

Boxgrove C.E.P School

Mental Health and Well Being Policy

School Vision:

*"This is our school, Let peace dwell here, Let the room be full of contentment,
Let love abide here, Love of one another, Love of mankind, Love of life itself,
And love of God."*

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Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

At Boxgrove CE Primary School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. 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:

- ✓ Provide a nurturing, safe and supportive environment with clear expectations for behaviour
- ✓ Help children to understand and manage their emotions and feelings
- ✓ Help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- ✓ Help children to form and maintain relationships
- ✓ Foster self-esteem and self-worth, 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
- ✓ Provide a structured approach to education about relationships, sex and health
- ✓ Support parents as partners in their child's learning and development

The Importance of Mental Health and Wellbeing

Recent research by the mental health foundation has shown that mental health problems affect about 1 in 10 children and young people. Statistics show that 70% of children who experience a mental health problem have not had support at an early age or the opportunity to build and develop their resilience. As a school, we recognise the need to ensure mental health problems are identified early and appropriate support is provided.

This policy 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. It should be read in conjunction with our policies e.g SMSC Policy, Behaviour policy etc.

At Boxgrove CE Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing of every member of our school community and recognise how important mental health and wellbeing is to our lives, as is physical health.

We recognise that children's mental health and overall wellbeing can affect their learning and achievement.

A key aspect of our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children 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 and support.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- ✓ All children are valued as unique individuals
- ✓ Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- ✓ Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- ✓ Positive mental health is promoted and valued
- ✓ Bullying is not tolerated
- ✓ Parents are supported and can access help

Policy Aims

The Policy Aims to:

- ✓ Promote positive mental health and wellbeing of all staff and children
- ✓ Promote an open culture which increases understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- ✓ Provide support to staff in the workplace
- ✓ Provide support to staff working with children with mental health issues
- ✓ Provide support to children suffering from mental health and their peers and parents

Definition of Wellbeing

'Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and act.' (World Health Organisation)

Mental health and well-being is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children to:

- ✓ Be effective and successful learners
- ✓ Make and sustain friendships
- ✓ Deal with and resolve conflict effectively and fairly
- ✓ Solve problems with others for themselves
- ✓ Manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety
- ✓ Be able to promote calm, optimistic states that support the achievement of goals
- ✓ Recover from setbacks and persist in the face of the difficulties
- ✓ Work and play co-operatively
- ✓ Compete fairly and win and lose with dignity and respect for other competitors
- ✓ Recognise and stand up for their rights and the rights of others
- ✓ Understand and value the differences and commonalities between people, respecting the rights of others to have beliefs and values different from their own

Taking a Whole School Approach

We take a whole school approach to effective practice and provision is in place that promotes the emotional wellbeing and mental health of both staff and pupils. This is achieved by:

- ✓ Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience and which everyone understands.
- ✓ Helping children to develop social relationships support each other and seek help when they need it.

- ✓ Helping children be resilient learners.
- ✓ Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
- ✓ Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning to support their needs, including working with specialist services.
- ✓ Effectively working with parents and others.
- ✓ Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and own resilience.
- ✓ Developing an open culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health awareness.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- ✓ Promoting our core Christian values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- ✓ Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- ✓ Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- ✓ Providing opportunities to develop a sense of self-worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- ✓ Providing opportunities to reflect.
- ✓ Access to appropriate support that meets their needs.
- ✓ Creating a whole school community that upholds kindness, values difference and challenges exclusion.

Curriculum and Nurture Provision

Positive wellbeing is promoted through the curriculum and all school activities. Through a carefully planned approach to PSHE & Citizenship our pupils are helped to acquire the knowledge and develop the skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives, and to become resilient, informed and responsible citizens. Specific themes are used to promote positive emotional health and wellbeing. Through their learning from YR - Y6 children are shown and learn to:

- Recognising what is fair and unfair, kind and unkind, what is right and wrong

- Share opinions and explaining views
- Offer constructive support and feedback to others
- Listen to other people, and play and work co-operatively (including strategies to resolve simple arguments through negotiation)
- Identify and respect the differences and similarities between people
- Resist peer pressure
- Accepting the unfamiliar
- To appreciate "the uniqueness of me"
- Develop confidence & self-awareness
- Communicate and managing feelings - both good and bad (vocabulary to describe their feelings to others and simple strategies for managing feelings)
- Change and loss and associated feelings (moving home, losing toys, pets or friends)
- "Know myself" - my personal qualities, attitudes, skills, attributes and achievements, motivation and self-awareness
- Recognise "Me as a learner" - what can I do even better?
- Problem solve; critical thinking and decision making
- Responsibility
- Understanding and valuing difference
- Developing communication and participation skills
- Team working
- Choices and consequences
- Different perspectives - listening and responding respectfully to a wide range of people; caring about other people's feeling.
- Raising concerns
- Strategies to resolve disputes and conflict through negotiation and appropriate compromise

In addition, whole school approaches such as worship and circle time sessions are used to further develop the pupils' knowledge of strategies. For example, peaceful problem solving is taught in circle time sessions to help pupils learn to control and manage feelings when there are disputes on the playground. Whole school events are held including Anti-bullying Week in November and Safer Internet Day in February. During these events, the focus is on mindfulness and resilience and the purpose is it to teach the pupils' strategies for dealing with anxiety and coping with changes. Children will have the opportunity to raise difficult issues and as a result these will be acted on and a de-brief provided.

