

**LOVE, COURAGE & RESPECT**  
Learning and Achieving Through Love, Courage and Respect

# **BRIGHSTONE C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL**



## **Promoting Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy 2021**

## Policy Statement

### What is Mental Health?

*“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 Organization)*

DfE guidance Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools states:

*Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils, by developing approaches tailored to the particular needs of their pupils. All schools are under a statutory duty to promote the welfare of their pupils, which includes preventing impairment of children’s health or development, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.*

*Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The school role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:*

- **Prevention:** creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos;
- **Identification:** recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible;
- **Early support:** helping pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions; and
- **Access to specialist support:** working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/755135/Mental\\_health\\_and\\_behaviour\\_in\\_schools\\_.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools_.pdf)

At Brighstone Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for every member of our school community. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at children and adults who require additional support, such as:

- evidence based interventions (e.g. ELSA)
- Early Help strategies (e.g. informal conversations with parents/carers)
- referrals to specialist and/or medical support (CCAMHS; Educational Psychologist; Employee Assistance Programme; school nurse)

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we also aim to recognise and respond to mental health difficulties by:

- raising awareness with all in relation to mental health and the importance of self-care
- implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures
- providing a safe, stable and nurturing environment for children and staff affected both directly and indirectly by mental health difficulties.

This document describes the school’s approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. It is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff, volunteers and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- Children with a Medical Condition policy, in cases where a child's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical condition
- SEND policy, where a child has an identified special educational need
- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy, where concerns may also be linked to safeguarding
- PSHE and RSE policy

### **The Policy Aims to:**

- Promote positive mental health in all children, staff, governors and parents/carers
- Increase understanding and awareness of common issues that may affect mental health
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental health difficulties
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing concerns
- Ensure support is provided to children experiencing mental health difficulties, their peers and parents/carers
- Ensure support is provided to staff experiencing mental health difficulties
- Ensure we work in partnership with children and their parents to identify appropriate support
- Ensure we work with other professionals and agencies to commission external sources of support for early intervention
- Ensure processes are in place for accurate, confidential record keeping and appropriate information sharing

### **Lead Members of Staff**

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

- **Mrs Melissa Jones** – Designated Safeguarding and Mental Health Lead (DSL/MHL), Mental Health First Aider (MHFA)
- **Mrs Rebecca Lennon** - Headteacher, Deputy DSL, CPD lead
- **Mrs Lucy Aram** - Head of PSHE/RSE, Deputy DSL

### **Mental Health Champions**

We recognise that some may find it daunting to talk about their mental health and wellbeing. Whilst all members of staff are supportive, the following have volunteered to be available at any time to provide support and a listening ear: [Kirsti Cousins](#), [Melissa Jones](#), [Rebecca Lennon](#), [Sue Boyd](#), [Mary Snow](#) and [Samantha Sharp](#). These members of staff have all completed the Place2Think program with the children's mental health charity Place2Be.

## The Promotion of Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing in School

At Brighstone Primary School, we believe that happy children learn better. The overall wellbeing of staff and children has to be the foundation of what we do to be able to achieve the best personal development for all. Our school vision is underpinned by this belief; the right environment is needed for anything and anyone to thrive and flourish:

*"WE PROVIDE A COLLABORATIVE AND NURTURING ENVIRONMENT WITH A SUPPORTIVE CHRISTIAN ETHOS WHERE EVERYONE IS ENABLED TO THRIVE AND FLOURISH IN THEIR OWN UNIQUE WAY"*

The COVID-19 pandemic has been a cause of trauma for many and this is understood by all staff in school to ensure that a trauma informed approach is taken when dealing with changes in, or challenging behaviour. Continuous CPD on this is achieved through regular updates from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead and training delivered in staff meetings.

## Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Curriculum

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum using the JIGSAW programme.

There will always be an emphasis on **resilience**, enabling children to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing topics in a safe and sensitive manner, which helps rather than harms.

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-teaching-about-mental-health-and>

## Early Signs in Children

School staff may become aware of early signs, which may indicate a child is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing difficulties. We recognise that everyone has good days and bad days but when changes in behaviour become persistent this should **always** be taken seriously and staff observing any of these signs should record their concerns on MyConcern and communicate with the Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead (Melissa Jones).

Possible signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity levels and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Any sustained changes in behaviour
- Not wanting to do PE or getting changed secretly
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Abusing drugs or alcohol

## **Next Steps**

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child should speak to the Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead (Melissa Jones) in the first instance. Possible support and/or interventions will be discussed with the child and parents. If there is reason to believe that the child is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the DSL, the Headteacher or the Designated Safeguarding governor. If the child presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to specialist services such as CCAMHS is deemed appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead (Melissa Jones). See Appendix A for referral form.

