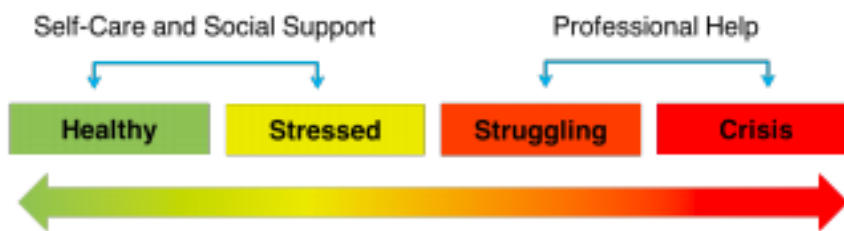


What do we mean by mental health?

Mental health is ***“the emotional and spiritual resilience which enables us to enjoy life and survive pain, suffering and disappointment. It is influenced by our experience and our genetic inheritance.”*** (World Health Organisation 2014)

Mental health affects all aspects of life and behaviour.

Like physical health, mental health is something we all have. It can range across a spectrum from healthy to unwell; it can fluctuate on a daily basis and change over time.



Why is mental health and wellbeing important?

At Bersted Green Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health.

We recognise that children’s mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that *‘in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy’*

Our school’s role is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their full potential or access help when they need it.

Our aim is to promote first aid for mental health and wellbeing of our school community, we aim to be a school where:

- All children are valued
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- There is a whole school approach for pupils, staff and parents.

What is a Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy?

- The Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy is a guide to define 'how' we expect to support children, staff and our families with mental health and wellbeing and 'what' practice we implement to support mental health and wellbeing.

How do we promote positive mental health?

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise. We will do this by:

- Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
- Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
- Children are supported to become resilient learners.
- Children are taught social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
- Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning to support to meet those needs.
- Effectively working with parents and carers
- A holistic and multi-agency approach for the whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers)

How do we support mental health?

We recognise that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health.

For our children

We recognise that all our staff have a responsibility to alert others to potential and actual indicators of mental health. Those to be alerted include:

- Designated Safeguarding lead
- Class teachers
- Wellbeing lead
- SENDCo

- School staff who support mental health and emotional needs of particular children – ELSA trained staff.
- Senior Leadership Team

If a staff member is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child then they will speak directly to either the Designated Safeguarding lead, Wellbeing Lead or the SENDCo. If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm then the standard children protection procedures will be followed with a direct referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

We co-operate with other organisations involved in the delivery of mental health and emotional support services.

For our children we ensure the following protective factors are in place:-

- ❖ Encourage secure attachment – trusted adults
- ❖ Develop communication skills
- ❖ Humour and positive attitude.
- ❖ Celebrate achievement and success however small
- ❖ Develop and encourage the ability to reflect on feelings/behaviour etc.
- ❖ Seeking advice from LBAT and ASCT
- ❖ ELSA support
- ❖ EBSA support
- ❖ MHST
- ❖ Regular staff check ins with the child/ren.
- ❖ Behaviour and bullying policies
- ❖ Staff code of conduct maintaining professional standards.
- ❖ ‘Open door’ and emotional first aid support.
- ❖ Children’s awareness of whole school approach to emotional wellbeing – ‘it is ok to talk’
- ❖ Good relationships between the children and staff within the school.
- ❖ Positive classroom and behaviour management.
- ❖ Sense of belonging and a knowledge that everyone cares.
- ❖ Building resilience – developing the skills.
- ❖ Encouraging positive peer relationships.
- ❖ Extracurricular activities, and experiences.

See Appendix 1 page 1– what we do to support our pupils.

For our Parents, carers and families

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health of their children, and in particular supporting children who do have mental health needs. To support our parents and carers:

- We promote education and workshops such as basic skills, cooking with your child, parenting skills, how to manage behaviour.
- We provide information and signpost parents to websites or organisations that can help with mental health issues and well-being. This information is published on our webpage.
- At all stages we observe confidentiality and follow the guidelines relating to data protection in respect of mental health and wellbeing.
- We support parents in accessing Early Help.

- We establish a home school relationship – good relationship between home and teachers and leadership team.
- Staff check-ins with parents.
- Staff members meeting parents and children on their arrival each morning – allows relationships and dialogues to be established.
- Make referrals to relevant agencies in order to support parents in the home environment.

See Appendix 1 page 2 - what we do to support the parents, carers and families.

For our Staff

Our Governing Body and Senior Leadership Team promotes workplace wellbeing. Wellbeing of staff can promote positivity and strengthen protective factors of employment, which will lead to a reduction in the risk factors of mental ill health and the overall improvement in general health and well-being.

The Governing body and Senior Leadership Team commit to the following in order to achieve this:

To encourage the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where all staff feel comfortable in asking for help or raising concerns. Enabling staff to be proactive and if possible to protect and enhance their own health and wellbeing.

To have an awareness of possible circumstances that may affect a staff member's mental health and wellbeing – support will be promptly offered to those individuals. Risk assessments will be undertaken if necessary.

Be aware that even though a staff member has returned to work after a period of absence it does not necessarily mean that they no longer need support for their health and wellbeing.

Ensure that the induction of new staff will include health and wellbeing policies, that staff will be made to feel welcome and supported. Training and development programmes will be offered to new staff if deemed relevant.

Where necessary, additional professional services may be offered in order to support staff such as Occupational therapy services, counselling services and Human Resources.

At all times the staff member's privacy and dignity will be respected. This means maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employee's rights and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity.

As a school we will undertake yearly audits to collate information from pupils, staff, parents and carers to allow us to develop strategies to meet the mental health and wellbeing needs of our school community.

See Appendix 1 page 3 - what we do to support the staff.

See Appendix 2 Possible Mental Health Problems and identifying them in children.

