
Binsted CE Primary Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy



Faith, Hope and Love



Policy Statement

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)

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do through our shared values of Faith, Hope and Love, but the greatest of these is Love, 1 Corinthians 13 v 13. Therefore all staff at Binsted C E Primary school are passionate about the mental health of all our staff, children and families.

We aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both universal and whole school approaches through a clear and inclusive PSHE curriculum. We will also use specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils and staff deemed at risk of mental ill health. In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing through good teaching and meaningful extra-curricular activities, we aim to recognise and respond to needs as they arise. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues. We hold **faith** in our school community; trusting and working with each other within our school, with teachers and colleagues across the school, with the wider school community and most importantly with the young people and families in our school. We also have **hope**, that whatever issues our pupils, their families, the school, our team or the community face, we always support, react and pull together in the hope that that tomorrow will be a better day. Finally, our school value of **love**, drives us to making a difference; we are not passive players in young people's lives but active participants who can and do make a real difference.

Scope

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 also details the process of escalation when responding to pupils and staff, showing the early signs of mental ill health.

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

What effective Mental Health Interventions means to us at Binsted

- We offer a person-centred approach to mental health.
- We offer a universal and inclusive curriculum focused on prevention.
- We are committed to spotting the early signs of mental ill health and offering support in school.
- We are equally committed to staff well-being recognising the value in staff who are happy in their role.
- We work as a team reaching out to parents and carers to support children and their families.
- We offer a healthy learning environment challenging damaging stigma and stereotypes from media
- We equip children with the skills, resilience, strength and determination to manage the challenges of everyday life.
- Support is tailored to the individual and led by the SMHL/Mental health first aider

Lead Members of Staff

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

Sharron Morton - Designated Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer and Henry Jennings DSL

Vicki Dewey - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead and PSHE Lead

Lora Bowden SENCo

Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

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 curriculum. At Binsted Church of England School we recognise the links between well-being, emotional resilience and PSHE. We use Heartsmart across the school to help promote healthy choices for both staff and children.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort being taught 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.

We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Universal (All)

- Heartsmart
- PSHE
- Assemblies
- School Culture
- Staff/pupil relationships
- Mental Health week
- Anti-bullying strategy
- Extra-Curricular activities
- SIP Priorities
- Links with church
- Relationship with parents
- Behaviour Policy
- Celebration Assembly
- School Council
- Positive praise
- Wellbeing support/activities for staff
- Ongoing staff training
- Wellbeing advice /evening for parents
- Peer mentoring

Signposting and pro-active prevention of mental health difficulties

We will take a preventative approach to Mental health, recognising that everybody need to take care of their mental health. We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. The support that is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access this is outlined in the Alton Buckle family and children support package, which is shared in our newsletter, signposting to courses School nursing service and in the case of staff, promotion of the Hampshire's Building resilience guidance, which is displayed in the staffroom.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. We have a dedicated page for Supporting and Promoting Emotional health and well-being on our website, under the key information tab www.binsted.hants.sch.uk/

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupils help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

Selective (Some)

- Chill out Club (invite only responding to need)
- SMHL monitoring
- In class support
- ELSA
- School nurse
- Mrs Benwell
- Early identification and support
- Support in school
- Relationship with teacher
- Meet with parents and SMHL to support
- Home/school link book
- Individual targets/reward
- Celebrate small wins
- SENCO

Any member of staff who is concerned about the immediate mental health or wellbeing of a pupil or staff member should speak to the Mental Health Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Child Protection Office staff or the head teacher. 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 the DSLO and if appropriate, by our Mental Health Lead. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided in our SEND policy.

Indicated (Few)

- CAMHS
- Behaviour Service
- GP
- Young Carers
- Children Services
- EHCP
- Counselling
- NSPCC
- Childline
- Emergency Services

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

Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or 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 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 of exploring 'Why?' For more information about how to handle mental health disclosures sensitively see our Safeguarding policy and our Children Protection policy.

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

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

This information should be shared with the Mental Health Lead (MHL), who will offer support and advice about next steps. Our MHL will report and confidentially share any concern with our DSLO. This is vital for both the individual child and for the emotional well-being of the Mental Health Lead. See our SEND policy for guidance about making a referral to CAMHS.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with pupils as regards the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass on our concerns about a pupil, we should consider:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

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

We will share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead, this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support (see above paragraph).

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the DSLO must be informed immediately so that they can make the appropriate judgment referring to the Hampshire Safeguarding Thresholds chart.

Working with Parents regarding individual concerns

When working with 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 the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, and other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that is being shared. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. We will finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Working with All Parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about promoting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents 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 access support, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support their child's positive mental health through our regular information evenings
- 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

Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. We will consider:

- What 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 to be aware of that might mean 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

All staff 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.

We will host relevant information on our website for staff and parents 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.¹

Training opportunities for staff and Governors 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 pupils.

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 our Headteacher and the Training and Development Governor, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in January 2027

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate in response to further guidance, legislation and school needs.

Written January 2024

Agreed with Staff: February 24

Agreed with Governors: February 24