

Baginton Fields School

'Dedicated to Delivering Inspirational Learning Experiences'



Mental Health and Well-being Guidelines

Statement

At Baginton Fields School, we are all committed to supporting, and care about, the emotional health and wellbeing of our students, staff and parents/ carers.

Baginton Fields School strives to create a safe and positive learning environment where the dignity of all students is prioritised. We recognise individual personalities and encourage all students to flourish. Through genuine opportunities to make choices, our students feel valued, confident and happy knowing their voice matters. We encourage independence and resilience in preparation for adulthood. We aim to build and sustain positive and trusting relationships with students, parents, carers and the whole school community (from Baginton Fields School Ethos)

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges and circumstances that can make us vulnerable, and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. The mental health of children and young people, adults in schools, parents and carers, and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of children's and young person's education.

We take the view that good mental health is essential in order for students to learn and develop, to engage in school and adult life, and maintain healthy relationships. For staff, good mental health is essential in order for them to be effective in their role and maintain our vision of being *"Dedicated to delivering inspirational learning experiences"*

All children and young people have the right to be educated in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody. All adults have the right to work in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody.

In order for the school community to support good mental health for everybody, we encourage open dialogue about mental health and well-being, whilst respecting confidentiality. We are fully aware that stigma can be the barrier to a person receiving the help and support that they may need.

It is ok not to be ok.

We understand the mental health continuum and that it is possible to have a mental health diagnosis with good mental health as well as it is possible to have poor mental health without a mental health diagnosis. Recovery from poor mental health is not only possible but is likely.

Children's and Young Person's Mental Health and Well-being

To support a mentally healthy environment, we have in place:

- A curriculum, teaching and learning that promotes resilience and supports social and emotional learning
- Mental health and well-being strategies included in lesson planning and behaviour management plans
- Learning passports, behaviour support plans and teaching strategies that ensure access and engagement
- Ethos and values that promote respect and supportive relationships; and value student voice and diversity
- A culture of 'Belonging'- a sense of being somewhere where you can be confident about who you are and safe in your identity
- Enrichment, Learning Outside the Classroom and Community links to ensure that students connect with and give to others; and are physically active
- Focus on mental health and well-being as part of the EHCP process
- Positive staff/ student relationships and positive staff role models
- Recognition and celebration of progress and achievements
- Strong working relationships and effective links with external agencies, parents and carers
- On-going training for staff in a variety of job roles in different aspects of Mental health and well-being.

Signs of Stress, Anxiety, Depression and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Staff at Baginton Fields are observant to changes that may indicate that a young person may be experiencing a mental health difficulty. The list below is not exhaustive.

- Physical signs- physical/ mental pain, sweats, tiredness, weight loss or gain, difficulty sleeping
- Behavioural- aggression, irritability, self-harm (even low-level behaviour), change of eating habit, attention seeking, fidgeting, pacing or seeking reassurance
- Emotional- crying, showing fear, frustration, mood swings, anger or worrying
- Engagement- withdrawn, lack of motivation, limited interaction with others
- Functional- loss of skills i.e. self-care, confidence, memory, focus, unable to cope with changes or the unexpected
- Psychological- irrational thinking, nightmares, pessimism, negative self-perception

Circumstances and Risks Influencing Mental Health

Staff at Baginton Fields School are aware that there are circumstances and risks that may affect a young person's mental well-being. These could be related to the young person's needs, parental situations, school and community influences, some examples might be:

- Changes in family circumstances or housing
- Bullying
- Medical issues
- Bereavement
- Physical/ emotional changes associated with puberty
- Abuse
- Loneliness

These circumstances are reported to the Senior Leadership Team and a young person may be referred to the School's PSA or the Nursing Team for individual or family support to minimise the impact on mental well-being. Staff will provide on-going listening, support and monitoring in class. Students will be informed of who they can communicate with if they need help, within class and across school.

Staff are familiar with ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences) from EduCare training, what these experiences might be, the impact that these can have on a young person's mental health as well as life outcomes.

If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If the child presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

In Class Support for Mental Health and Well-being

Staff at Baginton Fields School have received introductory training in Attachment and Trauma theory, Theraplay and Promoting good mental health. There has been a rolling programme of LINKS* training in place and some teachers have volunteered to complete an on-line training course for a level 2 certificate in Awareness of Mental Health Problems. An SLT representative (Mia Webster) attends on-going training on Attachment and Trauma provided by the Looked After Children Services. This training is cascaded to the SLT team to ensure that policies and procedures influencing classroom practise reflect an awareness of attachment and trauma.

