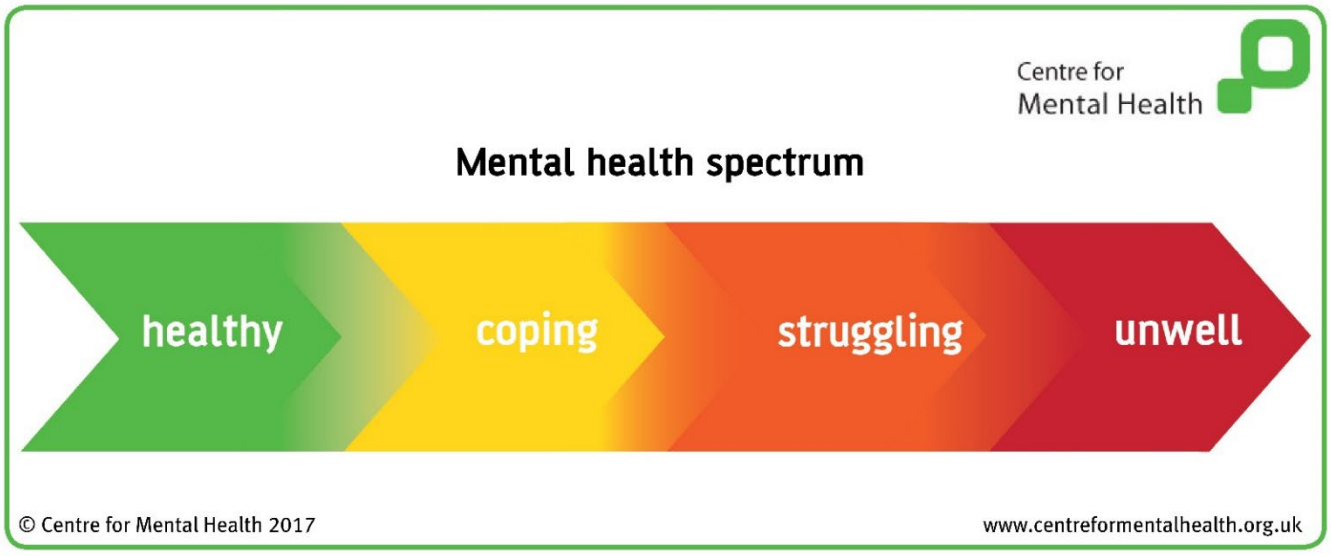
Bowlee Park Primary School

Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
UNCRC Article 24: Every child has the right to the best possible health.

Definition
Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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 Organisation)

At Bowlee Park, children are taught, 'Good mental health is a feeling of happiness, safety and the ability to thrive.'



INTENT

Moral Purpose
At Bowlee Park, we aim to promote positive mental health for pupils, staff and parents. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils and adults. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. Our Bowlee Park values of 'Kindness', 'Cooperation', 'Respect', 'Responsibility, 'Ambition' and 'Resilience' underpin our moral purpose. Our open culture allows students' voices to be heard, and through the implementation of effective policies and procedures, we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. A similar number of staff teaching in a school will have a diagnosable mental health issue and due to the number of parents, a much larger number of parents will have a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we all can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils and adults affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

Scope
This document describes Bowlee Park's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors. This policy should be read in conjunction with other policies including: RSHE, PSHE, safeguarding, behaviour, medical and SEND.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all pupils, staff and parents
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health and enable them to respond appropriately
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering with mental health difficulties/mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers
- Develop resilience amongst students and staff through raising awareness of resilience building techniques.

IMPLEMENTATION

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

- Aleks Hartshorne – Head Teacher
- Sarah Taylor – AHT, Mental Health Lead Teacher/Mental Health First Aider
- Neil Fairhurst – Mental Health Team
- Kerry Larkins – PSHE Lead
- Kathryn Gorton – RRS School Council Lead
- Catherine Mullane – RRS School Council Lead
- Marcos Walsh – PE Lead/ Mental Health First Aider
- Laura Walton – Family Liaison Officer
- Lindsay Campbell - Family Liaison Officer
- Victoria Butler – SEND Officer
- Jane Hyde - Governor

Health and Wellbeing for Pupils

A whole school approach
We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils become more resilient, happy and successful and prevent problems before they arise. This encompasses seven aspects:

- creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands
- helping pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to
- helping pupils to be resilient learners
- teaching pupils social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
- early identification of pupils who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services
- effectively working with parents and carers
- supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health issues.

Culture and Ethos
At Bowlee Park we strive to create a mentally healthy environment where children and young people:

- Have opportunities to participate in activities that encourage belonging
- Have opportunities to participate in decision making

- Have opportunities to celebrate academic and non-academic achievements
- Have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed
- Have opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Have opportunities to reflect
- Have access to appropriate support that meets their needs
- Have a right to be in an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for
- Are surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours, interactions and ways of relating at all times

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the mental health lead/phase leader 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 or DDSL. If the pupil presents as 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.

