



# **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

## **2024 v1**

This policy was approved by the governing body on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024 and will be reviewed every 3 years or as required.

Signed:

Chair of Governors

Date: 1<sup>st</sup> July 2024

### ***Non-Statutory Policy***

## **Defining Mental Health and Wellbeing**

This policy supports the World Health Organisation definition of Mental Health, which defines it as: 'A state of wellbeing in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.'

## **Mission Statement and Vision**

At Newcroft Primary Academy, our aim is to care for and develop the whole child educationally, emotionally, spiritually, morally and physically. As well as caring for their education, we also care for their mental health and wellbeing and feel that it is essential to provide children with information to enable them to make life long, well-informed decisions about their diet and health. We believe in teamwork; working with each other, with teachers and colleagues across the school, with the wider school community and most importantly with the pupils in our school. We are committed to making a difference; we are not passive players in young people's lives but active participants who can, and do, make a real difference. This is reflected in the school's curriculum intent statement and core values, in particular: 'resilience, 'inclusion' and in our motto 'Aspiring for Excellence.'

Our moral purpose can therefore be summarised in our values:

- Aspiration
- Resilience
- Creativity
- Inclusivity
- Pride

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

- All children are valued, feel confident in themselves and are able to learn and achieve
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe to express their emotions and ideas verbally or through worry boxes
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued
- Children can make and maintain healthy relationships
- Children will be able to cope with and manage times of stress
- Bullying is not tolerated

## **Relevant Policies**

This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors. The policy works in conjunction with the Anti-Bullying policy, Behaviour policy, Communication Best Practice guidance, Pupils with Medical Needs who cannot Attend School policy, Trust Equality and Diversity policy, SEND policy, Safeguarding Policy and SMSC procedures and approaches, Attendance policy. This policy is also related to the Relationships and Sex Education Policy, which discusses the statutory requirements for pupils to learn about building self-esteem, emotional wellbeing, relationships, and healthy lives, beginning in the EYFS through to Year 6 and our approach to this at Newcroft.

## **Supporting our Whole School Community - Promoting Wellbeing at all Times**

### **Role of All Staff**

- Treat each other with empathy and respect
- Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff

- Support other members of staff if they become stressed by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance
- Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support
- Contribute positively towards morale and team spirit
- Use shared areas respectfully, such as the staff room or offices
- Take part in training opportunities that promote their wellbeing

### **Role of Line Managers**

- Maintain positive relationships with their staff and value them for their skills, not their working pattern
- Provide a non-judgemental and confidential support system to staff
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies
- Monitor workload of all staff
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help or support
- Understand that personal issues and pressures may have a temporary effect on work performance and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures
- Promote information about and access to external support services
- Help to arrange personal and professional development training, where appropriate
- Keep in touch with staff if they're absent for long periods
- Monitor staff sickness absence and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- Conduct return to work interviews to support staff back into work

### **Role of Senior Leaders**

- Lead in setting standards for conduct, including how they treat other members of staff and adhering to agreed working hours
- Manage a non-judgemental and confidential support system for staff
- Monitor the wellbeing of staff through regular structured conversations
- Make sure accountability systems are based on trust and professional dialogue, with proportionate amounts of direct monitoring
- Regularly review the demands on staff, such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions, wherever possible
- Make sure job descriptions are kept up to date, with clearly identified responsibilities and staff being consulted before any changes are made
- Listen to the views of staff and involve them in decision-making processes, including allowing them to consider any workload implications of new initiatives
- Communicate new initiatives effectively with all members of staff to ensure they feel included and aware of any changes occurring at the school
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated
- Make staff aware of meetings, deadlines and events ahead of time so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing
- Promote information about and support in accessing external support services

### **Role of the Full Governing Body**

The mental health governor will support the Mental Health Lead in monitoring staff wellbeing. The governing board is expected to:

- Make sure the school is fulfilling its duty of care as an employer, such as by giving staff a reasonable workload and creating a supportive work environment

- Monitor and support the wellbeing of the headteacher
- Ensure that resources and support services are in place to promote staff wellbeing
- Make decisions and review policies with staff wellbeing in mind, particularly concerning workload
- Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from staff as part of monitoring work
- Be reasonable about the notice the school should give governors to read paperwork to prepare for a meeting
- Ensure staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits, and what information will be required from them
- Ensure wellbeing is a standing agenda item on the FGB agenda to ensure issues around staff and pupil wellbeing are highlighted and managed well through a strategic approach

## **The Role of Parents**

The school recognises the critical role parents have in educating their child about good mental health and wellbeing.

In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on the Pastoral Hub of the school's website and in a standing section on the school's Half Termly Newsletter
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through newsletters and other such initiatives
- 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 through our consistent approach to homework
- Work with agencies and partners

## **The Role of Pupils**

Pupils take part in an annual wellbeing survey in addition to the school's general pupil voice survey, which includes questions on mental and physical health and wellbeing. Mental Health Ambassadors also support pupils in ensuring their voice is heard on mental health and wellbeing matters.

## **The School's Mental Health Team**

### **Designated Lead in Mental Health**

As part of the Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision (DfE 2018), Newcroft Primary Academy has identified the essential role that a Designated Lead in Mental Health will have in our school. This senior leader will be a trained member of staff who is responsible for the school's approach to mental health. At Newcroft Primary Academy, our Designated Lead in Mental Health is Miss Alice Brailsford, Assistant Head Teacher and Pastoral Lead. Mrs Nicola Robe, the school's Family Outreach Worker, also provides essential support for staff, pupils and parents:

The designated lead will:

- Lead and work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing
- Work alongside our PSHE leader to ensure positive mental health is taught across year groups
- Provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates

- Liaise with mental health services and refer children to specialist services, if required
- Oversee the help the school gives pupils with mental health problems
- Help staff to identify pupils who show signs of mental health problems

## **Supporting Staff**

The school recognises the important work of the Designated Safeguarding Leader (DSL) and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leaders (DDSLs) in the school's approach to mental health and wellbeing. The DSL team, along with the school's family outreach worker, are also skilled in accessing support for pupils from specialist multi agency services, as well as support for their parents.

## **Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA)**

The school's Designated Lead in Mental Health and Family Outreach worker are qualified MHFAs and have delivered training to staff to enable them to be competent in supporting pupils in the classroom with their mental health, alongside the curriculum we teach. All teaching and support staff have undertaken a course in mental health first aid.

## **ELSA and Counselling in School**

The school prioritises mental health and gives pupils access to ELSA and counselling in school. The school's Designated Lead in Mental Health and Designated Safeguarding Leader manage the caseloads of these professionals to ensure the highest priority cases are seen first. The school works with multi agency professionals, who may wish to attend school, to provide counselling to pupils, in agreement with their parents.

## **Pupil Mental Health Ambassadors**

As part of the school's Job Centre, a team of KS2 pupils are nominated on an annual basis as Pupil Mental Health Ambassadors. They are trained by the school's Designated Lead in Mental Health First Aid. They provide peer support for wellbeing, promote initiatives, raise awareness of wellbeing and mental health across the curriculum. They also support leaders in creating policy and procedures, from a pupil-centred approach.

## **Aims of the Mental Health Team**

The main aim of the Mental Health Team is to support the Designated Lead in Mental Health to fulfil the duties outlined in the Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision (DfE 2018).

## **Training**

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues. 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 provided throughout the year where it becomes appropriate.

## **Warning signs of support needed**

School staff recognise that pupils may not always feel able to come forward and speak to a member of staff or put a concern in a worry box. School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil, or even a member of staff, 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 with a DSL and/ or the Head teacher.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or 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
- Lateness to or absence from school/increase in incidences

### **Targeted support and provision**

The school engages in a tiered approach to supporting pupils with mental health concerns.

### **Universal Interventions**

As part of our whole school approach, we have identified several universal interventions we offer to support children with their mental health and wellbeing.

- PSHE Lessons
- Wellbeing Stories and assemblies
- Pupil voice
- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes'
- Managing emotions resources
- ELSA support groups
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- The Boxall Profile

Teachers are trained to use the Boxall Profile to assess pupil's with social and emotional mental health concerns. This assessment identifies targets for pupil's that will be worked on through targeted interventions. We work alongside parents to discuss which interventions will best suit their child's needs and share these with them, where necessary, using individual support plans. The interventions we subsequently offer vary from child-to-child but may include:

- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) Focus Groups
- Drawing and Talking or Lego Therapy
- Lunchtime Support Clubs
- Social Communication Group

### **Signposting and Working with Specialist Agencies and Partners**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support through our website.

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

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Behaviour support through Oakfield Short Stay School
- Paediatricians
- Early Intervention
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- ELSA

- CFWS (Children and Family Wellbeing Service)
- Children's Social Care
- Early Help
- Autism Outreach Service (AOS)