



# **Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy**

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# Contents

- 1.0 Policy Statement
- 2.0 Scope
- 3.0 Policy Aims
- 4.0 Key Staff Members
- 5.0 Teaching about mental health
- 6.0 Identification of need
- 7.0 Managing disclosures and confidentiality
- 8.0 Targeted support
- 9.0 Working with other professionals and external agencies
- 10.0 Working with Parents / Carers
- 11.0 Supporting Peers
- 12.0 Training
- 13.0 Policy Review

## **1.0 Policy Statement**

At Brigg Primary, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, 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 pupils' mental health and well-being.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy". 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. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our school takes pride in leading our children on their journey - both educational and for life; enabling them to drive their own futures to greater success and shape our diverse world for the better. We will provide a culture of mutual respect and acceptance with children moving onto their next venture with the skills and values to set them on the path to achieve their dreams. We promote and encourage respect, determination and self-belief. Our school motto is 'Hand in hand we can grow'.

## **2.0 Scope**

This policy is a guide to all staff - including non-teaching and governors - outlining Brigg Primary School's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

## **2.0 Policy Aims**

Through our policy and drive towards a mentally healthy school, we aim to:

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health difficulties.
- Enable staff to implement professional curiosity when exploring student's mental health and well-being in order to respond to needs appropriately.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health difficulties.

- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support around their own mental health well-being needs.
- Provide the right support to students with identified mental health needs, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- To instil a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of individual emotional needs and how to respond with care and nurture.

#### 4.0 Key staff members

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

Designated safeguarding team	Mrs S Spencer Mrs M Archer Mrs S Riggall
Senior mental health lead SENDCo	Mrs H Taylor
PHSCE coordinator	Mrs J Winter
Mental health champion Lead learning mentor Youth mental health first aider	Mrs S Riggall
Forest family nurture team	Mrs S Riggall Mrs A Kilbee Mrs L Parker
Forest School lead Youth mental health first aider	Mrs M Archer

Please refer to our school website for staff photographs.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of student, in the first instance they should speak to a member of the safeguarding team.

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed (please see safeguarding policy). If the child presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

## 5.0 Teaching about mental health

PSHE is taught within our curriculum themes if the topic is appropriate. If the theme does not support the teaching of PSHE it will be taught as a 'stand-alone' subject with individual time allocation. Planning for our PSHE curriculum is taken from the 3D PSHE scheme published by Dimensions curriculum for Nursery to KS2. We also supplement the Internet Safety sections of the curriculum using the Internet Legends programme of learning published by Google. The six core areas of learning are:

- Health and Wellbeing - including healthy eating and first aid
- Relationships - including relationships made online
- Living in the Wider World - including environmental issues PSHE Policy 2022 3
- Relationships & Sex Education
- Substance Abuse
- Extremism and Radicalisation

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.

Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote students' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of students' own emotions as well as those of other people. If issues arise within certain classes or year groups, these are addressed through 'one off' or a short series of sessions aimed to address immediately and effectively.

## 6.0 Identification of need

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

- Strengths and Difficulty Questionnaire
- BOXALL profiles biannually
- RISE assessment
- Analysing behaviour, children at risk of exclusions and attendance
- Worry box for children to raise concerns which are checked by the forest family nurture team
- 'The three houses' nurture activity completed with children to identify worries, dreams and strengths
- Pupil Progress Review meetings
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer, or from previous teacher during transition to the next class
- Parental meetings

- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing difficulties. These warning signs should always be responded to following the guidelines outlined in this policy and seek support from the staff names in Section 4.

Warning signs could 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
- A change in academic levels and work ethic.
- Talking or using humour around 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

A referral to our Forest Family Nurture Team can be made should any of the above identify a child who requires emotional and wellbeing support.

## **7.0 Disclosures by children and confidentiality**

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to children who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of our children is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff will make it clear to children that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health Lead or the Safeguarding Lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps. If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student to either someone within or outside of the school, this should be done following the procedures outlined in our safeguarding policy. Concerns and disclosures are recorded on CPOMS.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

## **8.0 Targeted support**

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

- ELSA support sessions
- Targeted intervention by one of our three Level 3 trained counsellors
- Therapeutic activities including talking and drawing, lego therapy, sand play and mindfulness focus sessions
- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes' and 'worry eaters'
- Managing emotions resources such as 'the incredible 5 point scale'
- Forest school sessions

All children accessing support through our Forest Family Nurture team will have a 'Wellbeing passport' and complete an entry and exit rating questionnaire.

## **9.0 Working with external agencies**

In some case a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders. We have access to a range of specialist services and during the support will have regular contact with the service to review the support and consider next steps. School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Lead Learning Mentor or Mental Health Lead / SENDCO following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the pupil and parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs

Some of the other agencies we may refer to in order to support children's emotional health and wellbeing include:

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Family support workers
- With me in mind
- Behaviour support teams

## 10.0 Working with and supporting parents

In order to support parents we will:

- 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 get 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.

We are aware that parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health difficulty and we will be sensitive and supportive. We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health difficulties are common, and that help and advice are available.

When a concern has been raised, the school will:

- Contact parents and carers and meet with them
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- Be available for follow up calls.
- Make a record of the meeting.
- Agree a plan of action including clear next steps.
- 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 provided.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and children may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves. We give children the option of informing their parents and carers about their mental health needs for themselves or of accompanying and supporting them to do so.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern is the children, 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.

## 11.0 Supporting peers



When a student is suffering from mental health difficulties, 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 student 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
- Warning signs that their friend needs help

## **12.0 Training**

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 children and know what to do and where to get help.

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 students safe.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our staff appraisal process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

Our Lead Learning Mentor is a qualified 'mental health first aider' and the SENDCo recently completed the Senior Mental Health Lead role certificate. The school has a strategic mental health action plan outlining aims and actions over the next year.

## **13.0 Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is Spring 2024. In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of The Senior mental health lead.

Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.