Teaching about Mental Health

As part of our whole-school approach to mental wellbeing, we have implemented the myHappymind programme—a DfE-backed, evidence-based curriculum designed to support children's mental health and character development from Early Years through to Year 6. MyHappyMind is a preventative mental health programme that teaches children science-backed strategies to build resilience, self-esteem, and emotional literacy. It is structured around five key modules:

- Meet Your Brain – Teaching children how their brain works and how to manage their emotions.
- Celebrate – Helping children recognise their character strengths and the strengths of others.
- Appreciate – Introducing the practice of gratitude to boost mood and wellbeing
- Relate – Fostering healthy relationships and empathy through active listening and understanding.
- Engage – Building a growth mindset and helping children set and achieve goals.

Each module is delivered through age-appropriate lessons, interactive activities, digital resources, and reinforcement at home via the MyHappyMind parent app.

Through our RSHE curriculum, assemblies and ethos, we teach our pupils knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help pupils to be more resilient, understand about mental health and help reduce the stigma of mental health problems. Lessons are well-sequenced and progressive to enable pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. We teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. We value pupils' views and recognise that these lead to positive outcomes; we have a number of counsellors and ambassadors that represent our pupils and we encourage our 'Happy Heroes' (wellbeing ambassadors) to lead by example and promote wellbeing in school, at home and in the community

Warning Signs

School 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 communicate their concerns with the Senior Mental Health Lead. Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- High levels of anxiety
- 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
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Continuous lowering of mood
- Parents/carers reporting significant concerns with regard to SEMH
- Significant issues with peer relationships
- Often cries, nervous, unhappy, many fears, complains of headaches and illness

Early Identification

We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to secure the best outcomes for pupils. We do this in different ways including:

- Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff;
- Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons;
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff;
- Early Help Assessments;
- Using CPOMS to record and analyse behaviour, exclusions, medical appointments, attendance and sanctions;
- Pupil Progress meetings termly;
- Pastoral team meet with SLT to discuss individual children;
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer;
- Parent consultations three times a year;
- Safeguarding team posters in every classroom;
- Class logs;
- Parent questionnaires;

Some children and adults will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems in order to access the early intervention needed. ***A*ppendix 1** details Bowlee Park's Targeted Support and Referral Pathway.

Signposting

We ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. We display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as corridors and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

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

Within Rochdale, there a numerous external services and charities that can children be referred to.

- CAMHS;
- #Thrive;
- Mental Health Support Teams
- GP;
- Educational psychologist;
- Mind

Managing disclosures

If a pupil 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?' and not asking leading questions. All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the student's confidential file in CPOMS.

This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation – what the child said
- Actions taken

This information should be shared with the mental health lead, DSL and DDSL. Where necessary, staff will offer support and advice about next steps.

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil and other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect. We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing.

Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g., parent helplines and forums. We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record on CPOMS.

Training

The school recognises that all staff share a collective responsibility to promote and support positive mental health across our community. We aim to ensure that every member of staff feels confident and equipped to do so effectively. Staff receive training on identifying mental health needs, understanding protective and risk factors (see Appendix 2), and knowing the appropriate steps to take when concerns arise, including how to access support and guidance. Resources are readily available via shared Padlets, and senior leaders maintain regular liaison with external agencies to strengthen our network of support.

Several members of staff have undertaken specialist training to enhance our capacity in this area. The school's Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL) and PE Lead have completed Mental Health First Aid training, the Family Liaison

Officers have undertaken training through the Anna Freud Centre, and the school's SENDCO is a qualified Trauma-Informed Practitioner.

As a minimum requirement, all staff receive regular training on recognising and responding to mental health concerns as part of their ongoing safeguarding and child protection training, ensuring they are able to keep pupils safe. Additional self-directed professional development is encouraged through the **MindEd** learning portal, which offers free online training on a wide range of mental health topics. Opportunities for more in-depth or specialist training will be identified through the performance management process, and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where specific needs arise—such as in response to developing situations involving individual pupils or groups.

Tiers of support for pupils
Specialist support • Referrals to CAMHs • #Thrive • Kooth • School nurses • YPMHST • Heywood, Middleton and Rochdale early Attachment service • Proud Trust • Neurodiversity Hub
Targeted support • Daily check-ins with pupil • Team around the family • EHA • Support from Family Liaison Officers • Specific interventions E.g. Talkabout, Wellbeing Dominoes, ELSA • Mentoring sessions • Sensory areas in school • Sensory diets
Universal support • Pupil wellbeing policy • School behaviour policy • Significant adult to talk to – strong attachment to at least one adult in school • Welcoming/Nurturing school environment • Access to a high-quality curriculum that develops strength of character • My Happy Mind • Access to a high-quality RSHE curriculum • Celebration of success • Promote 5 ways to wellbeing • Staff that care • Access to high quality PE lessons by a PE specialist • Bowlee values and approach to character development • Emotions register • Healthy school meals provided • Access to water throughout the day • Wellbeing Ambassadors/Happy Heroes as peer support • Extra-curricular activities led by specialists e.g. music, ICT, sports • Calming music played in classes



