

Priory Junior School

MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING POLICY

Policy Date: September 2022

Review Date: September 2025



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Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

At Priory Junior School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. 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 wellbeing is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

Aims and Objectives

We aim to:

- 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,
- Celebrate all of the ways children achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom
- Encourage children to be confident and be proud of themselves for who they are
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Provide support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and a sense of belonging
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating achievements – academic and non-academic
- Providing opportunities to develop their sense of self-worth by taking on responsibilities and participation in extra-curricular activities
- Providing opportunities to reflect
- Access to appropriate support to meet needs

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole-school approaches
- Additional support - for those who may have short term needs and those who may have been made vulnerable by life experiences such as bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted support - for pupils who need more differentiated support and resources or specific targeted interventions.

Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL).

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Tracy Keefe - Headteacher
- Tracy Keefe, Emma Welch and Chris Snape - Designated and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL / DDSL)
- Rosey Durham - Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCO)
- Kim Willcock - Mental Health Lead / Pastoral Support Team
- Lyn Coolbear – Pastoral Support Team

Teaching about Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE 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 Cambridgeshire PSHE Service's Guidance, and the PSHE Association Guidance, to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, we:

- Raise awareness of mental health during assemblies, PSHE lessons, online safety lessons and during Mental Health Awareness Week
- Signpost pupils to sources of support, including knowing who they can talk to in school
- Teaching strategies to support positive mental health through the PSHE and Online Safety curriculum
- Regularly providing pupils with opportunities to provide feedback on school life- surveys and pupil voice – which included information about mental health
- Hold Daily School Breathe sessions
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through intervention such as:
 - Worry monsters
 - Circle times

Targeted support

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

- Sensory circuits
- Nurture groups
- STEPS plans
- Pastoral support
- Bereavement support
- Play therapy
- Therapeutic activities including art, lego, mindfulness techniques

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

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- The Boxall Profile
- Emotional Literacy Scales

Signposting

Sources of support will be displayed around the school and linked to on the school website, so pupils and parents are aware of how they can get help.

Information will be shared regularly with parents via our school newsletter and website. The school will also share information with children through assemblies and the PSHE curriculum.

Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer the school provides, the school will make, or encourage parents to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- GP or paediatrician
- CAMHS or YouNited
- STARS Bereavement Support
- Mental health charities (e.g. [Young Minds](#), [Kooth](#), [KeepYourHead](#))

These would be completed in consultation with parents.

Warning signs

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 share any concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead. These may include:

- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

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
- Ensure all parents are aware of who to talk to, if they have concerns about their child
- Make our mental health and emotional wellbeing 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

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 well-being, including:

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology service
- Cambridgeshire Emotional Wellbeing Service
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS / YouNited (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services)
- Family Support Workers
- Child Support Workers – Ormiston Families / Young Carers / 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.

Links to Other Policies

This policy links to other school policies, including:

- Safeguarding Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- PSHE Policy
- RSE Policy
- E-Safety Policy

Monitoring arrangements

The Senior Mental Health Lead will be responsible for monitoring the effectiveness of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed by the Senior Mental Health Lead every 3 years or whenever an update is needed. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher.