



# Mental Health and Pupil Wellbeing Policy

Date Reviewed:	June 2023
Date approved by Governors:	June 2023
Date for Review:	June 2024

## **1. Rationale**

- 1.1 At Southall School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. Our culture is supportive, caring, and respectful. We encourage pupils to be open and we want each pupil to have their voice heard.
- 1.2 At our school, we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that each of us may need help to cope with them sometimes. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support. At our school, positive mental health is everybody's responsibility. We all have a role to play.
- 1.3 This policy is a guide to all staff, including teachers and non-teaching staff, and governors. It outlines our approach to promoting pupils' mental health and wellbeing. It should be read and understood alongside our other relevant school policies.

## **2 Aims**

- 2.1 The aim of our policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health of our staff and pupils.
- 2.2 At our school, we will always:
  - Help pupils to understand their emotions and experiences better.
  - Ensure our pupils feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries.
  - Help pupils to form and maintain relationships.
  - Encourage pupils to be confident and help to promote their self-esteem.
  - Help pupils to develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks.

We will always promote a healthy environment by:

- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all pupils and staff.
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements.
- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect.
- Promoting our pupil's voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making.
- Celebrating each pupil for who they are and making every pupil feel valued and respected.
- Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and providing support to any pupil who needs it.
- Raising awareness amongst staff and pupils about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms.
- Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of mental-ill health in pupils.
- Supporting staff who are struggling with their mental health.

### **3 Responsibilities**

3.1 All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils and each other. However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process. These are:

- Our Designated Safeguarding Officers.
- Pastoral/Wellbeing Staff.

3.2 If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a pupil, then in the first instance they should speak to the tutor or Key Stage Lead, as well as parents/carers.

3.3 If a pupil presents a medical emergency then relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services.

### **4 Curriculum**

4.1 Our PSHE, RSE and Citizenship curriculum is developed to provide pupils with the skills, knowledge, and understanding they need to keep themselves mentally healthy. This includes resilience techniques and training.

4.2 We will regularly review our PSHE curriculum and lesson content to ensure that they are meeting the aims outlined in this policy. We will also implement this into our curriculum at all stages to provide pupils with strategies to help keep them mentally well and resilient.

### **5 Support at Southall School and in the local community**

5.1 We have a range of support available at Southall for any pupils struggling, as listed below:

- Pastoral.
- Tutor team.
- Wellbeing.
- Nurture.
- ASD coordinator.

5.2 At Southall School, weekly intervention meetings take place where pupils who have been referred by their tutor teams are discussed, and relevant, bespoke support is then put in place to meet their needs.

5.3 There are a lot of support networks available for pupils in the local community. This includes services such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS now known as BeeU), and BEAM.

### **6 Signposting**

6.1 We will ensure that all staff, pupils, and parents/carers are aware of the support that is available in our school for mental health. This includes how to access further support, both inside and outside of school hours. Information can be located in the school reception area, school website, as well as letters sent home.

## **7 Identifying needs and warning signs**

7.1 All of our staff are trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems.

~~7.2~~ This means that they are able to offer help and support to pupils who need it, when they need it.

7.3 These warning signs are always taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs communicate their concerns to the the Designated Safeguarding Officer as appropriate.

7.4 Staff are able to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including:

- Physical signs of harm.
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits.
- Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in mood.
- Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide.
- Drug and alcohol abuse.
- Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. a large winter coat in summer.
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption.

7.5 Staff are also able to identify a range of issues, including:

- Attendance and absenteeism.
- Punctuality and lateness.
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education.
- Family and relationship problems.

Finally, staff are well placed to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact a pupil's mental health and wellbeing, such as bereavement and health difficulties.

## **8 Managing disclosures**

8.1 If a pupil discloses concerns about themselves or a friend, to any member of staff, then all staff respond in a calm, supportive, and non-judgemental manner.

8.2 All disclosures are recorded confidentially and only shared with the appropriate authorities if it is necessary to keep the child safe, in line with our Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

8.3 The disclosure record will contain:

- The pupil's name, date of birth and home contact detail
- The date and time of the disclosure.
- The name of the staff member to whom the disclosure was made.
- The nature of the disclosure and the main points from the conversation.
- Agreed next steps.

- The context of the disclosure e.g. on the playground, following an altercation with another pupil

## **Confidentiality**

8.4 If a member of staff thinks it is necessary to pass on concerns about a pupil, either to somebody inside the school or somebody outside it, then this will first be discussed with the pupil. They will be told:

- Who the staff member is going to tell.
- What the staff member is going to disclose.
- Why it is necessary for somebody else to be told.
- When the contact will be.

8.5 However, it may not be possible to gain the pupil's consent first, such as in the case of pupils who are at immediate risk. Protecting a pupil's safety is our main priority so we would share disclosures if we judged a pupil to be at risk. (So is this clearly stating that if a pupil is considered to be at significant risk of harm then Southall will not necessarily inform on outside agency like children's services or the Police?)

8.6 No member of staff will ever promise confidentiality to a pupil.

## **9 Whole School Approach**

9.1 We take a whole school approach towards the mental health of our pupils. This means working with parents/carers and with other agencies and partners, where appropriate.

## **10 Working with parents and carers**

10.1 We aim to support parents/carers as much as possible. This means keeping them informed about their child and offering our support at all times. To support parents/carers we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school.
- Share and allow parents/carers to access further support.
- Ensure that parents/carers are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child.
- Give parents/carers guidance about how they can support their child's/children's positive mental health.
- Ensure this policy is easily accessible to parents/carers.
- Keep parents/carers informed about the mental health training our school staff receive and how mental health is covered in our school curriculum.

## **11 Working with other agencies**

11.1 As part of our whole school approach, we also work with other agencies to support our pupils' emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with:

- The school nurse.
- Paediatricians.

- CAMHS.
- Counselling services.
- Therapists.
- Family support workers.
- Behavioural support workers
- Social Care
- The Local Authority's Looked After Children Service/The Virtual School

## **12 Supporting Peers**

- 12.1 We understand that, when a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their peers. In response to this, we will consider, on a case-by-case basis, any peers that may need additional support.
- 12.2 We provide support in a one-on-one or group setting. These sessions are guided by the student, but they discuss how peers can help, how peers can access support themselves, and healthy ways of coping with any emotions they might be feeling.

## **13 Supporting Staff**

- 13.1 At Southall School the mental health and wellbeing of staff is taken seriously.
- 13.2 All staff are able to be part of the Wellbeing group led by Steve McCallum. The group meets at least once every half term.
- 13.3 Steve McCallum, who leads on staff wellbeing, is invited to senior leadership (Senior Leadership) meetings to share staff ideas and concerns about wellbeing.
- 13.4 All staff are made aware of the counselling service that is available to all Telford & Wrekin employees.
- 13.5 All staff have a return-to-work meeting after a period of absence. This ensures that their mental health and wellbeing is discussed, and appropriate support in 'is' not 'in) put in place, if needed.

## **14 Training**

- 14.1 Staff receive training in child mental health so that they can recognise and respond to mental health issues. Training records are kept on a central database by the School Administrator.
- 14.2 We post all relevant information, and additional information, on our school website so staff can learn more about child mental health. We will
- 14.3 We consider additional training opportunities for staff and we will support additional CPD throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with pupils.

**15 Policy Review**

- 15.1 This policy is reviewed every year. This is so that it remains up to date, useful, and relevant. We also regularly review it in accordance with local and national policy changes.