A mentally healthy environment is a place where staff and Governors:

- Have their individual needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way
- Have a range of strategies that support their mental health, e.g. a named person to speak to/signposting
- Have recognition for their work-life balance
- Have the mental health and well-being of the staff reviewed regularly
- Feel valued and have opportunities to contribute to decision making processes
- Celebrate and recognise success
- Are provided with opportunities for CPD both personally and professionally
- Have time to reflect

At Bowlee Park, we believe that staff wellbeing support needs to be personalised and bespoke to meet the specific needs of staff as these arise. How staff feel on an everyday basis is likely to affect their performance and therefore impact on the ethos and atmosphere of the school, which in turn affects learners. If staff are happy, motivated and are purposeful in their approach this will have a huge positive impact on the wellbeing of learners resulting in happier learners who achieve more.

Our school embeds practices and routines to support staff by providing opportunities for them to reflect on their own needs, develop their emotional literacy, and recognise when they need individual support. The school raises awareness of the support and services available, understanding that ultimately, staff need to take responsibility for recognising and addressing their own issues of concern, in order to reach a resolution that allows them to continue to work in an efficient and positive way.

Bowlee Park Primary School has signed up to the Education staff wellbeing charter.

Role of all staff
• Understand this policy and seek clarification from management where required; • Treat each other with empathy and respect • Keep in mind the workload and wellbeing of other members of staff • Take responsibility for recognising and addressing their own issues of concern, in order to reach a resolution that allows them to continue to work in an efficient and positive way. • Support other members of staff if they become stressed, such as by providing practical assistance or emotional reassurance • Report honestly about their wellbeing and let other members of staff know when they need support • Follow the school's policy on out-of-school hours working, including guidance on when it is and isn't reasonable to respond to communications • 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 YGLs

- Ensure that all staff in their team are made aware of this policy
- Actively support and contribute to the implementation of this policy, including its goals and objectives.
- Lead by example
- Maintain positive relationships with their teams and value them for their skills
- Provide a non-judgemental support to their staff
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff and communicate any concerns with the senior leadership team
- Promote information about, and access to, external support services
- 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

Role of Senior Staff

The Senior Leadership Team recognise the importance of ensuring all staff in school enjoy a reasonable balance between their working life and the demands of home, family and other interests and commitments. All senior staff are expected to:

- 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 surveys, structured conversations and supervision meetings
- Regularly review the demands on staff (see Approach to Workload Policy), such as the time spent on paperwork, and seek alternative solutions wherever possible
- 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 new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help
- Ensure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities/ external support services
- Understand that personal issues and pressures at work may have a temporary effect on work performance, and take that into account during any appraisal or capability procedures
- Monitor staff sickness absence, and have support meetings with them if any patterns emerge
- Work closely with YGLs to ensure all members of the team are supported

Role of the Governing body

The Governing body recognises that employees are not obliged to work in school beyond their contracted hours, although teachers are expected to complete preparation, planning and assessment beyond the school day. 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 in regards to workload
- Be reasonable about the format and quantity of information asked for from staff as part of monitoring work
- Ensure that staff are clear about the purpose of any monitoring visits and what information will be required from them

Tiers of support

Specialist support

• Employee Assistance – PAM Assist, Education Support, Qwell • Crisis support • Referrals to occupational health • Counselling
Targeted support • Supervision • Training around mental health • Regular well-being check-in meetings for all staff using peer support
Universal support • Staff wellbeing policy • Health and safety policy • Open door culture for all staff • Staff supported by SLT • Supervision meetings • All staff being treated in a fair and consistent manner • Culture of no blame and stigma for mental health needs of school community • Staff questionnaires/opportunities to feedback • Performance management – dedicated 1:1 time. • Team building opportunities • My Happy Mind – Staff Wellbeing and support

<u>Health and Wellbeing Support for Parents/Carers</u>

Effective parental engagement is an essential part of our whole-school approach to children's health and mental wellbeing. Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website/newsletter and through Padlets
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in RSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home
- Work alongside external agencies to facilitate mental health workshops

Specialist support • Referral to Mind for the adult • Team around the family • #Thrive
Targeted support • Early Help Assessment • Team around the family • Frequent informal meetings for support
Universal support • Access to the wellbeing policy • Staff are available to talk • Parents evenings • Stay and learn for parents

- Mental health training in school for parents
- Confidence that their child is being supported in school

IMPACT

This policy offers opportunities to measure the impact in a variety of ways:

- Child/Staff/Parent wellbeing;
- The school's ethos;
- School policies;
- Pupil and staff attendance/absence;
- Staff/Governor/RRS/Sports Council and School Council meetings;
- Feedback from the whole school community via questionnaires and verbally, formally and informally;
- The number of external referrals;
- Induction and professional development of staff and volunteers;
- EHA paperwork.

Signed: S Taylor

Date: November 2025

Review: November 2027