

**Ysgol Gynradd  
Porthcawl  
Primary School**



**Emotional & Mental  
Wellbeing Policy**

At Porthcawl School we are committed to embedding the principles of the United Nations Convention of the Rights of the Child ([UNCRC](#)). This policy enables our pupils to access and enjoy the following articles of the convention:

Article 1: Every child under the age of 18 has all the rights in the convention

Article 2: All children have these rights

Article 3: Decisions are made in the best interests of the child

Article 12: Respect the views of the child

Article 19: Every child has the rights to be protected from being hurt or badly treated

Article 28 – The right to an education and discipline that respects the child’s dignity and their expression

Article 34 – Every child has the right not to be touched in ways that make them feel uncomfortable, unsafe or sad

Article 42 – Every child has the right to know their rights

## **School Vision**

### **Our Curriculum Vision:**

We aim to inspire, support and challenge all our children so that they have the opportunity to fulfil their potential.

Our mission statement illustrates how we all work together towards the achievement of our vision. It demonstrates our commitment to curriculum reform and our intention to place the four purposes at the centre of school life.

### **School Mission Statement:**

Together every member of our school community will feel fulfilled, valued and happy. We will develop as ambitious, capable learners who set ourselves high standards and seek and enjoy challenges. We will provide opportunities to express ideas, take risks and problem solve so that we all become creative contributors. In our nurturing environment everyone will feel confident, safe and healthy. With trust and mutual respect, we will build positive relationships. We will respect the needs and rights of ourselves and others as ethically informed citizens of a diverse society in Porthcawl, Wales and the wider world.

Every one of our pupils will receive the respect, encouragement and opportunity they need to prepare them for their adult lives. Key to our success is enabling our pupils to develop a strong foundation of well-being with a balance between an academic and vocational ‘hands-on’ curriculum that promotes the life skills that enables our pupils to

mature into adult life. We strive to ensure the best possible standards in our pupils so that they become effective members of society; the type of adults you would be happy to have as your neighbours.

## **School Ethos**

At Porthcawl Primary School we aim to be a happy, exciting and purposeful place where all can learn, grow and achieve their full potential with enthusiasm and enjoyment. A place where pupils, young people and staff are aware of their rights and are able to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to access those rights, in accordance to the ['Framework for embedding whole school approach to emotional and mental well-being'](#), published by Welsh Government, March 2021.

We want to establish and maintain a school ethos and environment that ensures the holistic wellbeing of all stakeholders, fostering a love of learning, instilling strong values and celebrating the achievements of everyone. We want our relationships to be based on mutual respect so that adults and pupils can work together cooperatively in safety and enjoyment. We are a caring school and we want our pupils to develop in an atmosphere that promotes honesty, trust and increasing responsibility.

## **Why is emotional and mental well-being so important?**

At Porthcawl School, we aim to promote positive emotional and mental well-being for our whole school community (pupils, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important emotional and mental well-being is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that pupils and staffs' emotional and mental well-being is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their teaching, learning and achievement. All pupils and staff go through 'ups and downs' during their time at school and some face significant life events.

## **Pupils**

School can be a place for pupils and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting pupils' wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that pupils are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that pupils 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.

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

- All pupils are valued.
- Pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- Pupils feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Bullying is not tolerated.

In addition to pupils' wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing

## **Staff**

The biggest asset our school has is its staff; the biggest asset they have is their health and wellbeing.

We spend more daylight hours in school than at home, so it is important that we can have ownership of many of the decisions that affect us in our working lives. We can do this, even in areas where we have no choices about what we do (e.g. reports, or deadlines for assessments), by taking responsibility for these actions and approaching the tasks in our own way. All our work should be healthy, safe and supportive and governors have a responsibility to ensure our practices contribute to staff wellbeing. This includes monitoring staff absence and regularly requesting feedback from staff governors about wellbeing. Governors recognise the importance of the wellbeing of staff in our school.

We advocate a holistic, proactive approach to maintaining and supporting emotional and mental well-being at work, with everyone working together, staff, leadership team, governors, Local authority, occupational health and health and safety professionals, to:

- tackle the causes of workplace injury and ill health, including stress and anxiety
- address the impact of health on employees' capacity to work, providing support for those with disabilities and health conditions and rehabilitation
- promote healthier lifestyles and wellbeing to help improve the general health of the workforce.

Where requested, confidentiality can be important in establishing trusting relationships providing the safety of the person or others not compromised. However, where possible, staff are encouraged to share their emotional / mental and/or physical needs in an open way with colleagues, to maximise support networks available. This practice also helps to de-stigmatise issues related to health conditions in the workplace.

## **Links to other Policies**

This policy links to our policies on [Safeguarding](#), Medical Needs, Anti-Bullying, Positive Relationship Policy and Equalities. Links with the Positive Relationships Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet emotional or mental health need.

