January 2026

Bishop Monkton Church of England Primary School
Positive Mental Health and Emotional Well-being Policy

What is Mental Health and well-being and why is it important?

"*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 contribute to her or his community". World Health Organization*

This means:- "Every person that goes through different feelings and emotions at any time is listened to and respected".

Intent (what we are going to do)

At Bishop Monkton Church of England Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of all our pupils, staff and parents and carers. We take a whole school approach to promote positive mental health that aims to help pupils to become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise.

We have a supportive and caring ethos "Act justly, love kindness and walk humbly with God", and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and their contribution is valued.

We recognise that pupils' mental health is a crucial factor in their overall well-being and can affect their learning and achievement and we recognise that physical activity throughout the school day is beneficial to our learning. Our wellbeing warriors say that we should have:- brain breaks, active maths/literacy and active lessons as these are important support our health and wellbeing. We recognise that good mental health is just as important as our physical health.

The Department for Education (DFE) recognises that "*in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy".*

Schools can be a place for pupils to experience a nurturing (caring and looking after) 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 (time out or a safe place to be) from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting pupils well-being and can help give a sense of belonging and community.

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At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable (needs some support or help) and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's responsibility and that we all have a role to play. We also have a role to ensure that pupils learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and where they can go if they need help or support.

At our school we want all our pupils to:

- understand their emotions and feelings better and be able to express a range of emotions appropriately
- all pupils are valued and are confident in themselves
- help pupils feel a sense of belonging and feel safe comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help pupils socially to form and maintain positive relationships with others
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count
- encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- help pupils to develop emotional resilience and to manage setback and cope with the stresses of everyday life
- pupils feel able to talk openly about their problems (with a trusted adult) without feeling any stigma
- bullying is not tolerated
- learn and achieve

Implementation (how we are going to do it)

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging (sharing assembly, termly values, buddies (Y6 pupil buddied up with a YR), displays in each classroom, positive quotes around the whole school
- promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision making (school council, wellbeing champions, house captains, circle time, wellbeing warriors)
- celebrating academic and non-academic achievements (celebration assembly)
- providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others (school rules, classroom jobs)
- providing opportunities to reflect (safe areas in each classroom, circle time)
- access to appropriate support that meets their needs (The Hive, wellbeing warriors and wellbeing champions)
- Promoting the five ways to well-being – connect, be active, take notice, keep learning and give

- Transition days for Y6 pupils to secondary schools plus additional transition for pupils who require this
- Working with parents/carers, (parents/carers evenings, regular meetings if needed/appropriate, home school books)

We pursue these through:

- universal and whole school approaches
- support pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement
- specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment disorder
- Wellbeing warriors in each classroom as well as Wellbeing champions meet with Mrs Coupland at least once per half term.

<u>Staff/Pupils with a specific, relevant remit:</u>

- Sally Cowling – SENCO/designated child protection/safeguarding officer/CPD lead, mental health school lead
- Amanda Coupland – PSHE lead ,Pastoral Lead/mental health champion for staff
- Anna Kirby – mental health champion for parents and governors
- Sarah Worthington – lead first aider
- Teddy Hawkes, Alex Giles, Evie McGrath, Evie Clark, Eva Dell and Laila Russell are wellbeing warriors

<u>Teaching</u>

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by the pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE/PE/RE and Science curriculum and everyday life in school.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort that is being taught but, we will also use PSHE guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner, appropriate to the age of the pupils.

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

- Circle time approaches or 'friendship groups' activities
- Managing feelings resources e.g. worry boxes in each classroom – checked at least twice a week and issues arising are dealt with immediately. If named a chat with Mrs Coupland, if anonymous chat/discussion takes place as a whole class
- Managing emotions resources such as 'Zones of Regulation'

- ELSA support groups
- Therapeutic activities including lego, mindfulness techniques
- Planned brain breaks throughout the school day using go noodle, super movers
- "The Hive" will be a place of sanctuary for the pupils through invited sessions (Monday from 2.30pm and Wednesday all afternoon).
- Dedicated mental health days throughout the school year

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 Warning signs

At all staff meetings, mental health and wellbeing and vulnerable pupils/staff will be on the agenda. A range of possible difficulties including:-

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

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should be always taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated child protection and safeguarding officer.