In addition, all classroom staff have completed EduCare level 2 training in:

- Mental well-being in Children and Young People
- Overcoming Loneliness
- ACES- Adverse Childhood Experiences

Staff adopt the 'PACE' strategy as recognised good practice- Play, Acceptance, Curiosity, Empathy.

In class support could include:

- Therapeutic play, opportunities for 1-1 interaction/ 'time to talk'
- Review of behaviour management plans
- Sensory diet activities
- Attachment and nurturing relationships
- Increased opportunities for enjoyment, engagement and success

- Encouraging peer support and interaction
- Opportunities for therapies e.g. music, art, outdoor activity
- Opportunities for relaxation and mindfulness
- Where communication could be an underlying cause of frustration, the concern is raised with the designated Speech and Language therapist or Teaching Assistant with responsibility for Communication
- On-going monitoring
- Increased communication and collaboration with parents e.g. additional face to face meetings
- On-going sharing of information with SLT

*LINKS Therapy are independent providers of Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy and Speech and Language Therapy services. Their role in school centres around a multidisciplinary team approach to problem solving and providing strategies to staff to help support young people who may be struggling to regulate their own sensory needs or may be frustrated by difficulties to communicate or get around school.

Working with Parents and Carers

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 common mental health issues.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who they can talk to, and how to get the support they need if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our mental health guidance easily accessible to parents.
- Share ideas about how parents can support mental health in their children through our regular review meetings.
- 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.

When mental health continues to deteriorate, is on-going or is a concern

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. Classroom staff will report their concerns to Heads of Key Stage for discussion at weekly SLT meeting, by providing information about the frequency and types of behaviour observed, possible causes and interventions or strategies that have been tried.

SLT will decide on an appropriate course of action to address the underlying causes or to support the young person to improve their mental health. These may include:

- Involvement of PSA to work with the family
- Liaison with Social Care
- Referral for Therapeutic play
- Referral to LINKS therapy for physiotherapy, occupational or speech and language support
- Involvement of the nursing team
- Raising concerns with parent/ carer and signposting to a GP
- Raising concerns at the child's school clinic appointment or requesting an urgent clinic appointment with the child's consultant

- Early Help Meeting
- Referral to RISE as a single point of entry for a range of mental health services including CAMHS LD (Children and Adult's Mental Health Service- Learning Disability)
- Restorative Justice support
- Protective behaviours support

The success of interventions provided by external support relies on the implementation and reinforcement of strategies and programmes, in class, by classroom staff. On-going evaluation of strategies, monitoring of the young person's progress and feedback to the professionals involved is essential to ensure that the support can be effective and maintained.

Staff Mental Health and Well-being

Promoting staff health and emotional well-being is an integral part of the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. Therefore, periodic training and signposting to materials about mental health and emotional wellbeing will be made available for all staff. A staffroom noticeboard will display websites and helplines for a variety of organisations who are able to offer support and advice. Staff are aware of the IAPT service and the support they can offer. Some staff, including non- classroom staff have opted for specific training about managing stress.

An open-door policy to senior leadership is always made available if staff need to speak to someone about any issues of concern and we have a fully committed and supportive governing body. A member of the governing body has supported in the writing of this guidance and has been able secure on-going NHS training and workshops for staff. Senior Leaders have guidelines available to help them in guiding and signposting staff who wish to disclose mental health problems. They are available to listen to what the individual needs or just 'to listen' if that is all that is needed. Senior leaders are not able to promise confidentiality if there is a perceived risk to the individual, students or other adults, however disclosed information will be treated with sensitivity and discretion.

Meetings with line managers and appraisal reviews will allow for mutual communication about workload and work challenges impacting on personal health and emotional wellbeing. Adjustments to working and risk assessment may be all that is necessary to support a member of staff through a difficult period.

A Mentally Healthy Workplace Environment

The following good practice at Baginton Fields School was identified in conjunction with class teachers as part of an audit of staff mental health and well-being using resources from the NUT, MIND and 'Looking after teacher well-being' Education Support Partnerships.

