

Bedford High School

A specialist Business and Enterprise College

To Care To Learn To Achieve



Student Mental Health and Well-Being Policy

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Changes History

Version	Date	Description	Changes

Student Mental Health and Well-being Policy

Use of this policy should be in conjunction with school's behaviour and safeguarding policies.

1.0 Our Vision

Our school is a happy harmonious learning community where staff and students feel safe and secure. School life is characterised by a calm, businesslike environment underpinned by relationships built upon mutual respect. Our expectation is that all students and staff will behave in appropriate and socially acceptable ways. Our school takes seriously its' role in helping students succeed and we have a role to play in keeping them resilient and mentally healthy. Where severe problems occur we expect to get support from other sources, such as through the link worker to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), voluntary organisations and local GPs.

The school aims to increase the level of awareness and understanding of young people's mental health and well-being. The school aims to detect and address problems in the earliest stages and nurture effective working relationships with other agencies outside school that support mental health and well-being. The school celebrates Children's Mental Health Week (first week of February) every year with activities and focus around school.

The school aims to increase its' level of support to young people with mental health needs while working with families and respecting the fine line that can sit between support and obtrusiveness.

2.0 What are Mental Health and Well-Being?

Mental health is defined as a person's mental and emotional ability to make a full and positive contribution to the society in which they live in.

Children who are mentally healthy have the ability to:

- develop psychologically, emotionally, 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; and
- resolve (face) problems and setbacks and learn from them.

1 in 10 people aged 5-16 have clinically diagnosed mental health problems, while 1 in 7 has an emergent or less severe mental health issue.

3.0 Pressures on Young People

Some students may have a genetic predisposition to mental health problems but there are also many pressures that might be placed on young people from external forces that may cause them to struggle with their well-being:

- **loss or separation** – resulting from death, parental separation, divorce, hospitalisation, loss of friendships (especially in adolescence), family conflict or breakdown that results in the child having to live elsewhere, being taken into care or adopted;

- **life changes** – such as the birth of a sibling, moving house or changing schools or during transition from primary to secondary school, or secondary school to sixth form; and
- **traumatic events** such as abuse, domestic violence, bullying, violence, accidents, injuries or natural disaster.

4.0 Types of Mental Health Problems and Common Symptoms

A student may be considered to be suffering a mental health problem if they are diagnosed with the following:

Depression
 Anxiety
 Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
 Phobias
 Eating Problems (anorexia, bulimia)
 Post-Traumatic Stress
 Bi Polar Disorder (manic depression)
 Schizophrenia
 Personality Disorder
 Hyper-kinetic disorders (ADD, ADHD)

A student might suffer from one or a combination of the following symptoms:

Panic Attacks
 Mood Swings
 Low mood
 Self Harm
 Suicidal Feelings
 Rapid weight loss or gain

5.0 How the School supports Students with Mental Health Needs

Leadership and Management:

- Bridget Moss is the named member of SLT in promoting positive mental health and well-being. School leaders promote a culture of belonging and encourage talking about problems in a non-stigmatising way.
- Venessa Shakespeare as SENCO and Kerry Canning as SEN Manager accommodate students with mental health needs that impact on them needing learning support.
- Mental health is agenda-ed and discussed at SLT meetings.
- PSHE (PDE) and RSE curriculums are mapped to mental health and well-being.
- Anti-bullying and behaviour policies challenge stereotypes of mental health.
- The healthy school co-ordinator promotes mental as well as physical health.
- A cross section of staff in school sign up to the school mentoring (assertive mentoring) programme and receive training to mentor young people in Year 11 who need support.
- The rewards programme encourages young people to collect points in exchange for rewards, and several reward trips take place every year.
- The school safeguarding mentor tracks the attainment and well-being of all students who are CLA, open to a CP care plan, open as CIN or are of otherwise significant need. The safeguarding mentor is held to account by SLT on the attainment of these students.

School Policy:

- The mental health policy is supported by government guidance and updated every two years.
- SLT are kept up to date with developments from government by the named member of the team.
- Training for key individuals is made available.
- The school works with parents and takes seriously this commitment.

- A clear referral system is in place to safeguard a student who is suffering mental health problem or is at risk of doing so. Please refer to the school safeguarding policy.
- Incidents of bullying are recorded and the anti-bullying policy followed.
- Where intervention is needed, the pastoral team seeks to tackle the root cause of behaviour issues and sees them as a symptom of the cause. BIP's map out the support that a student receives in real terms and this is regularly reviewed throughout the period.
- The school's commitment to supporting young people in all areas of school life is detailed on the school website.

Curriculum Planning and Use of Outside Agencies:

- Schemes of work in PSHE, RE, and other curriculum areas name check mental health support and positive role models.
- There are several nurture areas in school: the Aspirations Centre, Well-being Room, Pastoral Office, and the Safeguarding Mentor's Office.
- Key staff are Team Teach trained in positive handling and restraint.
- The school has links with local groups, and representatives from groups such as Addaction, Climb Out and CEOP. These groups make contributions to school life where appropriate and through referral.
- Students who enter Bedford as mid-year admissions are given a programme of support which may include behaviour and well-being intervention to help them to get 'school ready' if necessary.
- The school chooses educational visits that will be suited to specific students or groups.
- Agencies who may be of support to young people are detailed on the school website for parents and students to see.

Learning and Teaching:

- SEAL and SEAD are included in planning the PSHE schemes of work.
- The summer transition programme supports more vulnerable children and their families with the move up from primary to secondary.
- Students in Year 7 and 8 are provided with journals on request to record their thoughts and get used to articulating problems they may have.
- The Early Help system is in place and the whole pastoral team are EH trained.
- The Start Well referral procedure in place.
- Enrichment Days regular feature a focus on well-being, healthy lifestyles and resilience.
- The school's mental toughness curriculum focuses on key aspects of 'healthy' learning skills.
- Weekly assemblies have a focus on kindness, living without harm and respect, via the PiXL Them & Us and PiXL Endurance programmes.
- Students in need of support can be referred to the All About Me programme or the Aspirations Centre for shorter or longer periods of time.
- The annual Well-Being Week and Enrichment Days (three per year) seek to provide positive guidance to young people on their next steps after school.

School Culture and Environment:

- The school a Mental Health Champion, Bridget Moss, Deputy Headteacher and school Mental Health First-Aider, Emma Darbyshire, PGO.
- The Hive area of the school where students may seek support in an emergency.
- Throughout school there is an ethos of Ready, Respect, Safe.
- Pastoral Guidance Officers serve each year group and operate within a mentoring role.

- Parents Evenings provide support to parents and guardians in helping their children cope with stress and other related concerns.
- Data is used to identify a student at risk of a mental health problem.
- Year 8 'buddies' support new Year 7's and Year 7's in turn 'buddy' children in their last year of primary school as part of the transition process.
- The Aspirations Centre serves to provide a different environment for those who struggle in 'mainstream' school. Staff who teach receive training in dealing with mental health needs of the students.

Giving Young People and Children a Voice:

- Student feedback boxes are provided around school to gauge students' views.
- Junior Leaderships Team meet regularly and discuss issues they consider relevant in school.
- Leaflets and posters provided to students in common areas such as the library, safeguarding officers areas and The Hive.
- Student Voice is sought on a range of subjects, at least twice a year from the whole school population. Form reps report back to the Junior Leadership Team once per half term on a range of issues.
- Student Voice feedback boxes are placed around school to give students a voice.
- Students new to Bedford are given a copy of the Live It Loud journal to use to record their feelings on transition from primary or another school/area.
- Suggested questions available for student to student care and teacher to student care (written by the JLT, see appendix 1)
- Tricky questions displayed on the school website and publicised to staff. (see appendix 2)

Provision of Support Services:

The pastoral team is aware of the full range of support from outside agencies and can access referral forms quickly and easily.

- Therapeutic stories and Talking About Teenagers are used.
- All About Me is the school's holistic support package for young people. Diagnosis of need is through the initial questionnaire, which is based on Boxall and the SDQ, used by social care.
- The school has as counsellor who students can be referred to.
- The school has a partnership with Oxford University's MYRIAD Mindfulness project and mindfulness is actively promoted through lesson and form time.
- The School Nurse runs a weekly drop-in on Wednesdays.
- There is a designated student area in school (The Hive) where students can call in if they need help with a range of issues during the day.
- Any student who has been referred to social care will be added to the caseload of the school safeguarding mentor and will access support in school as well as out of school.
- The school uses CPOMS online portal for students to report concerns about others well-being or about significant specific issues, eg bullying etc.

CPD Needs of Staff:

- Induction training for new staff covers safeguarding and students emotional health.
- The behaviour policy is given to and followed by all staff.
- Records are kept of teacher observations.
- Staff have access to training as mentors to young people.
- The Attendance Officer has a remit to support young people with a range of needs.
- Staff in the pastoral team access the provision of the EPS and tailor their training to the needs of their students, cascading where necessary.

- Risk assessments detail the specific needs to students and identify training needs in staff as necessary.

Partnership with Parents and Carers:

- Use of a nurture unit for students displaying difficulties in a traditional classroom set-up.
- There are risk assessments carried out with parents on students who need extra support.
- Tracking of student behaviour and a range of interventions put in place for students at risk of exclusion from school.

COVID-19 appendix

Additional support to students has been given during the periods of partial school closure and when students have been self-isolating:

- All staff provided with a booklet covering all areas of need and signposting to the appropriate agency.
A 'rapid response' team picks up issues when a lesson is missed and refers them to the appropriate person.
- School places (during partial closure) are offered to all students on the 'vulnerable' list, generated by the local authority.
- A weekly well-being drop in, promoted to all students, but with additional referrals from pastoral staff.
- A part or full-time school place where the student is vulnerable and where it is believed that being in school will improve their mental health.
- Online learning provision includes online assemblies, with a positive focus, and practical subjects seek to continue their practical focus to increase the variety and opportunities for creativity.

Further reading:

- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (published government guidelines November 2018)
- <http://www.sdqinfo.com/> - Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), to help school staff judge whether individual students might be suffering from a diagnosable mental health problem.
- <http://counsellingminded.com/> - MindEd, a free online training tool for school staff to help them learn more about specific mental health problems.
- <http://www.youngminds.org.uk/> - a charity committed to improving the mental health and well-being of young people.
- www.mind.org.uk - the principle charity for mental health in the UK.