BROADWATER
CHURCH OF ENGLAND
PRIMARY SCHOOL

Rectory Gardens
Worthing
West Sussex
BN14 7TQ

TEL 01903 235389
FAX 01903 215047
EMAIL office@broadwaterce.org

www.broadwaterce.org

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy 2026-2029

Turn your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding (Proverbs 2:2)

Broadwater is a Christian School. We will enable children to become wise, confident, successful learners with the motivation, skills and responsibility to make a positive difference in God's world. Our vision is underpinned by the values we live by.

The Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! Galatians 5:22

It is this fruit that, in partnership with parents, we will instil in the children of our school.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Policy Statement

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to her or his community. (World Health Organization)

In our school, our Christian vision shapes all we do:

Turn your ear to wisdom and apply your heart to understanding (Proverbs 2:2)

Broadwater is a Christian school. We will enable children to become wise, confident and successful learners with the motivation, skills and responsibility to make a positive difference in God's world. Our vision is underpinned by the values we live by.
In addition, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at supporting our vulnerable pupils and adults.
In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils and staff affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.
This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.
The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

Lead Members of Staff

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

Aaron Morrissey – Head-teacher / Designated Safeguarding Lead
Tracy Mitchell (SENCO) - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead/ Inclusion Manager
Anna Corless- Deputy head
Natalie Laycock- Lead First Aider
Sharon Robertson - Pastoral Leader
Leonie Scott - Head of RSHE and Mental Health First Aider
Nicky Dodds – Link Governor: Health and Wellbeing of staff and pupils

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health Lead in the first instance and record their concerns on CPOMS. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures will be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the 3 Safeguarding Officers. 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. Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Tracy Mitchell, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead or Sharon Robertson, Pastoral Leader, in her absence.

Individual Care Plans/ Risk Assessment

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan or risk assessment for pupils causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions including adaptations to the environment or curriculum
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play in supporting the pupil
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Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

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 RHE curriculum.
The specific content of lessons will be determined by the particular needs of the cohort we are teaching. 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.
We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner, which helps rather than heightens worries and concerns.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. We will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum and staff will have access to a wide source of external profession help if appropriate. This access can usually be via referral to the Integrated Front Door. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils and parents/carers and families understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

Warning Signs

School 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 communicate their concerns with Tracy Mitchell, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead.

Possible warning signs include:

Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Extreme behaviour differences between home and school
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretively
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?
- Where will this be recorded?

Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.
We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Each meeting is finished with agreed next step and a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record. (CPOMs)

Working with All Parents

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 on our school website and signpost to helpful resources
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents

- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in RHE/RSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case-by-case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Warning signs that their friend needs help

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Curricular and Extra-curricular Support

We support the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils through:

- A strong school ethos which empowers tolerance and respect, including respect for difference and diversity
- High profile anti-bullying procedures and policy through corporate posters, assemblies and events
- Establishing clear rules, routines and expectations about behaviour for learning and social cohesion.
- Encouraging positive, caring and constructive relationships
- Recognising the background of individual pupils and their physical, social and emotional needs
- Consistent support for vulnerable children and those with SEND from trained teams of pastoral, teaching assistants and other external agencies where appropriate.
- A balanced curriculum with opportunities for intellectual, physical and expressive development
- Using a range of teaching styles such as Circle Time appropriate to pupils' age, ability and level of maturity
- Opportunities for pupil leadership through school council, play leaders, peer mediators and other roles
- An emphasis on praise and reward
- Opportunities for reflection and spiritual development through art, literature and the RE curriculum
- Having pastoral groups for wellbeing as well as specific mental health, such as interventions dealing with anxiety or emotions for specific children- play therapy sessions

Staff Support

We support the mental health and wellbeing of all staff through:

- Curricular planning time within the school week
- Access to counselling and wellbeing services via school subscribed services
- Whole school training events, including Safeguarding
- Access to appropriate external training
- Involving all staff in decision making and proposed change e.g. timing of the school day, frequency of reporting to parents and so on
- Consultation on training and support needs through regular review
- Work life balance regularly reviewed at end of term staff meetings and acted upon
- Twilights sessions timetabled to reduce INSET requirements
- All staff should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the senior leadership team. General guidance can be found at https://www.gov.uk/whistleblowing

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 training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

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 it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum.