

Boundary Primary School



Positive Mental Health Policy

Review period: Annually

Date policy last reviewed: September 23

Person Responsible for Policy: Head teacher

Policy statement

Mental health is fundamental to our collective and individual ability as humans to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living and enjoy life. On this basis, the promotion, protection and restoration of mental health can be regarded as a vital concern of individuals, communities and societies throughout the world. (World Health Organisation)

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our school, both staff and students. We strive to meet this aim using both whole school approaches and individual, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. On average 1 in 4 people will suffer with a diagnosable mental health illness in their lifetime, for some people this can occur in childhood. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

Aims

The Policy Aims to:

- Encourage positive mental health for both students and staff
- Increase the understanding of mental health issues and promote a safe environment for mental health to be discussed without stigma.
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health.
- Offer support to staff working with young people with mental health issues.
- Ensure support is available to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers.

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. All staff within school should read this policy, this includes non-teaching staff. This policy should be read along with our medical policy and SEND policy, in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue or special educational need.

Lead Members of Staff

All staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students within Boundary primary school.

Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Mental Health First Aiders – Mrs Jacques and Mrs Ward
- Senior Mental Health Leader – Mrs Bunday
- The DSL (Designated Safeguarding Leads) Mrs. Bunday, Miss Ashton, Miss Moyes, Mrs. Jacques and Ms Ward
- Mrs S Bradley – engagement officer

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to a DSL in the first instance.

If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the safeguarding leads. If the student 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 a DSL and supported by the SENCO.

Our approach to Safety

Individual, child centered risk assessments will be completed within the school for students causing concern or who have received a diagnosis regarding their mental health. Alongside the risk assessment, each student identified will complete an individual safety plan; this is written with or by the student with the supervision of an appropriate member of staff.

This can include,

- Details of the pupils condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do and who to contact should an emergency present its self in school.
- The role of the school and what is expected of the staff, should a student's mental health deteriorate.
- The wishes, feelings and requests of the student.

We will ensure each student is aware of the role of the school and what may happen in an emergency. Warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any indicators of ill mental health should raise the concern with any of the DSL's or Behaviour lead that a student's mental health may be deteriorating.

Possible warning signs 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.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.

Education about mental health within school is addressed as part of our PHSE curriculum, to promote positive mental health at an age appropriate level. There is always an emphasis to develop the understanding, language and confidence to seek help as and when needed, for themselves or others.

We will ensure that students, staff and parents are aware of services and sources of support within the local community, online and within school. We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas within the school along with information to encourage positive mental well-being. If a student that decides to disclose concerns regarding their own mental health or the mental health of a friend to a member of staff, it is the responsibility of that member of staff to ensure that they

address the student with a calm, supportive and non-judgmental approach. Staff should listen to the student rather than advise, and our utmost priority at this time should be the physical and emotional safety of the student, opposed to asking Why?

All disclosures are to be recorded and written up and stored on My Concern, to ensure the information is stored safely and confidentially.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on then we should discuss with the student: Whom we are going to talk to, what we are going to tell them and why we need to tell them. All disclosures must be shared with a Designated Safeguarding Lead, this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support.

Parents must always be informed when disclosures regarding a student's emotional or mental health and wellbeing are made. We should always give students the option of us informing parents for them or with them. When disclosing to a parent we should consider for each individual case if it is preferable to meet face to face with the parent and who should be present at this meeting. It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues, if they are not already aware of them and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accommodating of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect. We should always identify further sources of information and support and be clear with the parent as to what support can be offered by the school. We should always provide clear means of communicating with school as further questions may be had by the parent. We will consider booking in a follow up meeting to ensure information between home and school is kept up to date. We will finish each meeting with agreed actions and always record the meeting minutes on to My Concern.

Peer support

In cases of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep other students safe, we will consider for each individual case if any of the students friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by a staff member.

Training

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our CPL and additional support for those staff members designated to manage multiple students with extreme mental health issues.

Where the need to do so becomes apparent, we will host training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health. Suggestions for individual, group or whole school learning should be discussed with Mrs. Bunday (SMHL)