## **Whole School Approach to Emotional and Mental Well-being**

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils and staff to become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses the following aspects:

- Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support emotional and mental well-being and resilience, and which everyone understands. Helping pupils to develop social relationships support each other and seek help when they need it.
- Helping pupils to be resilient learners.
- Teaching pupils social and emotional skills and an awareness of emotional and mental well-being.
- Early identification of pupils who have emotional and mental well-being needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
- Effectively working with parents, guardians and carers.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Reflecting on staff workload for a positive work / life balance
- Promoting and encourage staff to live a healthy lifestyle.
- Promote openness about emotional and mental well-being.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues

## **Role of Governors**

The Governing Body of our school has a critical role to play in developing our strategic aims and setting the school budget. Our governors ensure that the emotional and mental well-being of our pupils and staff is at the heart of our school culture. Governors understand that when we look after the well-being of our pupils, they want to attend school and their attainment and attendance improves. When we support staff well-being and invest in professional learning, staff want to attend work and staff absence and turnover decreases.

Our Governing Body enables and supports our Senior Leadership Team (SLT) to develop long-term development plans to promote and improve the emotional and mental well-being of pupils and staff.

We have a link governor for well-being and their role is to:

- act as a point of contact
- ensure the well-being of pupils and staff is on the agenda at every meeting
- provide support for staff who lead on well-being
- ensure policies, training and provision are fit for purpose

## **Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some pupils and staff will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of emotional and mental well-being issues and ensure that those who need help get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some pupils and staff more likely to experience problems, such as physical long-term illness, family difficulties, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying.

Our Lead for Well-being: Victoria Jones

- Leads and works with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Leads on curriculum development for teaching about emotional and mental well-being.
- Provides advice and support to staff, organises training, and updates.
- Is the first point of contact with mental health services, and makes individual referrals to them.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional challenges can be supported within the School environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some pupils and staff will need support that is more intensive at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to pupils / staff with mental health needs and their families.

## **Supporting Pupils Emotional and Mental Well-being**

We believe the School has a key role in promoting pupils' positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems.

Our School has developed a range of strategies and approaches to support pupils' emotional and mental well-being and can be found in Appendix 1.

These support strategies are categorised into three sections:

- Universal support – strategies that all pupils can expect to access without needing additional resources
- Targeted Support – strategies in place for pupils with additional needs over and above what is available through universal support

- Specialist Support – specialist services are those, which pupils may require following an individual assessment or referral.

## **Identifying, referring and supporting pupils with emotional and mental well-being needs**

Our approach:

- Provide a safe environment to enable pupils to express themselves
- Ensure the welfare and safety of pupils are paramount.
- Identify appropriate support for pupils based on their needs.
- Involve Parents, guardians or carers when their child needs support.
- Involve pupils in the care and support they have.
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with pupils and keep Parents, guardians or carers updated.

## **Early Identification**

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify pupils with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

- Well-being questionnaires
- Analysing attendance, behaviour, consequences and exclusions
- Staff report concerns about individual pupils to the relevant lead persons.
- Worry boxes in each class for pupils to raise concerns which are checked by the Class Teachers and Health and Well-being Lead
- Pupil Progress Review meetings termly
- Regular meetings for staff to raise concerns.
- Parental information and health questionnaire on entry to the School.
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer.
- Regular parental meetings
- Enabling pupils to raise concerns to any member of staff.
- Enabling Parents, guardians or carers to raise concerns to any member of staff.
- Named emotionally available adult for those pupils who need it

Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and talk to the Health and Well-being Lead or the ALNCo.

These signs might include, but not limited to:

- Isolation from friends, family, and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity, mood, or eating/sleeping habits.
- Falling academic achievement.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- Not wanting to do PE or change for PE.
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather.

- Drugs or alcohol misuse.
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour that could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development. If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the school's Child Protection procedures are followed.

If there is a medical emergency then the school's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

### **Disclosures by pupils and confidentiality**

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to pupils who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of our pupils is paramount, and staff listen rather than give advice.

Staff make it clear to pupils that the concern will be shared with the Health and Well-being Lead or the Safeguarding Lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil. All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps.

### **Assessment, Interventions and Support**

All concerns are reported to the Health and Well-being Lead or ALNCo and recorded. We then implement our assessment system, which is based on levels of need to ensure that pupils get the support they need, from either within the School or from an external specialist service.

Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

### **Evidence-based Intervention and Support**

The kinds of intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents and pupils. For example, Educational Psychologist assessment, 1:1 or family support or treatment, consultation with school staff and other agencies.

