



Oaklands Primary School

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Date of issue:	March 2023
Policy review date:	March 2025

Policy status:	Non-statutory, GB approved
Responsible member of SLT:	Kate Thompson – Deputy Mental Health Lead

Policy statement

At Oaklands, we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers). We recognise that mental health and emotional wellbeing is just as important to our lives as physical health.

At Oaklands we endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress. We aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

How the policy was developed

This policy has been created through consultation with the school community.

In developing the policy, we have taken account of:

Healthy Young Minds in Herts.

Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition publication (updated Sept 2021).

Keeping children safe in education. Sept 2021

Anna Freud school staff wellbeing.

Links to other policies

This policy links to our Child Protection Policy, Anti Bullying, SEND Offer and our Positive Behaviour Policy. It draws on our whole school use of Herts Steps, a therapeutic approach to behaviour management that aims to use training and resources to understanding the causes of behaviours, rather than a focus on the behaviours themselves.

Teaching about mental health

At Oaklands we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a pro-active way to avoid problems arising. We do this by:

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
- Adhering to Herts Steps therapeutic approach to behaviour management.
- Focusing on the 5 steps to wellbeing.
- Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the World.
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks.
- Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Enabling access to appropriate support.
- Mental Health and RHSE for all year groups
- Mental health assemblies
- Wellbeing week and access to information around the school
- Workshops for parents and carers

Small group activities.

- Nurture groups to focus on mental health, resilience, and wellbeing.
- Children to be aware that they can drop in and see a designated adult if they are anxious or worried about a certain situation/issue.

Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote this in and out of their classrooms.

All staff are Mental Health Level 1 certified with regular access to e-modules to upskill from MindEd.

Staff have received training on Trauma and Attachment. (November 2021)

Staff have received training on Playful Approaches for Teaching Emotional Regulation (March 2023)

Supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school. At Oaklands we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance. Staff are supported pastorally and have access to enriched opportunities. Staff also have access to external support systems. Social Secretary appointed in September 2022 to organise regular staff events.

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and to understand the protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help; all staff should have the skills to identify warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need. Staff will be offered opportunities for further training.

Key staff supporting Mental Health at Oaklands Primary School:

Named Mental Health Lead –Beth Andreas (teacher)

Deputy Mental Health Lead - Kate Thompson (SENCO)

Pastoral and Welfare Lead – Laura McGrath

Mental Health First Aider – Richard Woolin (support staff)

Named Mental Health Governor – Elin Gillard (non-operational role)

Our Mental Health Lead;

- Leads and works with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Leads on PHSE and RSE teaching and advice on mental health.
- Provides advice and support to staff and organises training and updates.
- Is the first point of contact with mental health services and makes individual referrals to them.
- Creates, updates and shares Mental Health and Wellbeing Provision Map with staff (see Appendix A: Provision Map)

Many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals.

Early identification

We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things from getting worse, we do this in different ways including:

- Teaching resources including: When to worry NHS questionnaire, SDQ (Social difficulty questionnaire) Herts Steps Anxiety mapping and Roots and Fruits table and checklist. Advice on 'how schools can support children and young person's mental health'.
- Changes in patterns may indicate warning signs indicating that a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. Teaching and support staff are responsible for reporting concerns about individual children to designated adults within the school.
 - Attendance
 - Punctuality
 - Relationships
 - Approach to learning
 - Physical indicators
 - Negative behaviour patterns
 - Family circumstance
 - Recent bereavement
 - Health indicators

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

Assessment, interventions and support.

All concerns are reported to the designated adults within school and needs are assessed through a triage approach with SLT, class teachers and SEN to ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible.

Working with parents and carers.

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the Mental Health Lead for assessment.

To support parents and carers we will be:

- Organising workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience and 5 steps to wellbeing.
- Provide information online via www.oaklands.herts.sch.uk on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.
- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.

When a concern has been raised, Oaklands teachers or Mental Health Lead will:

- Contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment (Although there may be cases whereby parents and carers cannot be involved due to child protection issues.)
- Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies.
- Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away.
- Create a chronology of actions and events
- Agree mental health care and protection plan where appropriate including clear next steps.
- Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting support groups.

Working with specialist services.

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Your child may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- CAMHS
- Healthy Young Minds in Herts.
- School Nursing Service
- Children's Services.
- Therapists
- Family support workers.

- Educational psychology services.
- Counselling services.

Monitoring and evaluation

The mental health and wellbeing policy is on the school website and hard copies are available on request.

This policy will be reviewed in March 2025.

Appendixes

Appendix A: Provision Map

Oaklands Mental Health and Wellbeing Provision Map 2022-2023		
Universal Quality first teaching for all children	Targeted provision Catch up/additional provision for some children	Personalised provision High level of personalised provision for few children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reception-Year 6 receive 1 hour SCARF curriculum weekly (PSHE) and Relationships Education • Oaklands School Values: Honesty, Kindness, Respect embedded throughout the school, amongst pupils, staff, parents and visitors. • Daily assembly reinforces positive values and behaviour • Displays promote growth mindset • Weekly 'Heads Awards' assembly to celebrate pupils' success, families invited to attend • Children elected Team Captains (Year 6) • Team captains role model behaviour and attitudes in fortnightly Team Time sessions. • Twice daily check-ins (1-5 emotions) with staff in class • Visual timetable • Zones of regulation displayed in class • Structured/consistent transition times/daily routine • Worry box in each class/'Ask-it' Basket in KS2 classes • 'Feelings' area in Reception class • Class 'circle time' to informally address any emerging issues • Y6/Reception 'Buddies' • Forrest school sessions • Talking partners in class • Family support worker termly sessions open to all parents/carers e.g.behaviour support/ the strong willed child • Open door policy to parents – they know they are listened to • Parental feedback considered • Attendance monitored • Positive reinforcement of expectations – KS2 table points • Daily mile • House points in KS1 and KS2 • Safeguarding policy followed by all staff rigorously (weekly focus from Headteacher) • Up to date safeguarding training for all staff • Herts Steps • Oaklands Therapeutic Approach to Behaviour Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual social stories • Sensory circuits (am) • Anxiety mapping/roots and fruits • Resilience groups (3-4 children in each year group) using Art and Drama skills • 1:1 Music time • 'Being Me' Book • Daily check ins with specific children • Wishes and feelings • Protective behaviours • Success Plans • Book of Brilliance (BOB) • Behaviour Support plans • Referral to CAHMS • Teddy Time (School Dog) • Calls/meeting with parents to information gather and/ or discuss support • The 'Den' - a space to unwind • Now and next choices to engage and motivate • 'Drawing and Talking' FSW • Lego Therapy • Seat pupils near a peer they are comfortable with • Pupils have a sign/gesture to indicate if they are struggling • Give a responsibility to aid transition into school/separating from parent (e.g. register monitor) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENCO/SMHL identify specific need e.g., anxiety/OCD, ADHD • Referral to CAHMS • School Councillor • Play therapy • Home-School Book • School nurse referral • Families First/Early Help Services • TAF