



COBHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Caring, Proud, Successful!

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy



This policy was written in consultation with staff, pupils, parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing

Policy Statement

At Cobham Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. The wellbeing of the whole school community is fundamental to the values and mission of the school.

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.

This policy separates staff, children, and their families into separate segments but it is important to note that they are all intertwined and a balanced wellbeing approach across all parties is fundamental to a successful wellbeing approach.

The wellbeing of our pupils

Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Supporting Children with Medical Needs Policy and our SEND policy in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying, and PSHE policies. 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:

- Jacqui Saunders- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Phil Burns – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead/ Mental Health Wellbeing
- Emma Heasman – SENCO
- Kate Cresswell – Safeguarding Governor and School Counsellor

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;
- Encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different';
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.



We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school TRUST values and rays of the lighthouse encouraging a sense of belonging;
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making;
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements;
- 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
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Specialised and targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder.

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 JIGSAW resources;
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes.'
- Managing emotions resources such as 'the incredible 5-point scale'
- Therapeutic activities including Time To Talk, Art Therapy, Lego Therapy & Play Therapy.

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including the Wellbeing scale, which is assessed termly in line with our foundation subject assessments

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

All staff will complete termly wellbeing assessments on their pupils aimed at identifying a range of possible difficulties including:

- 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 student 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 Mental Health 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

Teaching about Mental Health

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

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

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:

- Doctors
- Educational psychology services
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep students safe.

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 supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

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 and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums/training/workshops;
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child;
- Make our emotional wellbeing and 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 PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home;
- Where it is considered appropriate, we will signpost parents to support for their own well-being should there be concerns with regards to this.

The wellbeing of staff

We recognize that staff are our most important resource. We strive to value all staff through personal and professional support, involvement in school decisions and access to professional development. It is a two-way process, and as well as the school having a responsibility for staff wellbeing, it is also important that staff take care of themselves and inform the school about any aspect that may be impacting their physical or mental health.

Cobham Primary School will create an environment where:

- Well-being is at the heart of the school, ensuring a positive ethos and that all staff feel valued and supported;
- Staff are able to approach and feel supported by senior leaders in school and feel empowered to take responsibility for their physical and mental health and wellbeing;
- Staff feel they can raise any well-being issues with colleagues without any fear of judgement;
- External pressures impacting on staff lives are responded to sensitively and flexibly;
- Staff engage with each other to create constructive and effective working relationships across the School;

Practical aids will include:

- A wellbeing section on the annual staff survey, to assess the wellbeing of staff, enable all staff to confidentially share thoughts and feelings and regular monitoring;
- Three opportunities a year to meet with the well-being governor and confidentially discussing well-being environment in the school;
- Visible signposting towards well-being support available including Counselling via Cantium
- Provision of staff mental health/well-being training/via National College – two team members are Mental Health Wellbeing trained and team members are aware of who they are – Mr P Burns (teacher) and Mrs A Simmons (teaching assistant)
- Ensuring staff have access to professional development opportunities
- Ensuring wellbeing is a recurring item of the governing body agenda;