



# Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

May 2024

PER-15



APPROVAL COMMITTEE	DATE APPROVED	REVIEW DUE DATE
Personnel & Safeguarding	May 2024	June 2026

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### EQUALITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The governing board has reviewed this procedure to ensure that it does not discriminate against any individual or group on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, or socio-economic status. This procedure has been developed with due regard to the school's Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment, and victimization.
- Advance equality of opportunity between different groups.
- Foster good relations between different groups.

The governing board is satisfied that this procedure reflects the school's commitment to promoting equality and inclusion.

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## Policy Statement

At Chalfont St Giles Village School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils, staff and parents/carers.

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times anyone may need additional emotional support. 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
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.
- Listen to children and make sure their voice is heard
- Develop skills of empathy to help children feel understood by their peers
- Provide a curriculum that integrates the development of social and emotional skills including problem-solving, coping and conflict management/resolution.
- Support parents and carers to develop their parenting skills through providing information and sign-posting to programmes and courses
- Ensure that teachers and other staff have the knowledge, understanding and skills to deliver this curriculum effectively

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values using the learning gems and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making, for example through our school council
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements, for example through celebration assemblies each Friday.
- 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 which include our use of the learning gems, promoting our values through value of the month, and songs linked to these themes
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder. These include the use of our Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) and Nurture groups.



## Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Special Educational Needs and Disability policy in cases where a pupil's mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying, and the Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE) policy. It should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

## Lead Members of Staff

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

- Headteacher: Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Deputy Head Teachers: Deputy Leads
- SENDCo: Special Needs Lead
- Our Emotional Literacy Support Assistant and Nurture Group Lead

## Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but we will also use our PHSE scheme of work – Dimensions - alongside National Guidance from the DfE to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

## Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Targeted use of Social Emotional Aspects of Learning resources.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes'
- Managing emotions resources
- Nurture Support Groups
- ELSA support groups.
- Therapeutic activities including art, lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques

The school may make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- The Boxall Profile
- Luvan scales

## Signposting

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



## Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

All staff track their pupils to identify any warning signs. These possible difficulties could include changes to or evidence of any of the following areas:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

School staff may also 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 Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Emotional Wellbeing Lead as appropriate. Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

## Working with Parents

In order to support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
- Share with and allow them to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of whom to talk to if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to them
- Share ideas about how they can support positive mental health in their children.
- Keep them informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

## 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 service
- Educational psychology services



- Behaviour support through the Buckinghamshire Pupil Referral Schools
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists

## Training

All staff will receive training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe. This will be done in-house for all staff with our lead members of staff. Lead members of staff will attend courses run by appropriate training bodies.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and the Continuing Professional Development program will support staff throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

## Wellbeing and Governance

We have a Wellbeing Governor who meets at least termly with the Headteacher to discuss any actions taken and review current staff and pupil wellbeing. Governor monitoring visits include opportunities to meet with children and staff to discuss wellbeing and what the school is doing to support the community. Parents report on wellbeing in the parental survey. The findings from all of the monitoring and evaluating tasks are reported to governors and shared with to parents via the Governor newsletters.

## Staff Wellbeing

All staff are expected to:

- 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, 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-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 line managers

Line managers are expected to:



- 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 their staff
- Take any complaints or concerns seriously and deal with them appropriately using the school's policies
- Monitor workloads and be alert to signs of stress, and regularly talk to staff about their work/life balance
- Make sure new staff are properly and thoroughly inducted and feel able to ask for help
- 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
- 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
- Conduct exit interviews with resigning staff to help identify any wellbeing issues that led to their resignation

## Role of senior staff

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 and 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
- Establish a clear policy on out-of-hours working, including on when it is and isn't reasonable for staff to respond to communications, and provide clear guidance to all stakeholders
- Make sure that the efforts and successes of staff are recognised and celebrated
- Produce calendars of meetings, deadlines and events so that staff can plan ahead and manage their workload
- Provide resources to promote staff wellbeing, such as training opportunities
- Promote information about, and access to, external support services, and make sure that there are clear routes in place to escalate a concern in order to access further support
- Organise extra support during times of stress, such as Ofsted inspections



## Role of the governing board

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 regard 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

## Managing specific wellbeing issues

The school will support and discuss options with any staff that raise wellbeing issues, such as if they are experiencing significant stress at school or in their personal lives.

Where possible, support will be given by line managers or senior staff. This could be through:

- Giving staff time off to deal with a personal crisis
- Arranging external support, such as counselling or occupational health services
- Completing a risk assessment and following through with any actions identified
- Reassessing their workload and deciding what tasks to prioritise

At all times, the confidentiality and dignity of staff will be maintained.