

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Written: 7th February 2022

Reviewed:

1. Vision

Our overall school vision:

In order to discover the brilliance in everyone we are committed to achieve:

- A happy and healthy community
- An engaged and accountable community
- A compassionate and kind community
- An inclusive community of lifelong learners
- A community of empathetic and curious critical thinkers
- A community that celebrates diversity
- A community of Global Citizens

Our vision for mental health and wellbeing:

Shamblehurst Primary School's vision for mental health and wellbeing is a whole-school approach that ensures our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers) are supported to thrive, succeed and achieve their potential. We aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing and recognise how important this is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for children affected both directly and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues. At Shamblehurst Primary School, we understand that positive mental health and wellbeing is everyone's responsibility.

In order to realise this vision, Shamblehurst Primary will:

1. Make mental health and wellbeing an ongoing strategic priority, by:

- Undertaking the Wellbeing for Schools Award
- Identifying current and baseline best practice and resources through the Self Evaluation Tool
- Creating an Action Plan based on areas for development identified from the Self Evaluation Tool
- Embedding mental health and wellbeing within our school through leadership, policy and action planning.
- Committing to developing clear guidance on how concerns about mental health will be addressed and prioritised.
- Communicating our mental health and wellbeing vision to all stakeholders, and updating them regularly and annually through World Mental Health Day.

2. Promote positive and preventative mental health and wellbeing with early intervention, by:

- Maintaining an environment where stakeholders feel empowered to discuss and report any mental health and wellbeing difficulties.

- Creating new mental health and wellbeing resources for children, staff and parents that provide awareness-raising, advice, support and self-help.
- Providing mental health and wellbeing 'literacy' and 'first aid' training for all relevant staff.

3. Run mental health and wellbeing initiatives to support the student and staff journey, including:

- Promoting healthy behaviour; for example, in relation to physical activity, sleep, nutrition, stress and substance abuse.
- Increasing opportunities to engage in the evidence-based '**five ways to wellbeing**' model:

- 1. Connect**
- 2. Be active**
- 3. Take notice**
- 4. Keep learning**
- 5. Give.**

2. Objectives

To achieve our aims we strive to meet all of the below objectives:

- To have an inclusive whole-school approach to good mental health, evident in every classroom and create a positive ethos in school towards mental health and wellbeing.
- To increase the level of awareness and understanding amongst staff and parents/carers of issues involving the mental health and wellbeing of children.
- To assess and identify individual mental health needs within school and offer targeted support.
- To engage with parents and families to work together where mental health needs affect individual children or where mental health needs are prevalent within the immediate or wider family.
- To work in partnership with outside agencies to gain the best possible outcomes for our children and families.

2. What is Mental Health and Wellbeing

Mental health is defined by the World Health Organisation in 2014 as, ‘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 are able to make a contribution to his or her community’. A child or member of staff with positive mental health generally has the ability to progress within society both emotionally and socially. They are able to form relationships, manage their moods and make rational informed decisions. Mental health and wellbeing refers to how a person thinks, feels and manages their life experiences and any challenges. Just as we all have physical health, we all have mental health too. People who have good mental health and wellbeing find it easier to manage their emotions and behaviours. They are likely to be able to cope well with the day-to-day stresses of life and will be able to actively take part in their social setting or community. Someone who is experiencing poor mental health and wellbeing may be unable to control negative or unwanted thoughts or feelings. This may have an impact on their ability to function effectively, which may hinder their participation and enjoyment of activities, social interactions, sport or school.

3. Whole School Approach

Shamblehurst Primary School aims to offer a learning environment, which promotes and enhances positive mental health. A consistent approach means that the school environment and school ethos promote the mental health of the whole school community. This will be created through clear staff roles, specialist training for core staff and raising whole staff awareness and understanding. Our PSHE curriculum is developed to give children the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to keep

themselves mentally healthy. We will regularly review our PSHE curriculum and lesson content to ensure they are meeting the aims outlined in this policy. We will also implement this into our curriculum at all stages to provide children with strategies to help keep them mentally well.

At Shamblehurst, we hold weekly Wellbeing assemblies where we explore wellbeing and how to maintain positive mental health by sharing strategies and ideas for support. Celebrating difference and in particular, neurodiversity is important to us and to wellbeing. We understand that we are all different and strive for acceptance and celebration of individuality.

Shamblehurst Primary School strives to provide an environment where all children feel safe, secure and able to achieve and experience success and well-being.

At our school, we will always:

- Help children to understand their emotions and experiences better
- Ensure our children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- Help children to form and maintain relationships
- Encourage children to be confident and promote their self-esteem
- Help children to develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks

We will always promote a healthy environment by:

- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all children and staff
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements
- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect
- Promoting our children's' voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making
- Celebrating each child for who they are

4. Lead Members of Staff

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

Mrs Burrell – SENDCO - Senior Mental Health Lead - Mental Health First Aider

Mrs Jones - Headteacher - Designated Safeguarding Lead - Mental Health First Aider

Mrs Mohamed - Deputy Headteacher - Deputy DSL - Mental Health First Aider

Mrs Curry - Family Support Worker - Emotional Literacy Support Worker

Mrs Kelly - SEND LSA - Mental Health First Aider

5. Targeted Support

At Shamblehurst Primary School we have a vision to enhance our Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) provision especially in light of the global pandemic. We are undertaking the Wellbeing for Schools Award to help us achieve our vision. This award sets out Key Performance Indicators for us to meet to be able to achieve the award.

Currently in school, we have Mrs Curry who is our Emotional Literacy Support Assistant who works with children on a one to one basis or in small group sessions to help them to recognise and understand their thoughts and feelings and this support runs as a six to ten week programme. She is also our Family Support Worker and she works with and supports our families as and when they need it and to signpost them to a range of outside agencies. Mrs Curry also runs the Family Links Nurturing Programme for all parents who are interested and the Cygnet programme for parents with a child who has a diagnosis of Autistic Spectrum Disorder. These sessions run for ten weeks and are designed to help parents with strategies to implement at home. We recognise that the need for emotional support has increased and are excited to increase our ELSA support by training another member of staff in the ELSA programme.

Furthermore, we have Mr Richards who is our wonderful Outdoor Learning Teacher. He works with year groups across the school and in particular runs the National Outdoor Learning Award (NOLA) for small groups of identified children to improve their wellbeing.

'Health, well-being and self-development has been a cornerstone of the impact and value of outdoor learning practices for many decades. Over recent years, we have seen an exponential growth in therapeutic outdoor initiatives and programmes being developed and utilised for mental health and well-being benefits.' Institute for Outdoor Learning



In September we will have created our Rainbow room in school, which is a safe base to support children to access a range of emotional support as and when they need it. This space will be designed around the Zones of Regulation and be a safe space for children to explore their emotions.

6. Specialised Individual Support

At Shamblehurst Primary School we are very aware that SEMH needs can become very acute very quickly and can present large barriers to learning. We believe it is our responsibility to educate the 'whole child' to ensure that all needs are met and not just academic learning is catered for. Where school intervention is not enough for individual children, or mental health difficulties are affecting other individuals in the family, we can sign post parents to additional sources of support outside of school such as CAMHS or the school nurse. We work proactively with outside agencies such as CAMHS and the Primary Behaviour Service (PBS) to ensure that recommendations are put into place and care plans are produced depending on individual need. We work closely with our linked Educational Psychologist who carries out consultations with parents / carers and school professionals as well as

offering training to staff. We also have access to a trained counsellor and therapy dog to provide support for children with complex emotional needs.

7. Outside Agencies

Shamblehurst Primary School regularly seeks advice and consults with outside agencies. They may provide informal advice and strategies as well as offering more formal advice through individual referrals made by school which leads on to assessment of individual need. With parental consent, we can transfer information between these services and school directly and together find the best strategies to help children and their families. Services we regularly work with:

- CAMHS
- PRIMARY BEHAVIOUR SERVICE
- EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGIST
- WILDERN COUNSELLING SERVICE
- BARNARDOS
- EARLY HELP HUB
- GPs
- SCHOOL NURSE

8. Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular (annual) child protection training in order to enable them to keep children safe. Understanding how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems means that staff are able to offer help and support to children who need it, when they need it. These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs will communicate their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Leads as appropriate. Training opportunities for staff include whole staff training on INSET days as well as specific training for key staff who require more in-depth knowledge around certain areas. Where the need to do so becomes evident, twilight training sessions for staff are held to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Staff will be able to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including:

- Physical signs of harm
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in mood
- Talking and/or joking about self-harm and suicide
- Drugs and alcohol abuse
- Feelings of failure, uselessness and loss of hope
- Secretive behaviour
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. a large winter coat in summer

- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption

Staff will also be able to identify a range of issues, including:

- Attendance and absenteeism
- Punctuality and lateness
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education
- Family and relationship problems

Training linked to Mental Health and Wellbeing undertaken between September 2020 and April 2022

- Wellbeing for Education Return (DfE)
- Trauma Continuum (Betsy de Thierry)
- Anxiety training (EP service)
- Trauma training (EP service)
- Wellbeing training (EP service)
- Mental Health First Aid (Dragonfly Training)
- Senior Mental Health Lead (DfE)

9. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually and published on the school's website. It is a working document that has been written in response to the needs of the whole school community and as such will continue to develop as the shape of practice within school changes. The Governors are committed to reviewing the impact of the Mental Health and Wellbeing policy as part of a rolling programme, taking into account the following policies:

- Behaviour policy
- Attendance policy
- Safeguarding policy
- SEN policy