

The Bromfords School



Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

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Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Policy Statement

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 make a contribution to her or his community.

(World Health Organization)

At The Bromfords School, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue.

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. We view this as part of our safeguarding commitment both to students and staff.

Objectives

The Policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and students
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students. Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Daniel Osei-Poku – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Lorraine Briffaut – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Holly Williams – Assistant Head/SLT link
- Elizabeth Rainey – Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Coordinator
- Heads of Year – Sally Wilson, Yvonne Dixon, Aaron Rowswell (Deputy DSL), Kerry Morgan
- Assistant Head -Director of KS3 – Sam Fuller
- Assistant Head Director of KS4 – Emma Huet (Deputy DSL)
- Assistant Head Director of Key Stage 5 – EL McCue (Deputy DSL)
- SMSC Strategic Lead – Emma Huet

Promote positive mental health in all staff and students

The school promotes the mental and physical health and emotional wellbeing of all its students. Wellbeing is at the forefront of the School's PSHE programme and promoting good mental health is a priority. The physical, mental and emotional health benefits of exercise are well documented and the school actively encourages sport for all.

The school community has identified 5 key qualities that are fundamental to good mental health and wellbeing. The first five are promoted by the NHS and Mind. They are:

1. Connect;
2. Be active;
3. Take notice;
4. Learn;
5. Give.

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>

In addition, the school actively promotes the importance of:

1. Proper sleep patterns;
2. Healthy eating;
3. Emotional Resilience;
4. Sense of humour;
5. Firm boundaries.

Mental health issues can be de-stigmatised by educating students, staff and parents. This is done through tutorials and PSHE with the students, through staff CPD and through parent voice and the school website. Positive mental health is also promoted through strong pastoral care and support systems, including the school nurses and school councillor.

Warning signs that students may be suffering with mental health or wellbeing concerns

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student 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 communicate their concerns to the relevant Head of Year. 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;
- 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.

Disclosures and risk assessing students with mental health or wellbeing concerns

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded on My Concern in writing in an email to the HOY and DSL/DDSL.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the relevant Head of Year 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 DSL/DDSL or the Headteacher. 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 the appropriate Head of Year.

Supporting students with mental health or wellbeing concerns

It may be necessary to draw up a risk assessment for students causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the student, the parents and relevant health professionals where appropriate.

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 PSHE curriculum, assemblies and other opportunities. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum.

Working with all parents/carers

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents/carers, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child

- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through information evenings
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider, on a case-by-case basis, which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one-to-one or group settings and will be sensitive to the student suffering with mental health issues.

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular safeguarding training in order to enable them to keep students safe. We will host relevant links on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal² provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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 students.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health. Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Elizabeth Rainey who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Staff support and wellbeing

Wellbeing is all about our holistic health, including the physical and emotional. With good levels of wellbeing, we feel that life is in balance and that we can generally cope well. We feel motivated and engaged, we're 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 for promoting student wellbeing and attainment. It is important that everyone is given the right emotional and practical support so that they can, in turn, support their students.

The school's caring ethos and environment has a major impact on the wellbeing of its staff. It is important for the school leadership team (SLT) to build a culture of trust where school staff feel valued, can be open about their health and wellbeing and know how to access support if they need it. For all of this to happen, it is essential for the Headteacher and the SLT (including governors) to model good mental health and wellbeing behaviour and practice. It is also important for the Headteacher to remember to look after their own mental health and wellbeing alongside that of their staff.

To provide a much greater focus on supporting staff to be mentally healthy and look after their wellbeing, the school has a Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Coordinator – Elizabeth Rainey – who will work with the SLT, staff, students and other organisations to promote and support a variety of mechanisms to do this. A starting point for everyone could be to look at five ways to wellbeing:

<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/mental-health-at-work/taking-care-of-yourself/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>