



# Emmanuel Holcombe C of E Primary School

## Mental Health Policy

***Our Vision for this  
Christian Community is***

To grow together in love and learning,  
through faith, family and friendship.

*'Live a life filled with love,  
following the example of Christ.'*

EPHESIANS 5 V2

## Mental Health and Wellbeing

At Emmanuel Holcombe CE Primary 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 mental health is at the centre of everything we do and that we all have a role to play in supporting each other. We promote positive mental health to create an environment that supports the development and maintenance of mental health by helping children to feel good about themselves, to enjoy relationships, to learn confidently and to see their difficulties within a range of life experiences.

### **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
- help children to be aware of others and empathise with others
- 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

**Promotion of resilience:** we help our children to 'bounce back' from the disappointments and set-backs we experience in our day-to-day lives. With the ability to build protective factors in our lives which promote and protect our emotional wellbeing even when the unexpected happens.

### **Policy Aims:**

- To promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all our children and adults (see separate staff policy)
- To remove the stigma of mental health issues and increase awareness of common mental health issues
- To enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- To help staff to understand when and how to access support for pupils
- To provide interventions and support for any child displaying signs of mental health issues
- To create a safe and nurturing environment in which pupils can build resilience
- To sign post families to the correct services to support a pupil's mental health needs

**Lead staff members:**

- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Longstaff
- Accredited Mental Health First Aider, Mental Health Champion and Senior Mental Health Lead, Deputy DSL and SENCo – Mrs Thomond
- PSHE Lead – Mrs Bulmer
- Trauma informed practitioner – Mrs Hughes

**Health and Wellbeing of Pupils:**

Some children experience a range of emotional and behavioural problems that are outside the normal range for their age. These children can be described as experiencing mental health problems or disorders.

Mental health professionals have defined these as:

- Emotional disorders e.g. phobias, states of anxiety or depression
- Conduct disorders e.g. stealing, defiance, fire-setting, aggression and anti-social behaviour
- Hyperkinetic disorders e.g. disturbance of activity and attention
- Developmental disorders e.g. delay in acquiring certain skills such as speech, bladder control or social ability primarily affecting children with autism and those with pervasive developmental disorders
- Attachment disorders e.g. children who are distressed or socially impaired due to an abnormal pattern of attachment to parents or care givers
- Other mental health problems including eating disorders, sleep disorders, habit disorders, post traumatic stress syndrome, and psychotic disorders

Many of these problems will be mild and transitory challenges for a child and their families, whereas others will have serious and longer lasting effects. When a problem is severe or persistent or when a number of these difficulties are experienced at the same time, children are described as having a mental health disorder.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a pupil, in the first instance they should speak to Mrs Longstaff or Mrs Thomond and CPOM their concerns.

If there is a concern that the child is at risk or in danger then the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the child presents as a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

### **Warning signs:**

Staff may 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 alert Mrs Longstaff or Mrs Thomond.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure
- Changes in clothing e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE
- Lateness to or absence from school or an increase in these
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- Use of alcohol

### **We offer different levels of support:**

1. **Universal Support-** To meet the needs of all our pupils through our overall ethos and our wider curriculum; to develop resilience for all through our PSHE 'Twinkl' curriculum, My Happy mind, Wellbeing Through Sport and Forest School. All children have access to stress relief toys, movement breaks, 'chat and go' and a named member of staff if and when reasonable adjustments need to be made.
2. **Additional support-** For those who may have short term needs and those who may have been made vulnerable by life experiences such as bereavement, parent separation.
3. **Targeted support-** For pupils who need more differentiated support and resources or specific targeted interventions. As an inclusive school all children will have access to interventions to support their mental and emotional health regardless of gender, disability, ethnicity, SEND.

**Outside Agencies:**

We work closely with the School Health Team in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of our pupils. The School Health Team provide the Starlight Intervention, children can access this through a referral system and parents are supported alongside their child.

We recognise some children are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness, and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with other professionals such as:

- Early Help Service
- CAMHS
- Educational Psychologist
- Children’s Services

**We offer the following in house provision:**

Emmanuel Holcombe’s Healthy Minds Menu	
Intervention:	Focus:
My Happy Mind	Whole school programme to build resilient, balanced and happy minds at home and school.
Sand Therapy	Trauma informed practise
Forest School	To improve physical and mental health, building self-esteem and encouraging perseverance and resilience.
Wellbeing Through Sport Programme	An evidence based whole school approach to improving the overall mental health and resilience of children in school through sport and exercise.
Milo and Hamish Wellbeing intervention	A set of ten different wellbeing intervention programmes that focus on key emotional themes: friendship, resilience, anxiety, diversity, angry feelings, change, conflict, loss, sadness and self-esteem.
Draw & Talk Therapy	Drawing and talking is a safe, easy to learn method of working with children to help with underlying emotional difficulties that may be affecting their learning and behaviour. The core of the method is encouraging the children to draw with a person they

	feel comfortable with regularly at the same time each week, and this person asking some non-intrusive questions about the child's drawings.
Sensory Circuits	Sensory Circuits are a way to energise children during the school day or before an activity; Alerting activities (spinning, bouncing on a trampet, skipping) stimulate the body's central nervous system in preparation for learning; Organising activities (balancing on a wobble board, gym bench) demand brain and body to work together. Calming activities (heavy muscle work and deep pressure) give an awareness of their body in space and increases the ability to self-regulate sensory input.
Lego Therapy	Lego therapy develops social skills, fine motor skills, group skills, communication skills, attention skills and play skills.
Time to Talk	Time to Talk is used with a range of pupils who find it difficult to interact socially with others.
Talkabout	Talkabout is a complete programme for developing self-esteem, social and friendship skills.
Cuppa	An intervention which promotes positivity, self-esteem, confidence, resilience, and empathy.
Individual or group interventions	Short term interventions which target a particular need when it arises such as sensory needs, friendship issues, anxiety, and anger management.
Starve the Anxiety Gremlin	How to manage your anxiety and understand the different types of anxiety.
Starve the Anger Gremlin	Anger management for young people, how to manage and control anger effectively.