



Freeland CE Primary School

Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy

Policy Agreed by the Governing Body on

Signed

Signed Head Teacher

Review Date



Our Mission Statement:

*‘From small beginnings come great things:
Know your roots, Branch out and Fly high’*

Introduction

At Freeland CE Primary the biggest asset our school has is its staff; the biggest asset they have is their health and wellbeing. This policy is intended to outline the ways in which we can work together to ensure our school is a safe, caring and happy place to work, which, if we get it right, can help to enhance individual wellbeing, through personal fulfillment and professional identity. This in turn will benefit our pupils and our community.

We are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers).

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach to Wellbeing is rooted with our School values of **Honesty, Forgiveness, Compassion and Love**, where each individual and contribution is valued.

We endeavor to ensure that staff and pupils are able to manage times of change and stress and aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or to access help when they need it. This is mirrored to our school vision:

*“We are a Community where every member,
from the tiniest seed to the fullest tree, is nurtured and cared for.
Everyone can flourish and be ready to fly the nest and soar high.
We come together to grow, learn, love and be loved.”*



We also have a role to ensure that the school community can learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

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 Wellbeing and Mental Health policy sets out the key principles for the creation and maintenance of a safe school culture. This policy sets out:

- how we promote positive mental health
- how we prevent mental health problems
- how we identify and support pupils with mental health needs
- how we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent mental health problems getting worse
- where parents, staff and pupils can get advice and support

1. Definition of Wellbeing and Mental Health

Wellbeing refers to how good you feel about yourself and your life, it does not necessarily mean the absence of stress or negative emotions in life or the absence of mental health difficulties and that everyone experiences vulnerability and a need for care at some stages in their journey through life.

Wellbeing is present when a person:

- realises their potential
- is resilient in dealing with the normal stresses of their life
- takes care of their physical wellbeing and
- has a sense of purpose, connection and belonging to a wider community.

Our wellbeing is a fluid way of being and needs nurturing throughout life.

If someone experiences low wellbeing for a prolonged period of time, they may be more likely to develop Mental Health problems.

Mental Health is made up of our **emotional, psychological, and social well-being**. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

Ways to maintain positive mental health include:

- Getting professional help if you need it
- Connecting with others
- Staying positive
- Getting physically active
- Helping others
- Getting enough sleep
- Developing coping skills



2. Why is Wellbeing and Mental Health important?

At Freeland CE, we aim to promote positive mental health and well-being for our whole school community; pupils, staff, parents and carers, and recognise how important mental health and emotional well-being 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. Persistent mental health problems may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age.

Our role as a school is to ensure that everyone feels; able to manage times of change and stress, resilient in the face of challenge, supported to reach their potential and able to access help when they need it. We also endeavor to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and where they can go if they need help and support.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and be a school where:

- everyone feels valued
- everyone has a sense of belonging and feels safe
- everyone feels able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- positive mental health is promoted and valued
- bullying is not tolerated

3. Links to other policies

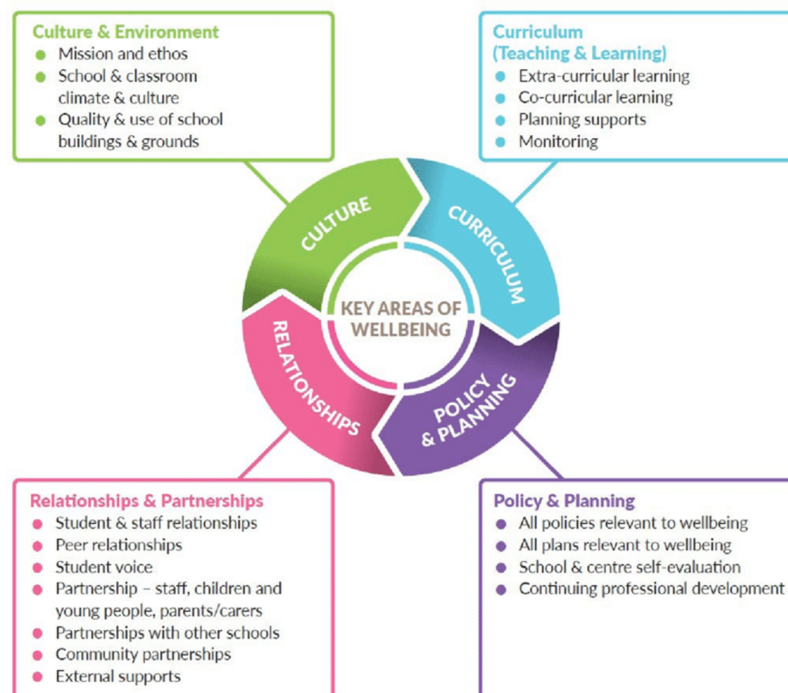
This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Inclusion, Looked After Children, Anti-Bullying, Behaviour and Discipline, Personal Social Health Education (PSHE), Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) and Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy. Check

