

# Eyam C of E Primary School

## Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy



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Our vision is to be a vibrant and thriving community of responsible and resilient learners who 'let their light shine' as we work together, using critical thinking skills to achieve more and celebrate each other's success through a culture of respect.

We learn as a TEAM because *Together Everyone Achieves More*.

Signed by \_\_\_\_\_ on behalf of the Governing Body Date \_\_\_\_\_



## **Policy statement**

We believe that everyone at Eyam has a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children and young people will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get the support that they need.

We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can impact upon their learning and achievement. Our role in school is to provide a safe environment where we support our pupils to become more resilient and manage times of stress, change and upset. Our role is to also support our pupils in their understanding of what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, and what they can do for themselves when they are experiencing a particular emotion.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school for our pupils where:

- All Pupils are valued
- Pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- Pupils are able to communicate and feel listened to in school about their emotions
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Pupils' understanding of mental health and wellbeing is developed so that we can provide them the tools and language to talk about their own experiences

## **Purpose of document**

This document explains the school's approach to promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing. It aims to provide guidance for all school staff and governors in the school's approach to mental health and wellbeing.

This policy is to be read in conjunction with other relevant policies including safeguarding, medical and SEND where there is a need that overlaps into these areas.

Policy aims:

- Promote and support positive mental health in children and staff
- Improve recognition and understanding of mental health issues
- Provide some early warning signs of mental health difficulties and poor wellbeing
- Support children affected by mental health difficulties
- Support staff who work with children affected by mental health difficulties

## **Positive mental health and wellbeing at Eyam Primary School**

- Eyam community is responsive and flexible to everybody's needs.
- We feel safe and are able to express how we feel without feeling judged. We acknowledge that a 'voice' comes in many forms, not just spoken and we seek to understand each other.
- We are able to seek help and receive and use strategies when feeling and dealing with difficult emotions.
- We know there is a spectrum of emotions and mental health, and that this can change at different times and situations.
- We acknowledge that mental health and wellbeing is a shared experience

## **Definition of mental health**

Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development.

(World Health Organization, 2022)

**We remember that sometimes we are the ones who need shelter and at other times we are the ones holding the umbrella.**

## **Whole school approach to promoting positive mental health and well being**

We believe having a mentally healthy community is not about being happy all the time, but about working together through the challenges and sharing the celebrations; feeling supported, heard, accepted, valued and empowered. This includes:

- A whole school ethos that supports mental health and wellbeing through policies and behaviours
- Promoting the development of good social relationships
- Supporting pupils in being resilient learners
- Developing social and emotional skills to support positive mental health and wellbeing
- Identification, planning and support for children who show signs of mental health needs
- Working with parents and carers to support children's mental health needs
- Having support and training opportunities for staff in mental health and wellbeing

## **Roles and responsibilities**

All staff, including teachers, teaching assistants, support staff and midday supervisors, have a responsibility to support and promote positive mental health and wellbeing in pupils in school, however our lead members of staff are:

- Designated safeguarding lead: Oona Gilbertson
- SENDCo: Oona Gilbertson
- Mental health lead: Oona Gilbertson
- Mental health first aider:
- ELSA – emotional literacy support assistant Rebecca Perring
- Governor with mental health responsibility: Clare Harley

## **Supporting pupils' positive mental health**

### Support in transition

- New starters visits
- Transition to secondary school – liaison with SENDCo at new schools, individual visits,

### Class-level activities

- PSHE (see policy) – see section on Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing This is broken down into themes:
- National Children's Mental Health week which centres on a theme with linked activities as well as a non-uniform day 'express yourself' and a whole community walk to encourage talking with different people.
- Regular mindfulness type grounding sessions, circle time, check in, activities such as parachute games which allow for modelling turn taking, equality, a different space to share feelings. We begin each half term with a mental well-being session and are building up age appropriate 'class' resources to be used each year in different cohorts.

### Whole school

- Ethos
- Mental health week activities
- Lunch clubs such as Change of Life and Firery Foxes which are to encourage the less active and less confident to develop new skills

### Pupil-led activities

- Mental health ambassadors, generally y5/6 who work alongside the ELSA
- Play Buddy system

### Small group activities

- Nurture group
- Buddy training
- The ELSA can work with a group of children in issues such as friendship or to model Mindful activities

### One to one support

- ELSA sessions (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)
- Referral to the local Action for Children/Changing Lives Team who are very luckily based at LMS in Bakewell. They can meet with families and sometimes the older children on an individual basis in school for a series of 1:1 sessions.
- Information and guidance in wellbeing and mental health  
<https://derbyandderbyshireemotionalhealthandwellbeing.uk/>

## **Teaching about mental health and wellbeing**

At Eyam we are using the Derbyshire approved PSHE Matters scheme (see PSHE policy), which is based on 3 core themes: Health and Wellbeing, Relationships and Living Well in the Wider World. It includes regular discussions and activities about emotional development which models strategies children can adopt for self-help and finding out how to ask for help.

Within this, the curriculum is organised into twelve **modules**, which are covered over 2 years – fitting in well with our class structure.

- Drug Education - including how to manage risk and peer influences
- Exploring Emotions - including how to recognise and manage feelings and emotions
- Being Healthy - including the importance of looking after our mental health
- Growing up - including the Sex Education element
- Changes - including loss
- Bullying Matters - including how to ask for help
- Being Me - including identity and community
- Difference and Diversity - including challenging stereotypes
- Being Responsible - including looking after the environment
- Being Safe - particularly featuring cyber, gaming and CSE
- Relationships - including what is a healthy relationship
- Money matters.

Peer support – as part of discussions about mental health in school the role of peers/friends can be explored so that children understand how to support friends but that if they are concerned about a friend in school they should speak to a school adult – part of PSHE teaching?

### **Early identification**

It is everybody's responsibility to remain curious when they notice a change in a pupil's behaviour and interactions. Where this is a safeguarding concern, all members of staff, both in the classroom, and in the wider school, report this to Mrs Gilbertson who will complete an entry into the '1 Incidents Record' - which is on the Staff shared drive for anyone to add to and check up on.

Any concerns about a child's, or adult's mental health and emotional wellbeing which are not safeguarding, are reported to the class teacher, they may then talk with Mrs Gilbertson and should complete a 'Concerns form' for the child. These are kept locked with the confidential records in Mrs Gilbertson's office.

### **Eyam School Pathway** for identifying and progressing a mental health concern

Mrs Gilbertson will always confer with the class teacher and usually talk with parents or the child to gather information about the concern, being mindful not to promise total confidentiality if the information needs to be shared with parents or professionals. Mrs Gilbertson always explains to children that there will be support and that by talking about it they have already made the biggest commitment to improving how they feel. There are various avenues of help that may be arranged including in-school and involving a referral to professional support.

- Raising concern with DSL/MH lead/SENDCo
- Complete a concerns form the DSL then, in discussion with staff will first put into place inclass support, often this is a chat with the Class Teacher and a monitoring role or giving specific support with the class TA or teacher.
- Follow upon your concern a few days later but before the end of the week to check that it has been followed through and some action taken.
- It is everyone's business to be curious and to follow this up – remain vigilant and continue to make a note of any unusual behaviours around this child and pass them on to the class teacher.

- Children are also able to drop a note to the teacher in the worries box or talk with any member of staff. This is made clear as part of the annual focus on mental health in wellbeing week.
- At this time the DSL would usually speak to the parents and make a plan
- If the issue continues or there are further concerns the ELSA may be asked advice or to work with the child.
- A referral may be made to the Changing Lives team or to the early help team depending on the concerns

### Risk factors

Any child or young person can develop mental health issues, but research has shown there are some risk factors that are associated with children and young people's long-term mental health.

All staff have an awareness that some of our pupils are also at risk of developing a co-occurring mental health condition alongside their SEN needs. All members of the teaching team are aware of the possible risk factors that might make some of our children and young people more likely to experience problems if they experience:

- long-term physical illness,
- having a parent who has a mental health problem, problems with alcohol or has been in trouble with the law
- death or loss of someone close to them
- parents who separate or divorce
- experiencing severe bullying or physical or sexual abuse
- difficult social situations as well as the pandemic
- poverty or homelessness
- experiencing discrimination
- being a young carer
- having long-lasting difficulties at school
- children who are neuro-diverse

(Mental Health Foundation, 2021)

### Warning signs

Common warning signs of mental health issues include:

- sudden mood and behaviour changes
- self-harming
- unexplained physical changes, such as weight loss or gain
- sudden poor academic behaviour or performance
- sleeping problems
- changes in social habits, such as withdrawal or avoidance of friends and family.

