Barons Court Primary School and Nursery

POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING POLICY

Responsible members of Staff

Mrs Julia Jones (Headteacher)
Mrs Rosheena Ali (Deputy Headteacher)
Mr Alex Thornton (Assistant Headteacher)

This Policy was approved by the Governors – September 2025
This policy will be reviewed on a bi-annual basis

"Barons Court Primary School and Nursery is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, staff and the community with all staff, governors and volunteers to share this commitment."

Introduction

At Barons Court, we aim to promote positive mental health and well-being for every member of our school community. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to ill health. National Statistics indicate that in an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health condition, by our school developing and implementing a practical, relevant and effective mental health and well-being policy and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for the many children and adults affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health. We recognise that our school has an important role to play, acting as a source of support and information. This policy aims to help empower staff to identify and support children and their families in need of help and to ensure that we effectively implement appropriate referral pathways and procedures to provide the best possible outcomes for our whole school community.

Aims and Philosophy

At Barons Court we are committed to supporting the emotional health and well-being of all of our school community. We have a warm, welcoming and happy environment where teamwork and mutual support permeate through every aspect of school life. Through our caring ethos and our approach to learning we ensure a respectful, kind environment, where each individual and contribution is valued, celebrating the diversity of our school family. We have high expectations of all pupils in all areas. At our school we also know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everyone's responsibility and that everyone matters. We recognise that we all have a role to play and we reflect upon our practice to provide imaginative and stimulating educational opportunities and skills for life meeting pupil's academic, social and emotional needs.

We aim to be a school where:

- Everyone achieves their full potential through the effective promotion of self-esteem, ensuring all children know that they count.
- Teaching and learning is personalised, creative, challenging and fun.
- Children are inspired and supported to develop interests and skills both in and outside of school.
- Positive links with the local community create strong partnerships.
- A sense of mutual respect, care and responsibility is shown for everyone and everything in school.
- Children are supported to understand their emotions and feelings.
- Children can contribute positively to a changing society.
- Everyone in school feels safe, supported, valued and happy with everyone feeling comfortable sharing any concerns or worries.
- Children are supported socially to form and maintain relationships and develop emotional resilience and manage setbacks.
- Children are supported to make informed decisions for a healthy lifestyle - physically, emotionally, socially and academically.

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.
- Increasing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and alerting staff to the early warning signs of mental ill health.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements both inside and outside of school.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs.

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches.
- Support for pupils and their families going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils and their families with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder.

Rationale

The emotional health and well-being of all members of Barons Court is fundamental to our philosophy and aims. Our policies and practices are founded in the development of a happy, healthy school, where all learners can flourish. As a school we promote positive emotional health and wellbeing so that pupils and the wider school community can better understand and express their feelings. This

builds confidence and emotional resilience and therefore everyone's capacity to learn. We believe that emotional health is closely linked to mental health and that as a school we can encourage positive development of mental health in childhood. We believe that children who are mentally healthy will be able to:

- Develop psychologically, emotionally, creatively, intellectually and spiritually.
- Initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships.
- Use and enjoy solitude.
- Become aware of others and empathise with them.
- Play and learn.
- Develop a sense of right and wrong.
- Face challenges, resolve issues and setbacks and learn from them.

Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of children, staff and the wider community, staff with a specific remit include:

- Julia Jones (Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead).
- Rosheena Ali (Deputy Headteacher and Mental Health Wellbeing Lead).
- Alex Thornton (Assistant Headteacher).

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or well-being of any member of our school community should speak to the Deputy Headteacher in the first instance. If there is a worry that the child is in danger of immediate harm, then the school's safeguarding procedures will be followed, with an immediate referral to the Headteacher. If the child presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and emergency services if necessary. Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Pastoral Team.

Teaching and Curriculum Provision about Mental Health and Well-Being

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed for children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of the developmental PSHE curriculum. There will always be an emphasis on enabling children 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 the teaching of mental health and emotional well-being is done in a safe and sensitive manner, which helps rather than harms. Through the planned programmes and informal curriculum, opportunities exist to explore issues appropriate to children's ages and stages of development.

Emotional health and well-being cover the spectrum of activities and experiences in our school and the range of educational and health/welfare agencies who support our children. Our school is proactive in its approach and welcomes opportunities to promote emotional health and well-being through the formal and informal curriculum. Staff use a variety of methods for ensuring sound emotional health and well-being for children. These compliment and reflect the overall aims and philosophy of our school. Our approach includes:

- Consistent application of the code of conduct and core values across our school.
- Clearly identified rewards and sanctions, understood by all.
- Rewarding positive behaviour and achievement.
- Setting appropriately challenging tasks.
- Providing a forum for listening and talking, e.g. using home group time as a tool for personal, social and health education and citizenship.
- Encouraging co-operation and collaboration.
- Developing social competence.
- Encouraging and developing coping strategies and resilience.

Our school places emphasis on problem-solving, positive self-assessment, time for reflection, quality feedback and encouragement to participate in school and community events. A range of extra-curricular opportunities exist for children that enable them to extend interests and talents beyond the school learning environment. We see parental involvement as a vital part of emotional well-health. Regular opportunities exist to promote partnership with parents, including parent's evenings and annual parental surveys, to help us build on what we do best and identify areas for improvements, involvement in pupil plans and reviews for children with special educational needs, meetings with home group teachers who are here to support our pupils' pastoral needs and through the vast, rich programme of adult learning within our Barons Court Community Hub.