Policy and Procedures:

- Staff are consulted on policies and practices
- Staff are able to exercise professional autonomy
- Managers avoid overloading individuals or creating conflict of expectations
- The reasons for change are explained to staff and impact on workload taken into consideration
- Systems are periodically reviewed
- Protection of harassment or bullying from others
- A Disciplinary policy and code of conduct is in place

Organisational Culture:

- Supportive environment in which teamwork and collaboration is encouraged
- Staff are supportive of colleagues who are experiencing ill health
- Managers treat employees with respect and praise good work
- Lesson observation is a positive process
- Staff are supported and encouraged to develop professionally
- Staff have their unique talents and skills recognised and celebrated; and opportunities are provided for development
- Mentoring and coaching is available
- Managers are aware of the issues affecting employees

Personal and social time:

- Staff have space to socialise, share ideas, hold meetings and catch up with emails.
- Flexible working is accommodated, for example, PPA time can be taken off site
- Staff are granted compassionate/ family days
- Directed time is clearly defined and after- school meetings are limited
- No expectation of immediate response to emails or response to emails at the weekend, in the evenings or in school holidays

Staff Code of Conduct

The 'Working Relationships' section of the Staff Code of Conduct states that:

- All employees have a right to be treated with dignity at work and valued for their different levels of experiences. Staff should always respect their colleagues, the pupils and the reputation of the School
- All employees are expected to follow the School's policies on equality and diversity. All forms of harassment, including racial and sexual harassment, and harassment on the grounds of disability, religion, sexuality, age, gender, demographic background, political affiliation or membership of a trade union are unacceptable
- All forms of bullying, including threats or verbal aggression towards colleagues is unacceptable and will be dealt with seriously by the School
- Employees should maintain an effective and professional working relationship with their colleagues and Line Manager

Signs of Stress, Anxiety, Depression and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder

Signs of stress, anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder in staff members would be similar to those outlined in the Children's and Young Person's Mental health section of this policy. In addition, other indicators might include:

- Difficulty in meeting deadlines, increased errors
- Taking on too much work and volunteering for every project
- Working too many hours
- Increased sickness absence or arriving late
- Withdrawal from social situations, for example, avoiding the staffroom at break times
- Loss of interest and enjoyment in their role

- Erratic behaviour, being more exuberant than usual
- Inability to concentrate or focus on what's important
- Increased arguments or conflict with others
- Self-harm e.g. increased consumption of alcohol, caffeine or cigarettes, taking risks, risky relationships

It is important to remember that what might be a warning sign for one person, may be normal behaviour for another and that a certain degree of stress, anxiety or worry is normal and can help us react appropriately in certain situations.

Often it is a partner, friend or colleague who may recognise that there is something wrong before the individual is able to admit it to them self, so it is important that staff seek help if someone they trust suggests this to them. Early intervention is recognised as being a major factor in recovery and in many cases can prevent a problem from becoming serious.

Bereavement and loss

By the very nature of some of the student's severe health needs at Baginton Fields School, occasionally we may experience bereavement and loss. It is normal for staff to experience a range of feelings including anger or guilt, and we should take comfort in that we always provide high quality care and education. Our student's lives are thoroughly enriched by the school experience and the contact they have with other young people and adults.

To support classroom staff to inform their students about the death of one of their friends, the headteacher (Alison Francis) will provide the information that should be shared, based on permission from the child's family. The explanation for our students should be non-ambiguous and non-religious, for example, using the term 'died' rather than 'passed on'.

To support staff, students and parents/ carers to cope at these times, we encourage class teams to:

- Collect photos of the young person and make a memory book/ wall for school or for home
- Make cards or flowers for parents/ carers in class and write down special memories for them to read
- Draw pictures and write down messages for the young person who has died- these could be shared with parents/ carers
- Give time for students to ask questions and for staff, who know the students well, to answer them
- Allow students to share their own religious beliefs about death
- Model appropriate feelings in the school environment
- Those staff in touch with the parents/ carers, to share their memories and condolences as support- it is likely that they will want to talk about their child.
- Have a collection for flowers or a charity, depending on the family's wishes
- Hold a remembrance activity appropriate to the child at a key time, for example, an 'everyone wears yellow day' because that was the child's favourite colour. Involve the parent/ carers in a fitting way

The headteacher will send a letter out to parents/ carers, so that students can be supported at home to understand what has happened and discuss their feelings.

A key member of staff (headteacher/ head of key stage/ PSA) will discuss longer term support with the family of the deceased and seek external support if required.

The headteacher will, as far as practicable, support key staff to attend the young person's funeral should this fall on a school day. A Leave of Absence request should be submitted to the Deputy as usual.

