



The Blue Coat School

PUPIL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

Approved by Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Committee on _____

Signed: _____

(A Poole – Chair of Teaching, Learning and Curriculum Committee)

This Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy was devised by the Deputy Head Pre-Prep and Deputy Head Prep in consultation with the Pastoral Team and the SLT.

Date of Next Review: Michaelmas 2026

The Blue Coat School Birmingham Limited

POLICY FOR PUPIL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1

At The Blue Coat School Birmingham, we are committed to ensuring the positive mental health and wellbeing of every child aged 3 to 11 in our care. We recognise that promoting physical, emotional, mental health and wellbeing is essential for a child's holistic development and their ability to thrive academically and socially. This policy outlines our approach to creating a safe and supportive environment for our pupils.

1.2

This policy was written with regard to:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- Articles 3 and 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

1.3

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we strive to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

2. AIMS

2.1

This policy focuses on pupils' mental health and wellbeing. We aim to:

- Set out the School's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across the School
- Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which pupils feel able to talk about and reflect on their experiences of mental health
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues and support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Inform pupils and their parents about the support they can expect from the School in respect of pupils' mental health and wellbeing, provide the right support to children with mental health issues, and know where to signpost parents for specific support
- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and pupils
- Develop resilience amongst pupils and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.

3. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1

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). If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed. If the pupil 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.

3.2

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

- Headmaster
- Deputy Head Pre-Prep and DSL
- Deputy Head Prep
- Head of Prep and Second Master
- Head of Pre-Prep and Academic Lead
- Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO)

- Director of Learning Success
- Chaplain
- Pastoral Team
- Headmaster's PA (Administration Staff)
- Director of Marketing and Admissions (Administration Staff).

4. WARNING SIGNS

4.1

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a child 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 the DSL.

4.2

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

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Secretive behaviour
- Lateness to, or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Rapid weight loss or gain
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in Sports or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Changes in:
 - Mood or energy level
 - Eating or sleeping patterns
 - Attitude in lessons or academic attainment
 - Level of personal hygiene.

5. MANAGING DISCLOSURES

5.1

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

5.2

Staff must focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

5.3

Staff must always follow the School's Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and pass on all concerns about pupils to a DSL. All disclosures are recorded on the School's secure online management system, CPOMS.

5.4

When making a record of a disclosure, staff include:

- The full name of the member of staff who is making the record
- The full name of the pupil(s) involved
- The date, time and location of the disclosure
- The context in which the disclosure was made
- Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

6.1

Pupils will be made aware that disclosures will not be confidential. A member of staff may feel it necessary to pass on concerns about a child to either someone within or outside of the School.

6.2

Parents would be informed if concerns are raised about a child's mental health. If a child gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

6.3

A parent hearing concerns about their child can be upsetting and distressing. Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful. Lines of communication will be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. A record of the meeting and points discussed and agreed will be stored on the School's secure online management system, CPOMS, and a Risk Assessment created, if appropriate.

7. SUPPORTING PUPILS

7.1

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

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, tutor time, PSHE and mental health awareness week
- Signposting all pupils to sources of support through corridor displays
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of the School that is negatively impacting their mental health
- Monitoring pupils' mental health through assessments, e.g. Bounce Together questionnaire
- Appointing members to the Pastoral Team who have a strategic oversight of the School's approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support, e.g. through heads of year
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as worry boxes and circle time.
- Actively monitoring and responding to significant life events that may affect children.

8. SUPPORTING AND COLLABORATING WITH PARENTS

8.1

It is recognised that the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. The School works in partnership with parents to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels
- Encouraging parents to liaise with staff to discuss any warning signs
- Offering support to help parents develop their parenting skills and bespoke parent sessions.

9. SUPPORTING PEERS

9.1

Watching a peer experience poor mental health can be very challenging. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

9.2

We offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. The support offered is reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Support may include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support.

10. SIGNPOSTING

10.1

We ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services. Within the School and through our communication channels, we share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

11. WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

11.1

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. Additionally, lessons are used to provide pupils, who do develop difficulties, with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting pupils to support any of their friends who are facing challenges.

11.2

As part of the PSHE curriculum, the pupils are taught about physical health and mental wellbeing so that they can make good decisions about their own health and wellbeing. Pupils are taught to recognise what is normal and what is an issue for them, and how to seek support as early as possible from appropriate sources. Physical health and mental wellbeing are interlinked, and it is important for pupils to understand that good physical health contributes to good mental wellbeing, and vice versa.

11.3

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort being taught, but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

11.4

Strategies for self-control and self-regulation are promoted to help the pupils achieve well and persevere even when they encounter setbacks or challenges. Staff aim to reduce the stigma that can be attached to health issues, particularly those to do with mental wellbeing.

11.5

The pupils are taught about the benefits and importance of daily exercise, good nutrition and sufficient sleep and they are taught about the range of emotions that everyone experiences. Lessons include teaching pupils how they can protect and support their own and others' health and wellbeing, including simple self-care techniques, personal hygiene, prevention of health and wellbeing problems and basic first aid. They are also taught about the benefits of hobbies, interests and participation in their own communities.

11.6

In PSHE lessons and in Computing lessons, the pupils are taught about the benefits of rationing time spent online and the risk of excessive use of electronic devices. In Years 5 and 6, the pupils are also taught why social media, computer games and online gaming have age restrictions.

12. TRAINING

12.1

As a minimum, all staff receive training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

12.2

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of the School's performance development process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

12.3

There are four trained Mental Health First Aiders who can support children at the school where deemed appropriate.

13. SUPPORT FOR STAFF

13.1

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can affect that staff member's own mental health and wellbeing. To help with this the School:

- Outlines the support offered to staff
- Treats mental health concerns seriously
- Offers staff supervision sessions
- Supports staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Creates a pleasant and supportive work environment
- Offers an Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) with Care First.
- Has a Staff Wellbeing Charter in place as part of its accreditation with Nourish the Workplace
- Has a designated Staff Wellbeing Lead.

14. POLICY REVIEW AND MONITORING

14.1

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure its effectiveness in promoting pupil mental health and wellbeing at The Blue Coat School. It will be presented to the Governors' Teaching, Learning, Curriculum Committee for approval in the Michaelmas Term each year. The minutes of this meeting will be presented to the Governors.

14.2

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other related whole school policies and documents including the Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (including Relationships and Sex Education) Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, Behaviour Management and Exclusions Policy, ICT Acceptable Use Policy, Online Safety Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Policy.