



*Opening up the world for our
children and families*

Mental Health Policy

Date: November 2021

Review: November 2023

Policy Statement

At Burrowmoor Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils 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.

At our school we:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count
- encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks

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
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through difficulties including bereavement
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder

Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with other linked policies: SEND, Behaviour, Anti-bullying, and PSHCE. It also sits alongside our safeguarding and child protection procedures.

Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of all children, staff with a specific, relevant remit are:

Diane Griffiths – Family Worker, Designated Safeguarding lead, Mental Health Lead

Gemma Angier – SENDCo, Designated Safeguarding Lead, Thrive Licensed Practitioner

Diane Hawkes – Head teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead

Marie Lucca – Deputy Head teacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead

Andrew Smith - Designated governor for child protection

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHCE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but we will also use the PSHCE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner. Teachers are trained in using Thrive to screen their class's mental health needs and then to deliver targeted whole-class interventions in identified areas. Our Thrive licensed practitioner is trained to work on a 1:1 basis with identified children and their families.

Targeted Support

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

- Use of Thrive resources for whole class, small groups and 1:1 with individual children
- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities
- Targeted use of SEAL resources
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes' and 'worry monsters'
- Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques
- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- The Boxall Profile
- Emotional literacy scales and resources such as The Blob Tree

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support, identifying needs and recognising warning signs including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators 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

Working with Parents

In order to support parents, we will: Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums. Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their child. Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents. Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children. 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.

Working with other agencies and partners

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

- NHS via paediatrician, GPs
- Educational psychology services
- Cambridgeshire SEND Service
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services – including Willow Tree Counselling
- Family support workers
- Social Care
- Therapists
- Colleagues from other schools eg Highfields Littleport Special School
- Thrive practitioners

Staff Training

Our staff are trained in recognising and responding to mental health issues and the possible root causes by using the Thrive programme. It is part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep children 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. We also use outside agencies for more specialist training such as YMCA and Education Psychologists.