(NSPCC, <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/child-health-development/child-mental-health>)

In school the signs of mental health needs might include:

- non-verbal behaviour
- isolation from friends
- drop off in academic progress
- expressing feelings of failure or hopelessness, displaying low confidence or self-esteem

- increased absence from school
- reluctance to join in with PE
- talking about self-harm or suicide
- repeated physical pain or illness without evident cause
- non-compliant, aggressive or disruptive behaviours

Mental health difficulties most commonly experienced by children:

- Depression
- Self-harm
- Generalised anxiety disorder
- Post-traumatic stress disorder
- Eating disorders

### **Managing disclosures**

Children with a mental health need who make a SG disclosure and then transferred to the SG protocol - see Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

### **Intervention and support**

Small group activities

One to one support

Referrals to outside agencies

For a safeguarding disclosure there would be a referral to Call Derbyshire Starting Point

Signposting: The head teacher may suggest talking with the GP or using the website to seek a range of services <https://derbyandderbyshireemotionalhealthandwellbeing.uk/>

- **Derbyshire Mental Health Support Line** - 0800 028 0077 - Open 24/7.
- **Childline** - 0800 1111 - Free confidential helpline for children and young people and **online chat** .
- **Samaritans** - 116 123 - Free helpline 24 hours per day Email: [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) - Emotional support if experiencing distress, despair or suicidal thoughts.
- **Kooth** - Free, safe and anonymous mental health and emotional wellbeing **online** support for young people aged 11 to 25.
- **BEAT** - Student line: 0808 801 0811 - Youth line: 0808 801 0711 - Helpline: 0808 801 0677 and **web chat**. Information, help and support if you are affected by eating disorders.
- **First Steps Derbyshire** - Derbyshire's only eating disorders charity, supporting people affected by eating difficulties and disorders.
- **Young Minds** - Text **YM** to 85258 – Free 24/7. For young people looking for support and needing urgent help with their mental health.

Free Parent helpline: 0808 802 5544 - **Young Minds Parents Webchat**.



- **Papyrus** - Hopeline UK helpline: 0800 068 41 41

Text: 07860 039967 or email [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org). Confidential support and advice to young people under 35, experiencing thoughts of suicide and to anyone worried about a young person at risk of suicide.

- **Self-harm UK** - Information and support around self-harm including an online support group.

## **Bereavement Support**

- Click on **bereavement support** for further advice.
- **Hope Again** helpline: Freephone 0808 808 1677 for young people from Cruse Bereavement Team.
- **Child Bereavement UK** helpline: 0800 02 888 40  
Email: [helpline@childbereavementuk.org](mailto:helpline@childbereavementuk.org)

## **Working with parents**

Parents have a vital role in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children. We support parents and carers who have children with mental health needs by ongoing dialogue and signposting to relevant services, as well as providing information for parents to access services for their own mental health needs.

If we have a mental health concern regarding a child we will:

- Contact parents and carers to discuss the concern
- Involve parents in any interventions unless there is a safeguarding concern
- Offer signposting to relevant services
- Agree an action plan
- Discuss interventions and keep parents fully informed of decisions about support

## **Involving pupils**

Peer support – as part of discussions about mental health in school the role of peers/friends can be explored so that children understand how to support friends but that if they are concerned about a friend in school they should speak to a school adult – This is built into our PSHE teaching as well as specifically talked about through mental wellbeing activities.

Mental health presentation for all children developed and given by children

Buddies – we train the School Council to be Playground buddies, looking out for those who might need a friend and also encouraging a range of playground games for everyone.

PSHE – learning through direct teaching activities.

Pupil voice – Governors collecting pupil views on mental health and wellbeing.

Anti-bullying – Write and review pupil policy as well as a celebration of friendship during anti-bullying week.