When pupils require additional support for social, emotional and/or mental health, we use our Your Space Counsellors in school or the children have the opportunity to spend time with a Teaching Assistant trained in "Drawing for Talking"

Where there is a need for more specialised, targeted approaches that support vulnerable children, the headteacher will make a referral to outside organisations such as CAMHs or speak to the Educational Psychologist Service

Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

As a school, we want to ensure that we have clear systems and processes in place for early intervention and identification of mental health problems, and that referral to experienced skilled professionals is made. Staff know pupils well and are on the constant look out for any signs that children are upset, appear anxious or worried, or are acting 'out of character'. Negative experiences and distressing life events can affect mental health in a way that brings about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state. This can include:

- ✓ Emotional state (fearful, withdrawn, low self-esteem)
- ✓ Behaviour (aggressive or oppositional; habitual body rocking)
- ✓ Interpersonal behaviours (indiscriminate contact or affection seeking; overfriendliness or excessive clinginess; demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent disapproval; failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed; coercive controlling behaviour; or lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions).

These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff will discuss their concerns with the Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead

Certain individuals and groups are more at risk of developing mental health problems than others. These risks can relate to the child, to their family, or to their community or life events. These risk factors, taken from *Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools*, November 2018, are listed below:

Risk and protective factors that are believed to be associated with mental health outcomes:

Personally:

- Genetic influences
- Low IQ and learning disabilities, specific development delay or neuro-diversity
- Communication difficulties
- Difficult temperament
- Physical illness
- Academic failure
- Low self-esteem
- Attachment concerns
- Being a planner and having a belief in control

In the family:

- Overt parental conflict including domestic violence
- Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted)
- Inconsistent or unclear discipline
- Hostile and rejecting relationships
- Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder
- Physical, sexual, emotional abuse, or neglect
- Parental psychiatric illness
- Death and loss - including loss of friendship

Other factors including those that could be found in school:

- Bullying including online (cyber)
- Discrimination
- Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships
- Deviant peer influences
- Peer pressure
- Peer on peer abuse
- Poor pupil to teacher/school staff relationships
- Socio-economic disadvantage
- Homelessness
- Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events
- Exploitation, including by criminal gangs and organised crime groups, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation
- Other significant life events

Ways Forward to Support individuals:

- A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health
- Good pupil to teacher/school staff relationships
- Positive classroom management
- Create a sense of belonging
- Encourage positive peer influences
- Support positive friendships
- Ensure effective safeguarding and Child Protection policies are adhered to
- An effective early help process

- Adults to understand their role in and be part of effective multi-agency working
- Appropriate procedures to ensure staff are confident to can raise concerns about policies and processes, and know they will be dealt with fairly and effectively
- Clear policies on behaviour and bullying
- Staff behaviour policy (also known as code of conduct)
- 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems
- A positive attitude used in conversations
- Enabling experiences of success and achievement
- Faith or spirituality support and guidance
- enabling a capacity to reflect
- working in partnership with families
- High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying
- Opportunities for valued social roles
- Range of sport/leisure activities

Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The school's role in supporting and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

- **Prevention:** Creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping children to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this through our ethos and other school activities.
- **Identification:** Recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.
- **Early support:** Helping children to access evidence based early support and interventions.
- **Access to specialist support:** Working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

Working in Partnership with Parents

At Boxgrove CE Primary School, we understand and value the need to work closely with parents to ensure that the school's health initiatives meet the needs of our pupils. We value the important contribution made by parents and appreciate the need to proactively engage parents and families in the health of the children. We seek to establish and maintain strong partnerships with families, outside agencies and the wider community to promote consistent support for children's health and wellbeing.

Pastoral Organisation for Staff and Staff Wellbeing

Pastoral support for all members of the school community is fundamental to the aims and philosophy of Boxgrove C.E.P School. We believe that a well-supported, valued staff team with a clear and shared purpose are best placed to provide emotional wellbeing for children in their care.

Members of our community meet to support the school's work around mental health and emotional wellbeing.

To ensure staff wellbeing, these principles are followed:

- ✓ Leaders act as positive role models
- ✓ Senior Leaders and Governors ensure that the school environment promotes staff wellbeing
- ✓ Decision making processes are understood and supported by staff
- ✓ Opportunities are provided for staff to socialise and relax with each other
- ✓ New staff are supported with an appropriate level of induction
- ✓ Leaders promote an open listening culture that responds quickly to problems
- ✓ Maintenance of quality staff facilities and accommodation
- ✓ The regular and systematic monitoring of staff absences
- ✓ Access to LA confidential counselling and support services