Possible warning signs include:

- 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

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Working with Parents/Carers

In order to support parents/carers we will:-

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
- Share and allow parents/carers to access sources of further support
- Ensure that all parents/carers 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/carers
- Share ideas about how parents/carers can support positive mental health in their children
- Keep parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PHSE

Where to get information and support

For support on specific mental health needs:

Anxiety UK – www.anxietyuk.org.uk

OCD UK – www.ocduk.org

Depression Alliance – www.depressionalliance.org

Eating Disorders – www.b-eat.co.uk and www.inourhands.com

National Self-Harm Network – www.nhsn.co.uk and www.selfharm.co.uk

Suicidal thoughts – Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS – www.papyrus.uk.org

For general information and support:-

www.youngminds.org.uk – champion's young people's mental health and wellbeing

www.mind.org.uk – advice and support on mental health problems

www.minded.org.uk (e-learning)

www.time-to-change.org.uk – tackles the stigma of mental health

www.rethink.org – challenges attitudes towards mental health

Working with other agencies and partners

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Behaviour support
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers – Early Help
- Therapists
- Compass Phoenix

Training

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.

Links to other Policies

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Inclusion, Looked after Children, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour Regulation Policy, Personal, Social and Health Education (PHSE), Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

Links to the Behaviour Regulation Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need. We consider ***behaviour to be a message.***

Personal Provision Maps

It is helpful to draw up individual provision maps for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving pupils, the parents and relevant health professionals.

This can include:

- Details of pupil's conditions
- Understanding triggers and related strategies
- 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 "Teaching about Mental Health"

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to help themselves and others keep physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum. 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 skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will display relevant success sources of support in communal areas such as corridors, cloakrooms and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum.

Warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with Sally Cowling, our mental health and emotional wellbeing lead.

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 development
- Talking or joking about 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
- Avoiding PE or getting changed secretively
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Supporting Staff Wellbeing

Wellbeing is all about our holistic health, including the physical and emotional. When we have good levels of wellbeing we feel that life is in balance and we can generally cope well. We feel motivated and engaged, we are resilient and able to deal effectively with daily troubles, as well as “bounce back” from life’s challenges.

Good staff wellbeing is essential for cultivating a mentally healthy school, for retaining and motivating staff and promoting pupil wellbeing and attainment.

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Emotionally Healthy Staff

This is the bedrock. There is a strategic approach to nurturing this culture, leadership have:-

- Confidence in our staff - let's be creative and try new things
- An INSET day each year devoted to whole school wellbeing
- Trust – it's ok to make mistakes, we learn from them
- Appreciation of the contribution that every member of the school team makes to the outcomes of our pupils
- Staff expertise and enthusiasms developed and used through the school
- Leadership takes into account individual staff needs – families matter
- Ensure that PPA (planning, preparation and assessment) time is disrupted to a minimum and for PPA time to be given back
- Staff appraisal that is encouraging and that concentrates on the "praise aspect". Targets should be realistic and concentrate on raising standards of all children.
- Dedicated "wellness" time in the form of a "golden ticket" to take some time off during the school year (this has to be booked off in advance to ensure that cover can be provided if needed)

Impact

If we as a whole school community can achieve and provide all this, we will have robust, positive mentally, healthy pupils leaving in Y6 with all the tools they will need to become happy, well rounded and successful. Where they will thrive and flourish in the wider community and world.

-This policy should be reviewed yearly by the Mental Health Lead Staff and Pupils

Signed Head teacher – Sally Cowling.....

Signed Chair of Governors – Ashlea Costelloe .....

Date: February 2026

Review date: January 2027