



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Date	Reviewed by	Agreed by governors	Next due for review
October 2022	Sally Cross	October 2022	October 2024

BEDS-created
Non-Statutory
2-year review cycle

Believe to achieve! “Roots will grow down into God’s love and keep us strong.” Eph 3:17

Values: Friendship, Respect, Trust, Courage, Perseverance, Thankfulness

Brinkworth Earl Danby’s is committed to providing a secure, happy and stimulating learning environment in which EVERYONE is valued, spiritual growth is nurtured and potential maximised. We believe as a community that each child can reach their vocational potential. We believe each child is of unique worth made in the image of God. We believe in each child being the best that they can be and finding their place in the world. We believe in: a child’s potential; being part of a community; being the best you can be.

In partnership with parents/carers, we aim to:

- create a happy, caring atmosphere in which each child feels secure and valued within an environment which is stimulating and attractive
- meet each child’s needs physically, creatively, intellectually, emotionally and socially
- educate children about a diverse society and world in order to promote understanding and positive attitudes
- help the child acquire a set of moral and spiritual values that reflect our designation as a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School
- inspire each child to be an enthusiastic learner and develop capabilities and attributes that ‘build learning power’
- enable pupils to become confident and responsible citizens

Our ethos underpins our unique culture and behaviour in our Church of England School. Our children are at the centre of every decision made. We always ask ‘of what benefit will this be to our children? Will this help support them to be the best they can be?’ We go the extra mile. Whether it is staff, parents, children, governors or community members, we choose to make that extra effort for a better outcome for individuals and for our school community.

This policy is written with our vision, values, ethos and aims at its heart.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Policy statement

At Brinkworth Earl Danby's C of E School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing to all pupils, 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.

Mental Health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to their community. (World Health Organisation)

Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Brinkworth Earl Danby's approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies. This policy aims to:

- § Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils;
- § Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues;
- § Enable staff to identify and respond 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 health issues, their peers and parents/carers.

Key staff members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- § Alana Walsh – Designated Safeguarding Lead
- § Sally Cross – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead & Senior Mental Health Lead
- § Catherine Venny & Kim James – Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA)
- § Terry Jones – Parent Support Advisor (PSA)
- § Danni Mewis – PSHE Subject Lead

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of pupil, in the first instance they should speak to the Senior Mental Health Lead. If there is a concern that the pupil is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures of medical emergencies should be followed, including altering first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary. Where a referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Sally Cross, Senior Mental Health Lead. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided on their website.

Individual Care Plans

When a pupil has been identified as having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, it is helpful that an Individual Care Plan should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals. This can include:

- § Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis;
- § Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions;
- § Medication and any side effects;
- § What to do and who to contact in an emergency;
- § The role the school can play.

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. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the pupils we're teaching 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.

The PSHE Association offers guidance on how we teach about mental health and wellbeing issues safely and sensitively. <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing>

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the support within school and in the local community.

Within the school (noticeboards, staff rooms, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites), we will regularly highlight sources of support available to pupils. The aim of this is to ensure pupils 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

Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns to Sally Cross, our Senior Mental Health Lead.

Possible warning signs, 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

Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves to a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen, rather than advise and out first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and stored on the pupil's confidential file. This written record should include:

- § Date;
- § Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made;
- § Main points from the conversation;
- § Agreed next steps.

This information will be shared with Sally Cross, our Senior Mental Health Lead who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

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

We should never share information about a pupil without telling them first. Ideally we would receive their consent although 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.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague, usually our Senior Mental Health Lead, Sally Cross. This ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the pupil and helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed if there are concerns about their child's mental health and wellbeing and students 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 contact parents/carers.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Alana Walch, must be informed immediately.

Whole school approach

Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we should consider the following questions, on a case by case basis:

§ Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?

§ Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.

§ Who should be present – pupils, staff, parents etc.?

§ What are the aims of the meeting?

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.

We should always highlight further sources of information and support as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns and we should consider booking a follow-up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the pupil's confidential record.

Supporting parents

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

§ Ensuring all parents are aware of who to talk to and how to go about this if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child;

§ Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our school website and newsletter;

§ Making our Mental Health and Wellbeing policy easily accessible to parents;

§ Sharing ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through information evenings;

§ Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning through PSHE.

Supporting Peers

When a pupil 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 pupil 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.

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 pupils safe.

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 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 Alana Walch, the Head Teacher, 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.

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes.