



# Mental Health and Well Being Policy

April 2021

At Aldersbrook Primary School we promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community.

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing, "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." We make it clear that mental health and wellbeing are not just the absence of mental health problems.

### **Aims**

We believe mental health and emotional wellbeing are just as important in our lives as physical health. In July 2020 The Office for National Statistics and NHS Digital found that one in six children and young people have a probable mental health condition. We know that these can have a significant impact on a child's quality of life, relationships and academic achievements. Therefore we aims to:

- Inform and teach pupils the foundations of good mental health and how to look after their wellbeing.
- Promote and value positive mental health.
- Work towards reducing the stigma attached to mental health disorders by having open discussions.
- Contribute to and help maintain the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff through school practices.
- Encourage pupils, to begin to, and staff to take responsibility for their own mental health and wellbeing.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that, "in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy."

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to inform pupils, staff, parents, carers and governors about how we promote positive mental health and support emotional wellbeing at Aldersbrook Primary School.

### **Statutory Requirements**

Maintained schools are under statutory duties to promote wellbeing and mental health. This is in accordance with Section 10 of the Children Act 2004, provides a duty for schools to cooperate with local authorities to improve the wellbeing of children and young people, including physical and mental health and emotional wellbeing. Section 175 of the Education Act 2002 provides a duty on maintained

schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils. Section 38 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 amends Section 21 of the Education Act 2002, to state that “The governing body of a maintained school shall, in discharging their functions relating to the conduct of the school – (a) promote the well-being of pupils at the school.”

### **Mental Health Team**

Named Senior Leader for Mental Health	Brian Hughes
Named Subject Leader for Mental Health	Jennifer Bales
Named Governor for Mental Health	Catheryne Hill
SENCO/Inclusion Lead KS1/2	Gill McKarkiel-Powell
SENCO EYFS	Bethan Newman
7 Mental Health First Aiders	Michael Lewis Lyndsay Gibson Alvin Kalisa Julie Dietz Dominique Melin Gemma Palmer Balbir Kaur
2 ELSA Trained Leaders	Lyndsay Gibson Julie Dietz
Parent Support Advisor	Dean Gibson

### **Subject Intent**

To develop mentally healthy children we have a dedicated school mental health and well-being team comprising of Head Teacher, Mental Health Subject Leader, a higher level Learning Support Assistant in KS1 and a higher level Learning Support Assistant in KS2. We focus on the impact every member of staff can have on a child’s mental health. We teach children to be involved and confident in managing and recognising their mental health needs. Staff have a vital role in developing a child’s well-being through daily interactions and quality relationships. Furthermore, staff take part in regular mental health INSETs on identified areas of need. Children with a higher-level of need are flagged up early and supported with additional services such as interventions or counselling. Children are taught about mental health during PSHE lessons. They are encouraged to be curious and ask questions to help them learn about mental health. We want them to be independent in managing their mental health and confident to recognise when they need additional support.

### **Identifying and Supporting Children with Mental Health Needs**

Only trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, but our staff are well placed to identify pupils whose behaviour suggests they might have a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. If staff are concerned about a child's mental health they should speak to a member of the senior leadership team.

Some key indicators of mental health difficulties are:

- A drop in attendance, or consistent lateness
- Sudden or significant change in pupil's mood
- Change in eating habits e.g. eating more, refusing to eat, hiding food or being newly picky over what is eaten
- Withdrawing from social groups or friends, or suddenly appearing very confident.
- Recent bereavement
- Fixating on small details e.g. difficulty in completing work because of restarting it until completely correct
- Frequently asking questions about big concepts or the news
- Avoidance of certain activities, lessons, staff or situations
- Sleeping difficulties, or recent and new enuresis
- Sudden drop in academic performance or caring much less than previously
- Self-harm or talking about self-harm
- Sudden behavioural outbursts
- Frequent headaches or stomach aches, or regularly complaining of minor ailments

## Whole-School

- Staff trained to identify, support and direct children, families and colleagues with mental health difficulties. Specific training has included PAC-UK, trauma, attachment, LGBTQ+, mindfulness.
- Seven school mental health first aiders.
- Staff promote positive mental health throughout the school day.
- Staff aware of children who may experience or are more likely to experience poorer mental health e.g. pupil premium, SEN, LAC, LGBTQ+.
- School behaviour policy promotes positive behaviour strategies.
- Value of the month supports children's focus on their's and other's strengths.

## Classes

- KS1 and KS2 classes teach The PSHE Association programme that has specific lessons for mental health and wellbeing.
- At least one lesson focused solely on mental health is taught each half-term.
- Regular assemblies focus on relevant mental health issues.
- Nursery and Reception classes teach weekly lessons to support mental health and wellbeing based on the EYFS.
- Children regularly practice mindfulness based activities.
- Growth mindset approach taught to children.

## Groups

- Staff work with children with identified needs on a small group or one-to-one basis e.g. snack group, nature group, one-to-one tuition.
- Forest school prioritises those with mental health and wellbeing needs.
- ELSA programme administered by two higher level teaching assistants in KS1 and KS2 for identified children.
- Children who have greater mental health needs are prioritised for class responsibilities or additional activities.
- Variety of specialist programmes targeting e.g. yoga, face your fear, drama workshops.

## Individuals

- CAMHS referrals.
- Specialised timetables with additional break or movement slots.
- Staff across school aware of children with greatest needs.
- SENCO supports individual families to access school and external support.
- School counsellor and Place2Be counsellors for 3 and a 1/2 days a week for children with specific needs.

## Supporting Staff and Parents with Mental Health Needs

### Whole-School

- School vision promotes a positive and supportive attitude to mental health.
- Staff and families encouraged to spend time on their own mental health.
- Stigma regarding mental health needs is strongly challenged
- Seven staff mental health first aiders and one trained governor.
- Open door policy for staff or parents to speak to senior leaders.
- Methods to support mental health are regularly promoted e.g. healthy eating, exercise, using the forest.

### Staff

- Headteacher works with NEU representative to support staff wellbeing needs.
- Free tea, coffee, milk in the staffroom
- Free staff yoga club
- PPA in year group teams
- Days in lieu for extra hours worked e.g. during camping, running a club
- Positive praise of good practice shared during meetings
- Flexibility in calendar and timetable
- Healthy work-life balance promoted by SLT.
- HR and occupational health involvement if necessary.

### Parents and Carers

- Close links with local Children's Centre to support parents and carers of children under 5.
- Regular meetings for parents of LAC.
- Resources emailed out e.g. Anna Freud 'It's never too early to talk about mental health', Young Minds website, Place2Be documents.
- Detailed information and additional websites shared on school website.
- Full time dedicated Parent Liaison Officer
- Regular events such as 'Good to Chat' mornings, parents workshops and support resources & links in weekly newsletter

### Individuals

- Access to school counsellor on site and during school hours.
- Support given by senior leaders to manage mental health difficulties e.g. quiet spaces, time off to attend appointments, time to chat.
- Parent liaison officer supports parents with temporary or longer-term mental health needs.

## **Confidentiality**

All children and staff need to be informed that as a general rule, confidentiality will be maintained. Where a member of staff is concerned that a child protection issue is arising or an adult is at risk the school's policy on safeguarding will be followed.

## **Induction and Training Procedures**

Training for staff is delivered through INSETs, regular sharing of online resources and external speakers.

## **Links with Other Policies**

This policy links with the schools policies on: appraisal policies, behaviour policy, health, safety and welfare policy, PSHE policy, and safeguarding and children protection policy, thrive policy.

## **Links with External Agencies**

We work with CAMHS, our school nurse, educational psychologists, SEATTS external advisors, family support workers, counselling services, linked primary and secondary schools, PAC UK, charities including Place2Be and Young Minds.

## **Who to contact if you need support:**

Pupils – if you feel able to speak to your class teacher, if you would prefer speak to a Mental Health First Aider.

Parents/Carers – please speak to a member of staff you feel comfortable to approach or a Mental Health First Aider.

Staff – if you feel comfortable, please speak to a member of the Senior Leadership Team or speak to a Mental Health First Aider.

## **Helpful Websites**

- Anna Freud Centre Schools in Mind: <https://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/>
- Early Years in Mind: <https://www.annafreud.org/early-years/early-years-in-mind/>
- Mentally Healthy Schools: <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk>
- NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/>
- Nip In The Bud: <https://nipinthebud.org>
- Place 2Be: <https://www.place2be.org.uk>
- Redbridge CAMHS: <https://www.nelft.nhs.uk/redbridge-camhs/>
- Young minds: <https://youngminds.org.uk>