Links with the Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

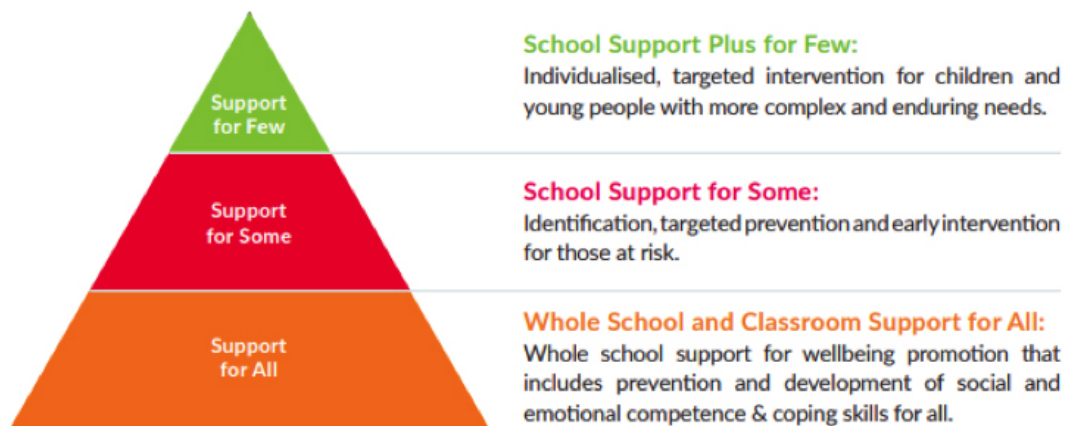
These related policies can be found on the school website.

4. A whole school approach to promoting positive Wellbeing and Mental Health

We recognise that Wellbeing and Mental Health is an integral element of our school ethos. It is intertwined with everything we do.



We understand the importance of addressing all educational needs through the Continuum of Support:



As a school we organise a number of events each year, aimed at the wellbeing of our school community. These events are organised by staff over the course of the year. The following summarises some of these initiatives:

- Children's Mental Health Week
- Parent and child breathwork workshop
- Enrichment mornings, focused on helping others
- Walk to School Week
- Playground games, organised by the play leaders
- Wellbeing councilors undertake a variety of initiatives throughout the year to promote wellbeing in our school community.
- School Council - Our student council is a representative structure working under the guidance of a teacher. It introduces a system in which the pupils can have a voice in the school using democratic processes. The council is voted in by their peers and meets on a regular basis.

5.Roles and Responsibilities

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

Named Mental Health Lead – Penny McCarthy (Headteacher)

Deputy Mental Health Lead – Kate Pritchard (PSHE leader)

Emotional Literacy Support Assistant - Donna Gray

Named Mental Health Governor – Sophie Dawes

Our Mental Health Leads:

- Lead and work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Work with the PSHE leader re: teaching about mental health.
- Provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates.
- Liaise with mental health services and make individual referrals to them.

Staff members:

- Will make themselves aware of the school's Code of conduct policy.
- Will assist in the development of good practice and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or their colleagues.
- Will ask their Line Manager for help or support if required. This includes understanding that a good relationship requires communication from both parties and so it's important that issues are raised at the earliest possible moment so that effective strategies can be put in place to manage workloads.
- Will identify opportunities for development and take advantage of those offered by the school.
- Will share their views, ideas and feelings about all issues concerning the school at formal meetings and informal gatherings.

