

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Low Ash Primary School



Approved by:	The Governing Body	12/11/2024
Last reviewed on:	11.10.23	
Next review due by:	Autumn Term 2025	

Policy Statement

At Low Ash Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

We have a supportive, warm and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and nurturing, where each individual and contribution is valued.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and there are times when any one of us 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.

At our school we:

- help children to understand and express their emotions and feelings
- help children regulate their emotions
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children to form and maintain relationships
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they are important and valued
- encourage children to be confident and be the best that they can be
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of community
- promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making, including a School Council
- celebrating all achievements, both academic and non-academic
- encouraging pupils to take responsibility for themselves and others
- providing opportunities to reflect on thoughts and feelings
- access to appropriate support that meets pupils' individual needs

We pursue our aims through:

- universal whole school approaches

- support for pupils going through recent difficulties, including bereavement
- targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties, such as attachment difficulties

Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical policy and our SEND policy in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with Behaviour and Anti-bullying and PSHE policies. It should also sit alongside child protection and safeguarding procedures.

Lead Members of Staff

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

Carmel Spedding – Inclusion leader and Designated Safeguarding Lead

Beth Medhurst – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Dan Hurst – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Louise Robinson – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Sadie Kellett- Pastoral and Family Support Worker, delivering 1:1 and group emotional wellbeing support and Forest Schools Practitioner

Jacqueline Hill- Pastoral worker, Attendance officer and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Amrik Singh – Play Learning Mentor, delivering 1:1 and group social and emotional wellbeing support

Rebecca Taylor – Forest Schools Practitioner

Teaching

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching 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:

- social skills activities, e.g. Lego Therapy, social skills games
- Drawing and Talking
- Emotional Literacy activities
- emotion management, e.g. 'worry eaters', 'the incredible 5 point scale'
- therapeutic activities, including art, relaxation and mindfulness techniques

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

- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire
- NFER
- The Boxall Profile

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

Identifying Needs

School staff may 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 communicate their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, following school safeguarding procedure.

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

Working with Parents and Carers

In order to support parents and carers, we will:

- highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website, and through our weekly parent update
- share and allow parents to access sources of further support, e.g. parent forums
- ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their child
- make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through School Ping, the school website, and our weekly update
- 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 wellbeing, including:

- School Nursing Team
- Educational Psychology Team
- Social Emotional Mental Health Team
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Young Carers support service
- Barnardo's
- Early Help workers

Please note this is not an exhaustive list.

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 and safeguarding training.

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 appropriate.

Support for Staff

In school, we have a Staff Wellbeing Group that meets half-termly. All areas of school staff are represented on the team, allowing for issues to be raised and taken to Senior Leadership and ideas to improve emotional wellbeing are shared.

The school has an Employee Assistance Programme with Education Support, which all staff are signposted to. Any member of staff can access this service confidentially and at no personal financial cost.