ability to develop caring and concerns for others.
- The ability to develop meaningful, positive and long lasting relationships.
- The ability to take responsibility for themselves and make practical decisions.
- Supporting all of our children and staff.

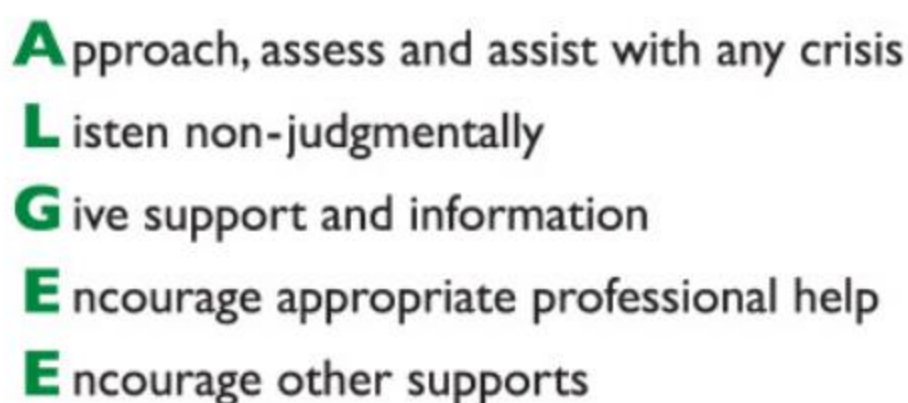
We want our children to:

- Be effective and successful learners.
- Make and sustain friendships.
- Deal with and resolve conflict effectively and fairly.
- Solve problems with others for themselves.
- Manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety.
- Be able to promote calm, optimistic states that support the achievement of goals.
- Recover from setbacks and persist in the face of the difficulties.
- Work and play cooperatively.

- Compete fairly and win and lose with dignity and respect for other competitors.
- Recognise and stand up for their rights and the rights of others.
- Understand and value the differences and commonalities between people, respecting the rights of others to have beliefs and values different from their own.

The Mental Health First Aid action plan – The five basic steps: ALGEE

Approaching someone with a mental illness requires a step-by-step process to ensure that they receive suitable help for their current condition. We use an acronym called ALGEE to help people understand the process of dealing with a person struggling with their mental health.

A graphic with a green border containing the ALGEE acronym. Each letter is in a large, bold, green font, followed by its corresponding action in a smaller, dark grey font.

Approach, assess and assist with any crisis
Listen non-judgmentally
Give support and information
Encourage appropriate professional help
Encourage other supports

MHFA England 2017

Procedure for reporting concerns linked to mental health and wellbeing.

Wellbeing measures include staff observations focusing on any changes in behaviour, attention and presentation will feed into the identification process as well as any communication from children regarding their emotions and feelings. Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child should speak to a DSL in the first instance. If there is a fear that the child is in danger or immediate harm then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the safeguarding leads (see Safeguarding and CPOMs policy). If the child 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.

If a child 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. Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the child's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing, given to a DSL and inputted onto CPOMs (follow safeguarding policy and CPOMs policy). This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the child who disclosed the information.
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made to.
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits.
- Becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity and mood.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.

Mental Health and Wellbeing interventions

Identified children will receive bespoke intervention packages delivered by trained staff who have undertaken relevant training in relation to the development of resilience through providing a secure basis, enhancing self – esteem and self - efficiency will underpin all interventions.

Virtual School Heads in the LA will be made aware of information about all looked after children’s’ physical, emotional or mental health that may have an impact on their learning and educational progress, this will be indicated in their Personal Education Plan (PEP) and the school policy will be shared with the virtual school head.

Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual children or groups of children which may include:

- Circle time approaches or ‘circle of friends’ activities.
- Targeted use of PHSE resources.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. ‘worry boxes’ and ‘worry eaters’
- Managing emotions resources.
- Primary Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups.
- Therapeutic group activities.

Working in partnership with parents/carers

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

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website.
- Ensure that all parents/carers are aware of who they can talk to, and how to get the support they need if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child.
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents/carers.
- Share ideas about how parents/carers can support positive mental health in their children through our regular review meetings.
- Keep parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHEC and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

Working in partnership with other agencies

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's mental health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse/Locala team
- Educational psychology services
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists

Staff Training and CPD

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 students safe. We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff to learn more about mental health. The MindEd website provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue. Information can be found at www.minded.org.uk.