

# **Booker Avenue Infant School**



**'Working together, learning together'**

## **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

## Policy Statement

At Booker Avenue Infant School, it is our vision that all children are entitled to develop to their fullest potential academically, socially, emotionally and into healthy well beings, enabling each child to grow in confidence and be able to fully participate in everything that goes on in the wider community with confidence. It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning, as well as their physical and social health and their mental wellbeing in adulthood. The Department for Education recognises that, in order to help their pupils succeed: schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy.

'Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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 his or her community.' (World Health Organisation 2014)

At Booker Avenue Infant School, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our school family. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental health.

Advice from School Improvement Liverpool stated that 'The pandemic should lead to a renewed focus on improving everyone's well-being, mental health and workload. A priority should be further developing our understanding of effective therapeutic support for children who have experienced trauma.'

We appreciate that children will need opportunity to talk about their worries and feelings. More than ever, children and young people need opportunity to learn techniques to manage their stress and anxiety. As a school, we provide opportunities to experience relaxation, mindfulness and quiet, calm places.

## **Ethos**

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. This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a child has an identified special educational need.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health

- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils and staff suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

### **Lead Members of Staff**

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils. Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Lynne Brown – Designated Safeguarding Lead / Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead
- Sophie Ball – PSHE Lead / Deputy Safeguarding Lead
- Antoinette Doherty – SENDCO and Inclusion Lead
- Jan Homan - Wellbeing Governor

### **Pupil Identification**

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil or member of staff should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that a child is in danger then they should be immediately referred to the designated child protection lead. 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. Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Lynne Brown, mental health lead and or Antoinette Doherty, SENDCO.

### **Individual Care Plans**

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 who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

### **Staff Identification**

It is recognised at Booker Avenue Infant School that promoting staff health and emotional wellbeing should be an integral part of the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. Therefore, training and signposting to materials about mental health and emotional wellbeing will be made available for all staff. An open door policy to senior leadership is always made available if staff are in need of speaking to someone about any issues of concern and a fully committed governing body. Supervision and appraisal will allow for mutual communication about personal health and emotional wellbeing if it is deemed necessary.

## **Teaching About Mental Health**

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 developmental PSHE & RSE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are 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 or others.

## **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as staffrooms and entrance hall areas. We will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum.

## **Managing Disclosures**

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. Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than exploring 'why?'

All disclosures should be recorded on file and assigned to a member of the safeguarding team.

Parents must always be informed by a member of staff due to the age of the pupils we work with in our school. If a pupil gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, then we must follow our safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures.

## **Working with Parents and Carers**

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 and carers we will:

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

## **Staff training and CPD**

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.

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 pupils. There will be relevant training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

**Date of Policy:** March 25      **Date of Review:** July 26