Inclusion

All curriculum policies make reference to inclusion which is key to our school ethos. Curriculum provision is based on an understanding that we may need to cater differently for individuals in order to provide equality of opportunity. This approach to equal opportunities is extended to all members of our school community and included in our Equality Policies. These needs include specific policies for SEND children. Our Teaching and Learning Policy and Curriculum Policy contains our expectations in planning, the learning environment and teaching strategies. Differentiation and awareness of a variety of teaching and learning styles are used to provide appropriate curriculum approaches for different children's needs.

Targeted Support - Pupils

We pride ourselves on the whole school team approach that is integral to our way of working at Barons Court. As a school we offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils, groups of pupils and the wider support for families. Our universal offer for all pupils includes:

- PSHE and "home group time" approaches.
- Whole school approaches to pastoral care which are contained within our clear policies for safeguarding, anti-bullying and attendance which are promoted to all pupils.
- Managing feelings resources.
- Peer mentoring.
- Celebration assemblies.
- Pupil Leadership Team and roles of responsibilities to ensure that every child is heard.
- Therapeutic activities including art, lego, play therapy, relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

As a school we have strong pastoral support structures and programmes. Our school makes effective use of resources to assess and track the well-being of pupils such as the SDQs. Early Help Family Support Assessments are created for children causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health in partnership with families and wider agencies. We always liaise with appropriate agencies to enlist advice and/or support. We recognise the effectiveness of our early intervention approach and our commitment to pastoral care for all and we always implement such support in consultation with the child, their parents and the relevant health professionals. This might include:

- Details of the child's condition.
- Special requirements and precautions.
- Medication and any side effects.
- What to do and who to contact in an emergency.
- The role the school and wider agencies can play.
- Interventions and strategies to be implemented to enhance the mental health and well-being of the child.

As part of our targeted provision our school works with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including: The school nurse; Educational Psychology services; Behaviour support; Paediatricians; CAMHS; Counselling services; Early Help Family support workers, Family Action and Play Therapists.

The Tier Process

Children who have been identified by the Pastoral Team as requiring additional support for their mental health and well-being may be referred to interventions following Barons Court's tiers of support. In Tier 1 children will receive regular support through Lego Therapy. Tier 2 is the next step in support and consists of children accessing play therapy support through the school's specialist play therapist. Tier 3 is for any child who continues to pose a significant concern for their well-being despite previous intervention. Tier 3 consists of the provision of counselling delivered by professional child psychologists. All children requiring support will be discussed at pastoral meetings weekly. Tier referral forms will be completed by the child's home group teacher and will be used to baseline the well-being of the child and monitor their progress during the intervention. All referrals will be made following discussions with parents and carers and will be in the best interest of the child's mental health and well-being.

Targeted Support – Staff

Pastoral support for all members of the school community is fundamental to the aims and philosophy of our school. We believe that a well-supported, valued staff with a clear and shared purpose are best placed to provide emotional well-being for children in our care. We follow Local Authority and National guidelines and policies for supporting personnel, including those for anti-bullying, race equality and

managing staff absence. School leaders are accessible to all staff and take a keen interest in monitoring teacher workload and work related stress. The school makes effective use of Occupational Health providers to ensure that all staff can access pastoral support if required.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, children and parents are aware of sources of support within school and the local community and how to access further support. Whenever we highlight sources of support to children within relevant parts of the curriculum, we will increase the chance of their seeking help, by ensuring children understand:

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

We also ensure that key information is signposted to our families and the wider community via the relevant pages on our school website, our school App and our newsletter. Within our Barons Court Community Hub we also run a range of parental workshops on issues regarding mental health and well-being to ensure that the needs of our school community are met. Parents and visitors can request specific areas for learning and senior leaders ensure that specialist providers are booked through Barons Court Community Hub to run such workshops for example cognitive behaviour therapy.

Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate that a child is experiencing mental health or emotional well-being issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and concerns should be communicated to the Pastoral Team straight away.

Possible warning signs may include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental – these will be referred to the Designated Safeguarding Lead following the school's procedures for safeguarding.
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits.
- Increased isolation from friends and family, becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity and mood.
- Recent bereavement.
- Lowering of academic achievement and progress.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- 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.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Managing a Disclosure

A child may make a disclosure about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, so all members of staff need to know how to respond appropriately. If a child chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a peer to a member of staff, the response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen rather than advise and first concerns should regard emotional or physical safety, rather than exploring "Why?" All disclosures should be recorded on the school's safeguarding portal. This information will be shared with the Designated Safeguard Lead immediately who will follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, they must be approached with sensitivity, as it may be shocking or upsetting for parents to hear of their child's worries and they may respond with anger, fear or distress. We should be accepting of this and give the parents time to reflect. In order to support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional well-being on our school website and our school app.
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums and Barons Court Community Hub workshops.

- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional well-being and mental health policy easily accessible to parents via our school website.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and the wider curriculum and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

Training and Professional Development

As a minimum, all staff receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health and well-being issues as part of their annual safeguarding training in order to enable them to keep children safe. Training opportunities for staff are also provided through staff meetings where a more in depth knowledge is provided through additional learning opportunities.

Monitoring and Review

Provision across the school is monitored by the Headteacher and senior leaders. The Headteacher will provide support and advice to members of our school community about the provision and implementation of pastoral care in school. Regular staff meetings, SLT meetings, pastoral meetings, LSAs, Play Leaders and termly Governor meetings provide regular opportunities for the quality of care to be evaluated and developed. This policy will be reviewed every two years or in light of new legislation regarding child welfare.