Much of the above would apply and could be adapted in the event of the death of a member of the school community, for example, a staff member, a parent/ carer/ grandparent or a school governor. In all cases, the most helpful approach in supporting families initially is to:

- Offer condolences
- Listen and comfort
- Seek permission to share

Targeted Support

The headteacher may require or invite staff to attend Occupational Health for help and support. Occupational Health would guide the headteacher as to the most productive way of assisting recovery. Alternatively, he/ she may offer to make a referral to Coventry City Council's counselling service.

School employ the services of a HR provider to ensure that the Promoting Health at Work Policy is applied consistently, and that staff wellbeing is an integral part of this. The policy is one that applies to all employees of Coventry City Council. As part of the process all staff on their return to work meet with their line manager to discuss their absence and if appropriate will be offered further support or a referral to counselling/occupational health.

The senior leadership team will provide on-going debriefing opportunities for all staff working in classes for pupils with complex medical needs or challenging behaviour. Following incidents of assaults resulting in a significant trauma, staff will be offered counselling with a trained professional from Occupational Health. Staff can also be supported by 'change of face' opportunities or temporary lesson/ class swaps.

Parent/ Carer Mental Health and Well-being

Parents and carers are:

- Recognised for their significant contribution to children and young people's mental health
- Welcomed in school, included and work in partnership with schools and agencies
- Provided with opportunities where they can ask for help when needed, for example, parent coffee mornings, EHCP review meeting and parents evening
- Provided with advice from senior leaders, the designated safeguarding lead, parent support advisor and school nursing.
- Signposted to appropriate agencies for support
- Supported by members of school staff at meetings with other professionals/ school clinic
- Informed of out of school activities for meeting and networking with other families

Roles and Responsibilities

The school's improvement plan prioritises training for staff, interventions for young people and identifies key members of staff who have received specific Mental Health awareness training, responsible for driving initiatives and improvements.

- A designated member of SLT (Mia Webster) has the responsibility for leading practice
- SLT have responsibility for mental health and well-being signposting

- All staff have the responsibility for monitoring, reporting and implementing strategies to support student's mental health
- PSA has the responsibility for working with parents and making referrals for parent/ child support
- Heads of Key Stage have the responsibility for monitoring and making any necessary referrals for students in their key stage
- The head teacher (Alison Francis) has the responsibility for promoting health at work procedures, ensuring the staff code of conduct and school anti-bullying policies are adhered to.
- The deputy head (Franck Lavie) has responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection
- SLT have the responsibility of managing staff workload
- School Governors are responsible for monitoring the School Improvement Plan of which mental health is an important feature.
- All staff have a shared responsibility for their own health and well-being
- All staff have a shared responsibility for managing their workload and raising any concerns with SLT about workplace practice if it affects well-being.
- All staff have a responsibility for keeping up to date with the training that is offered to them

Measuring Impact

All staff complete a termly wellbeing tracker for their class group (Factors Influencing Learning document) This is aimed at identifying a range of possible difficulties including: Attendance; Behaviour for learning; Social behaviour (including having friendships); Medical needs; Mental Health; Home/ family circumstance. These are colour coded to aid identification of the areas of concern and show where there has been a deterioration or improvement. The impact of interventions and targeted support will be recorded on this document.

Annual Review of EHCP is an opportunity to evaluate progress and support for Mental Health and Well-being needs, and to identify the student's next steps and the support required. Parents/ carers have the opportunity for Structured Conversation twice a year and Parent/ Carer evening once a year, for intermediate review.

Therapeutic play sessions will be monitored, reported to the relevant adults (with respect for the confidentiality of the students) and actioned appropriately by a designated member of SLT (currently Mia Webster)

Staff questionnaires and feedback provide opportunities to assess the impact of training and inform future training needs. They provide opportunities to monitor workplace practices in order to ensure that these contribute to positive well-being.

Key websites/ helplines

For support with your mental health or if you are worried about a colleague:

- NHS Choices website gives information about helplines for adults. Search 'mental health'.
- Education Support Partnership offers information and counselling, plus a range of resources on managing stress for school staff.

- MIND provides information, advice and support to anyone with a mental health issue. Call 0300 123 3393. Visit mind.org.uk/helplines.
- Samaritans For somebody to talk to Call 116 123. Visit samaritans.org/how-we-can-help
- NHS 111 For urgent advice and support Call 111. Visit 111.nhs.uk

Bereavement and Loss:

- Winston's Wish For support for children and their families after the death of a parent or sibling. Visit www.winstonswish.org

To be read in conjunction with:

School Development Plan

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Behaviour policy

Anti-bullying policy

PSHE/C policy

Stress Management policy

Staff Code of Conduct

Mia Webster Spring 2020