

# Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy for Pupils



Ferndale Primary &  
Nursery School

Date Prepared: October 2022

Date Approved by Governing Body:

Date to be reviewed: September 2024

### **This policy should be read in conjunction with:**

Our *SEND policy* in cases where pupil's mental health needs overlap with these. It should also be read in conjunction with policies for *Safeguarding, Behaviour and Acceptable Touch, Anti-bullying, Attendance, How we Communicate with Parents and Carers and the Equality Duty Statement*. There is a separate policy which covers *Wellbeing and Mental Health for Staff*.

### **What is Mental Health?**

Mental health is about how we think, feel and act. Just like physical health: everybody has it and we need to take care of it. Our mental health is on a spectrum, and can range from good to poor. Good mental health can help you to think positively, feel confident and act calmly. Everyone feels low sometimes and this is very normal but if these feelings are extreme or long lasting then we may need support to manage and help us to feel better.

### **At Ferndale Primary School**

We are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and all stakeholders. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

At our school our aim is to:

- 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.
- 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 and are important.
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.
- Ensure we have some staff members in school who undertake training to better equip them in supporting others with their mental health and wellbeing.

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Having internal trained ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) staff (see Level 1 section for further information)
- Working with parents in partnership to give them advice around the best way to support their child, signposting them to further support external to school or working together to decide the best support route or service (internal or external to school) to refer the pupil to if it is agreed that this is needed.

### **The Levels of Support:**

#### Universal (Level 0)

We promote a Mentally Healthy Environment by:

- Teaching the skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe. These are included as part of our Jigsaw curriculum.
- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Role modelling an open approach with pupils around mental health and their feelings and emotions. This may be done through means such as feelings registers, Jigsaw (PHSE) lessons around mental health and wellbeing, staff checking in with children who they have noticed are not themselves and information boards within school with information around the area and support available.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making through means such as pupil surveys and Student Council
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others. Giving opportunities to reflect and supporting pupils to develop a growth mindset.

### Level 1-

Children who don't yet require any planned support but need a slight step up from the universal offer to try and stop things escalating. Examples may include incidents such as a fall out with a friend, missing their parent/carer or putting themselves in sad/angry etc on their class feelings register. If the member of staff feels the parent/carer needs to be made aware they will do so verbally or via a call home.

- Ad-hoc check in with a teacher, TA or other member of staff they interact with. Go to a space where they won't be overheard by peers to provide a listening ear or have a conversation to share how they are feeling and, if needed, discuss what may help them feel better.
- The teaching staff in their class being mindful of how that child feels and if any adaptations are needed that day such as not calling on them for answers or matching them with a 'playtime buddy'
- A quiet space to go to in their classroom where they can have a mindful few minutes to reflect on their feelings.

### Level 2-

Children who require a step up from level 1 and need more planned and ongoing support due to continuing, lower-level mental health needs or a sudden event they need further help to deal with such as parental separation or a bereavement. If we feel a pupil needs access to level 2 this will be communicated with a parent or carer either via a letter or verbally.

Internal to Ferndale Primary School:

- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) sessions: We have a number of trained ELSAs who deliver targeted work in both a 1:1 and group situation aimed at pupils with more long-term difficulties or who have been through a tricky situation which they need support with. Areas they may support with include self-esteem, friendships and social skills, bereavement or understanding their emotions. Sessions tend to be weekly and last for a term but may be longer if needed.
- Inclusion Worker- Our inclusion worker can support with a huge range of areas such as general anxieties or worries, changes at home, friendship issues or just

giving a child time to talk about a topic they need support with. They can also provide support to parents with different areas or in signposting them and/or their children to external agencies and support services. The inclusion worker also provides advocacy support for any children open to social services.

- Lighthouse: Lighthouse are an early intervention service who work across all the schools that are part of the Blue Kite Academy Trust. School staff can refer children who they feel would benefit from this service. Lighthouse workers will look at the child's wider lived experiences and put in holistic and necessary support which may include direct work with the child, work with their family and/or provision of support for the staff at the child's school.

#### External to Ferndale Primary School:

- Trailblazer by Barnardo's- 1:1 support from an Educational Mental Health Practitioner. 1:1 or group sessions based around the CBT (Cognitive Behavioural Therapy) model. Support is accessed through a school referral.
- Early Help Hub- A Swindon Borough Council service which offers family support with a wide range of areas. The Early Help Hub can assign a Family Support Worker who is able to support in the home.
- TaMHS (Targeted Mental Health Service)- work with children and young people with emotional and mental health needs that cannot be met by staff within universal settings such as schools. They can work with concerns such as: Anxiety, trauma, emotional distress, low mood, self-harm. Parents can refer to TaMHS via their GP.

#### Level 3:

If the child's mental health needs are of too high a level to be met through level 2, or the level 2 work has not been successful we would move onto level 3. This would involve a referral to an external agency who have specialist provision in young people's wellbeing and mental health needs such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service). This referral will go to the Single Point of Access (SPA) which is jointly run by TaMHS and CAMHS. All referrals are screened and the most appropriate service is identified and you will be sent a letter detailing the next steps. This could include being invited for an assessment with TaMHS or CAMHS or signposting to a service which is better suited to meet the needs of your young person/family. We would also always advise parents to contact their child's named GP for further advice and support.

