

# Holymead Primary School

## Pupil Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

### Policy statement

At Holymead Primary School, we are committed to promoting the positive mental health and emotional wellbeing of all students and their families. Our caring and supportive ethos ensures pupils' voices are heard and valued and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected by mental health issues. 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:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships
- promote self-esteem 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.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school 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 worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs.

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties.

### Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff outlining Holymead Primary School's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with our SEND policy in cases where pupils' mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with Holymead Primary School's PSHC, Behaviour and Anti-Bullying policies. It should also sit alongside child protection policies and procedures.

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### **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 Lead – Angharad Davies
- Senior Mental Health Lead – Jo-Anne Head
- Family Link Worker – Wendy Kelly
- SENDCos – Angharad Davies and Joanne Holbrook
- PSHC Leads – Liz Elston and Isabel Williams

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

If there is concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

### **Teaching about mental health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHC 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. We will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

### **Signposting**

We will ensure that students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, website etc) we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure pupils and parents/carers understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why they should access it
- What is likely to happen next

### **Warning signs**

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should alert the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Senior Mental Health Lead or the school's Family Link Worker as appropriate.

Possible warning signs which all staff should be aware of 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

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- Lowering of academic achievement
- 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
- 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

### **Targeted support**

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with school nurses and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers.
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs
- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including Bristol CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur
- Provide pupils with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and educational policies and protocols regarding confidentiality
- Provide pupils with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when the need it
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

### **Managing disclosures**

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially on CPOMs, including:

- Date

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- Name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure and main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information will be shared with the school safeguarding team.

### **Confidentiality**

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a pupil to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be discussed with the pupil. We will follow the school's child protection and safeguarding policy.

### **Supporting parents**

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc)
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by appropriately trained health or education practitioners
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

### **Working with other agencies and partners**

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Education psychology services
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (Child and Adult Mental Health Service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists

### **Supporting peers**

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, 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 who 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

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- Warning signs that their friend needs help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling.

### **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 to enable them to keep students safe.

The MindEd portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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

### **Policy review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is 25.4.24. 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.

Date: 25.4.22

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