6.Supporting pupils

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 follow the JIGSAW scheme 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.
- Targeted use of ELSA resources.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. zones of regulation.
- Managing emotions resources.
- Primary Group Work/Mental health and wellbeing groups/ELSA support groups.
- Therapeutic activities including art, lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Play therapy
- Pony therapy
- Music 4 Wellbeing

Early Identification and Warning Signs

All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health, including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstance

- 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 DSL and the emotional wellbeing lead, as appropriate. These concerns should be recorded on CPOMS. Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking 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

Assessment, interventions and support

All concerns reported to the designated adults within school are assessed through a triage approach with SLT, class teachers and SENDCO to ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible.

7.Supporting staff

The wellbeing of the staff at Freeland CE is of extreme importance. As a school, we aim to support staff wellbeing through our policies, procedures and practices. For example:

- The promotion of a safe, comfortable teaching environment
- An open door policy whereby staff can discuss issues of concern with the members of SLT in a confidential manner
- Regular staff meetings
- CPD is provided, encouraged and supported
- Training sessions relating to developing personal wellbeing (e.g. breathwork workshop)

Identification

Training and signposting to assessment materials will form the basis for the staff identification. Onus will be placed on staff to self-assess and information for next steps will be available on request. Staff wellbeing questionnaires will be sent out annually and the analysis of this will help to improve and inform whole school wellbeing approaches.

Where you can get support

Health Assured Employee Assistance Programme. All employees can access this benefit. There is a wealth of online help and advice for all types of issues people may be facing including financial, relationship, mental wellbeing and family issues. In addition to the advice and guidance online, employees are covered for 6 counselling sessions as part of this benefit. These can be either telephone or face-to-face sessions. Employees also have access to the 24/7 helpline on the freephone number on the

website.

Staff can access the *Employee Assistance Programme* directly as follows...

Website: <http://www.healthassuredeap.co.uk/>

Username: IMASS

Password: Request from Mental Health Lead

Employer: Eynsham Partnership Academy

Freephone: 0800 030 5182

Education Support Partnership helpline

Freephone: 08000 562 561

Website: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/get-help/help-for-you/helpline/>

Procedures for handling issues of Wellbeing

- Where additional professional advice is required, the school has contacts with Occupational Health Professionals and Human Resource experts and these avenues should be utilised.
- Where necessary, staff should be encouraged to use the confidential counselling service available (Health Assured Employee Assistance Programme). This service provides staff with serious concerns to obtain advice and support outside of the workplace.
- The school will provide support to any employees facing high-levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work-related issues which are having/have the potential to have negative impacts on the staff member's health and wellbeing. The various options for dealing with such issues should be discussed with staff members where appropriate. In some cases, this may include external support such as the Education Support Partnership helpline or support from other relevant bodies.
- During this time, the school will ensure that at all times the staff member's privacy and dignity is respected. This means maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employee's rights and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity.

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive annual 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.

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.

8. Working with parents

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the Mental Health Lead for assessment. To support parents and carers we will:

- Provide information online on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.

- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Organise workshops on mental health and steps to wellbeing.

When a concern has been raised, teachers or the Mental Health Lead and SENDCO will:

- Contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment (Although there may be cases, parents and carers cannot be involved due to child protection issues.)
- Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies.
- Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away.
- Create a chronology of actions and events (CPOMS).
- Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting support groups.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Pupils are our primary concern, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

9. Working with specialist services

In some cases a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. We make links with a range of specialist services and have regular contact with the services to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the pupils' provision. School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Mental Health Lead in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

Children may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- Educational Psychology Services
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- School Nursing Service
- Children's and Family Services
- Music therapy
- School Mentor (ELSA trained)
- Family support workers
- Counselling Services
- Team Around the Family
- Early Help Referral

10. Monitoring and evaluation

This policy was made in collaboration with the whole school. Its effectiveness will be monitored by the SLT and reported to the Governors. This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if deemed necessary.