## **Support and Information**

We will ensure that staff, children, governors and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined in Appendix B.

Information will be provided in our weekly newsletter in the SEMH section. Posters are displayed on the mental health and wellbeing display board in the school hall, in toilets/cloakrooms and notice boards outside school.

We will raise general awareness of internal and external support that is available, and will highlight sources of specific support within relevant parts of the curriculum. We recognise that whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of a someone seeking help by ensuring they understand:

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

## **Individual Care Plans for Children**

Children causing concern, or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health, will be added to the 'Vulnerability Spreadsheet' noting Social Emotional Mental Health (SEMH) needs and details recorded on MyConcern. An individual care plan will be drawn up involving the child, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of the child'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

## **Managing disclosures**

A child may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure:

If a child 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-judgmental – utilising the same principles of safeguarding training.

Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the child's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' A referral form should be completed if a staff member believes that further support may be needed. Appendix E.

All disclosures should be recorded on MyConcern. This written record should include:

- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead (Melissa Jones) who will offer support and advice to the member of staff, the child and family about next steps.

## **Working with Parents**

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health on our school website, our weekly newsletter, Facebook page and notice boards
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children on the Wellbeing tab on our website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have mental health and wellbeing concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make this policy easily accessible to parents on the school website
- 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

We recognise the need to be sensitive in our approach to making parents aware of any concerns we have regarding their child's mental health and wellbeing. 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? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral
- Who should be present? E.g. parents, the child, other members of staff, school nurse
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's difficulties and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We will be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We will highlight further sources of information and give them information to take away where possible, as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that we are sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can be helpful too, e.g. parent helplines, websites and forums.

We will provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and we may consider booking in a follow-up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Each meeting will be finished with agreed next steps and brief records will be kept of the meeting on the child's confidential record on MyConcern.

## Confidentiality

We will always be open with regard to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a child on, then we will discuss with the child and/or parents:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We will never share information about a child without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain safeguarding situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and/or a parent. In cases where a child is considered to be in danger of harm to themselves or others, the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed and information will be shared with appropriate external agencies.

The Designated Safeguarding, Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead (Melissa Jones) must be made aware of all disclosures, this helps to safeguard the member of staff's own emotional wellbeing as they are no longer solely responsible for the child, it ensures continuity of care in their absence, and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. It is advisable for staff members to share anonymised disclosures with a colleague if they feel the need to "offload". Any information sharing should be explained to the child informing them of whom it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed and included in any decisions made regarding their child's mental health and wellbeing. If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the DSL must be informed immediately.

## Supporting Peers

When a child is experiencing mental health difficulties, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case-by-case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either one to one or in group settings and will be guided by conversations with the child who is struggling and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best provide support
- Things friends should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend may need help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

## Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training and updates about recognising and responding to mental health difficulties as part of their regular child protection and safeguarding training to enable them to keep children safe.

As a school, we subscribe to [The National College](#), which provides free (to staff) online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue. We also use external agencies for CPD and advice.

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 developing situations with one or more children.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Mrs Lennon, our CPD Coordinator, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every three years as a minimum. It is next due for review in March 2024.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate, as and when required. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to Mrs Jones, our Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead, via telephone 01983 740285 or email [m.jones@brighstoneprimary.org.uk](mailto:m.jones@brighstoneprimary.org.uk)

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.



## **Appendix A**

CCAMHS Isle of Wight - More information and referral form

<https://www.iow.nhs.uk/our-services/mental-health-services/CAMHS/Our-services.htm>

## **Appendix B**

This website offers a wealth of information regarding services available locally

<https://www.iwmentalhealth.co.uk/>

## **Appendix C**

Barnardos Talk2 Service - More information and referral form

<https://www.barnardos.org.uk/what-we-do/services/talk-2-service>

## **Appendix D**

Youth Trust IOW - More information and referral form

<https://www.iowyouthtrust.co.uk/>

## Appendix E

### Referral form for **Additional Support**

Date:		Name of Pupil:		Person referring:	
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#### Additional Support needed (Please Circle/highlight)

Special Educational Need (SEND)	Mental Health/ Wellbeing	Emotional Literacy Support (ELSA)	Other (Please specify)
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<b>Reason for concern</b> (Anything at all that is relevant to why you believe additional support may be needed)	
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<b>Parental Concerns?</b> (have the parents expressed concerns)	
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<b>Suggested Targets / objectives</b> (What do you believe would help the pupil?)	
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Impact on learning/behaviour	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	A little									A lot

Urgency	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	A little									A lot

Member of staff dealing with referral:		
Actions/Notes/Additional Support provided		Date Complete

Logged actions on my concern										
Date:										
Impact on learning/behaviour	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	A little									A lot