

North Mundham Primary School

Pupil Mental Health and Well-Being Policy

Belong – Believe - Achieve



Approved by:

Resources Committee

Date: May 2024

Next review due by: May 2027

Policy Statement

At North Mundham Primary school, 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, face fears and worries, through their school career and some face significant life events. 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.

Our role in school is to ensure that pupils 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 or any incidents of prejudice against a protected characteristic are not tolerated

Aims

This policy focuses on pupils' mental health and wellbeing. It aims to:

- Set out our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across our school
- Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which pupils feel able to talk about and reflect on their experiences of mental health
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Inform pupils and their parents/carers about the support they can expect from our school in respect of pupils' mental health and wellbeing, and provide them with access to resources.
- Set out how we prevent mental health problems and train and support all staff to understand mental health issues to spot early warning signs to help prevent mental health problems getting worse

Legislation and Guidance

This policy was written with regard to:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

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.

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Headteacher
- Designated safeguarding team
- Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO)
- Mental health lead
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)

Our Mental Health Leads:

- Lead and work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Work with the PSHE leader re: teaching about mental health.
- Provide advice and support to staff and organises training and updates.
- Liaise with mental health services and makes individual referrals to them.

Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

At North Mundham we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a pro-active way to avoid problems arising.

We do this by:

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and well-being.
- Adhering to a positive, restorative approach to behaviour management
- Helping children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- Helping children to feel comfortable about sharing any concerns or worries.
- Teaching children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they understand their emotions and feelings better.
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the world.
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks.
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Enabling access to appropriate support.
- Mental Health and PSHE for all year groups

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment disorder.
- Nurture groups via ELSA to focus on mental health, resilience and wellbeing.

Early Identification

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.

There are clear links with our Therapeutic Thinking Behaviour Policy because we believe that behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, is likely to be related to an unmet mental health need. We consider behaviour to be a form of communication.

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
- physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

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.

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible and provide a prompt response. We do this in different ways including:

- Identify individuals that might need support
- being an Attachment Aware and Trauma Informed School

- Analysing behaviour, exclusions, visits to the medical room, attendance and Behaviour incidents
- pupil surveys
- staff report concerns about individual pupils to the Designated Safeguarding Team, SLT or SENCO
- weekly staff briefing 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'
- Meetings with outside support services such as CAMHS, Mental Health Schools Team (MHST, Speech And Language Therapy (SALT), or Educational Psychologist

Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff will always follow our school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the Safeguarding team.

Supporting pupils

We seek pupils' views and feedback about our approach and whole school mental health activities through Pupil Voice, surveys, class questions and our school council.

All concerns about pupils are reported on Brom Comm and to the 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. The Safeguarding Team regularly reviews all processes. All staff are trained to use Brom Comm. 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.

As part of our school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, our school offers support to all pupils by:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, PSHE and mental health awareness week
- Signposting pupils and families to sources of online support on our school website
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of our school that is negatively impacting their mental health
- Monitoring pupils' mental health through assessments, e.g. a strengths and difficulties questionnaire
- Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support, e.g. through ELSA
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as: Circle time, JIGSAW (pshe) lessons.

Targeted Support

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. Support includes:

- Safeguarding/Child Protection Team
- Support staff to manage mental health needs of pupils
- SENCO 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.
- Mental Health Lead/Mental Health First Aider
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health (CAMHS) - core meetings to support staff to manage mental health needs of pupils
- Thought-Full NHS Mental Health Schools Team (MHST) to provide group work and support for child/Parent/carers and staff
- Educational Psychologist
- Play therapists
- ELSA support

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, we will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide.

Our school will offer support in cycles of:

- Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are
- Creating a plan to provide support
- Taking the actions set out in the plan
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

ELSA support

1:1/small group support from key staff

Time out/lanyards to step out of class

In some cases a pupil's social emotional mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, school refusal and other complex needs. We make links with a range of specialist services, such as CAMHS and MHST, and have regular contact with the services to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the pupils' provision.

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer our school provides, our school will make, or encourage parents/carers to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- Their GP or a paediatrician

- SPOA (Single point of access)
- CAMHS
- Mental Health schools Team (Thought-Full)
- Mental health charities (e.g. [Samaritans](#), [Mind](#), [Young Minds](#), [Kooth](#))

Supporting and collaborating with parents

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the social emotional 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 about mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes via our newsletters and website
- have an Open-Door policy.
- support 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.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Pupils are our primary concern, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

We will work with parents/carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child

- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent/carer forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents/carers about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face-to-face.

These meetings can be difficult, so our school will ensure that parents/carers are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record.

If appropriate, an individual healthcare plan (IHP) will be created in collaboration with parents/carers

Signposting

Sources of support are displayed around our school and linked to on our school website, so pupils and parents/carers are aware of how they can get help.

The Headteacher/SENCo will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

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.

All staff will be offered training so they:

- › Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are
- › Know how to recognise warning signs of ill mental health
- › Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

Staff training to raise awareness of social emotional and mental health well-being topics have been accessed through Mental Health Lead training, the Virtual school and Thought-Full. We also provide regular 'inhouse' training from the Safeguarding Team on topics such as childhood Adverse experiences, therapeutic thinking, attachment strategies and behaviour.

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. We encourage support staff to participate in the Place 2 Be Mental Health Champions Foundation Programme as part of their training time. Those staff with a specific responsibility have more specialised training and where possible access to supervision from mental health professionals.

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years by the Headteacher and the Resources committee.

Links to other policies

- SEND policy
- Therapeutic Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy

- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- PSHE policy
- Equality Policy and objectives

In addition to children's well-being, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and well-being and we have a separate policy dedicated to this.

Protective and Risk Factors (adapted from Mental Health and Behaviour DfE March 2016)

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
In the Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genetic influences • Specific development delay • Communication difficulties • Physical illness • Academic failure • Low self-esteem • SEND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being female (in younger children) • Secure attachment experience • Outgoing temperament as an infant • Good communication skills, sociability • Being a planner and having a belief in control • Humour • Problem solving skills and a positive attitude • Experiences of success and achievement • Faith or spirituality • Capacity to reflect
In the family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overt parental conflict including domestic violence • Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) • Inconsistent or unclear discipline • Hostile and rejecting relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education • Supportive long-term relationship or the absence of severe discord

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs • Physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect • Parental psychiatric illness • Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder • Death and loss – including loss of friendship 	
In the School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Negative peer influences • Peer pressure • Poor pupil to teacher relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems • A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences
In the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Other significant life events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider supportive network • Good housing • High standard of living • High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying • Opportunities for valued social roles • Range of sport/leisure activities