If the school, professionals and/or parents conclude that a statutory education, health and care assessment is required, we refer to the [ALN Statutory Code](#). All pupils needing targeted individualised support will have a [One Page Profile \(with targets\) and IDP](#) (page 352) drawn up setting out:

- The needs of the pupils
- How the pupil will be supported

- Actions to provide that support
- Any special requirements

Pupils and parents/carers will be involved in the plan. The plan and interventions are monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess the impact e.g. through observation, SMART targets.

The Health and Well-being Lead or ALNCo oversees the IDP.

### **Working with Specialists**

In some instances, a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders.

We have access to a range of specialist services and during the support will have regular contact with the service to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the pupils' Individual Education / Care Plan.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Health and Well-being Lead or the ALNCo following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers.

Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the pupil and parent/carer when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

### **Main Specialist Service Referral process**

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) accessed through school, GP or self-referral
- Educational Psychologist accessed through the Headteacher, Health and Well-being Lead or ALNCo
- Space Well-being Panel accessed through the Headteacher, Health and Well-being Lead or ALNCo

Persistent mental health problems may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age. In some cases, the child may benefit from being identified as having an Additional Learning Need (ALN).

### **Involving Pupils**

We seek pupil's views about our approach, curriculum and in promoting whole school mental health activities.

We always seek the views of pupils when developing support packages, seek feedback during, and after the support has been provided. This is to ensure that pupils receive the right support at the right time and to help improve the services they received.

### **Involving Parents, Guardians and Carers**

We recognise the important role Parents, guardians or carers have in promoting and supporting the emotional and mental well-being of their pupils, and in particular supporting pupils who do have emotional or mental well-being needs.

We share information, which includes who parents can talk to if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child and where parents can access support for themselves.

When a concern has been raised, the school will:

- contact parents, guardians or carers and meet with them (In almost all cases, Parents, guardians or carers will be involved in their pupils' interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.)
- offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- Be available for follow up calls.
- Make a record of the meeting.
- Agree an Emotional and Mental Well-being Plan / Individual Care Plan including clear next steps.
- Discuss how the parents, guardians and carers can support their child.
- Keep Parents, guardians or carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions provided.

Parents, guardians or carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger. Pupils may choose to tell their parents, guardians or carers themselves.

We make every effort to support parents, guardians or carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern is the pupils, and in the rare event that parents, guardians or carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority.

We also provide information for parents, guardians or carers to access support for their own mental health needs – **Appendix 3 –Family Support**

### **Supporting Staff Emotional and Mental Well-being**

We believe the school has a key role in promoting and supporting positive emotional and mental well-being for all staff.

These support strategies are categorised into three sections:

- Universal support – strategies that all staff can expect to access without needing additional resources
- Targeted Support – strategies in place for staff with additional needs over and above what is available through universal support
- Specialist Support – specialist services are those, which staff may require following an individual assessment or referral.

See **Appendix 4**

## **Promoting Staff Well-being**

Research indicates that taking the following steps can be important in the promotion and maintenance of mental well-being.

At our school, we promote these strategies to maintain positive emotional and mental well-being:

- Knowing personal limits and having the ability to say 'no' when necessary.
- Identifying supportive people that you have in your life, both in and out of school.
- Talking.
- Being flexible around change.
- Self-compassion.
- Being responsible for your own self-care

## **Identifying, referring and supporting staff with emotional and mental well-being needs**

Our approach:

- Provide a safe environment to enable staff to express themselves
- Ensure the welfare and safety of staff are paramount.
- Monitor staff sickness and reasons for sickness
- Identify appropriate support for staff based on their needs.
- Involve external services if needed, with the permission of the staff member
- Involve staff in the care and support they have.
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with staff member.

Supporting and promoting the emotional and mental wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing, such as:

- celebrating special occasions,
- staff craft club / physical activity clubs,
- social committee (responsible for organising team building events both physical and non-physical)

Additional information in Appendix 1

## **Staff Training**

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of emotional and mental wellbeing. Staff will be able to promote positivity throughout the school, identify emotional and mental well-being needs early in pupils and know what to do and where to get help.

Our staff, who undertake specific roles in relation to emotional and mental well-being, have access to professional support and supervision appropriate to their role, such as:

- ELSA,
- Thrive,
- Counselling,

- Team Teach
- Child Protection Level 1 - 3

As a school, we understand how important training is for staff and carry out a Training Needs Analysis of staff annually. The Training Needs Analysis is monitored and reviewed annually and linked to our School Development Plan.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating**

The Mental Well-being Policy is on the school website and hard copies are available to parents and carers from the school office. All mental health professionals are given a copy of this policy before they begin working with the school as well as external agencies involved in our emotional and mental well-being work.

The policy is monitored at a biannual review meeting led by the Health and Well-being Lead and involves staff with a responsibility for emotional and mental well-being, including specialist services supporting the school and governors.

