

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

FROM ALPHA TO OMEGA



At Emmanuel Church of England School, broad opportunities are provided for individuals to develop their full potential and allow them to be healthy, happy and secure.

Building on our Christian ethos and in partnership with the whole school community, we provide a stimulating and caring environment where individuals are valued and nurtured morally, spiritually and academically.

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels cared for, valued, respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. This is promoted through our school values; where children learn to be respectful, to forgive and to move on so that they can experience:

Introduction and aims

Emmanuel Church of England Primary School is an inclusive setting where our focus on mental health and wellbeing is integral to school improvement and success. We have a whole-school approach to supporting our pupils, their parents/carers and our staff with an aim to:

- Promote the importance of supporting and maintaining positive mental and emotional wellbeing by providing regular and timely information and support.
- Create an understanding of all aspects of emotional literacy and mental health and wellbeing; and how to identify symptoms of poor mental health.
- Empower our children to develop emotional regulation strategies and enabling those with mental health related concerns to take action and seek support in a safe, confidential manner.
- Offer guidance, strategies or targeted initiatives (with the support of the Wellbeing team, staff Wellbeing Committee and pupil Wellbeing Champions) to support pupils and staff to be mentally healthy, build resilience and be prepared for expected and unexpected events which can impact wellbeing.
- Help to develop the protective factors that build resilience to mental health concerns and be a school where our pupils feel valued, have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- Support our children to feel confident in themselves; that they are able to express a range of emotions appropriately; manage times of stress and change; and feel able to talk openly with trusted adults, to reduce barriers to learning so that they can achieve their full potential in learning and talents.
- Create an open and approachable environment where children, staff and parents/carers are able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- Help all pupils, parents/carers and members of staff to recognise their responsibility and accountability in supporting the mental health and wellbeing needs of themselves and those around them.

This approach aims to help pupils become more resilient, happy and successful in their learning and to help them experience: 'Life in all its fullness' – John 10:10. We aim for them to be more reflective and self-aware of their feelings and behaviours to help prevent mental health difficulties before they arise or get worse.

Why is mental health and wellbeing important?

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community; pupils, 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. All children go through ups and downs through their school career/life and some face significant life events.

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- The national prevalence of children and young people who have a diagnosable mental health condition is 9.6%. This equates to 4,652 children and young people in Camden
- The Mental Health of Children and Young People Survey 2020 showed that 1 in 6 5-16 year olds were identified as having a probable mental health disorder. This is an increase from 2017 when it was 1 in 9
- 92% of young people will experience a significant bereavement before the age of 16 years (Child Bereavement UK).

Mental Health difficulties can have an enormous impact on children and young people's quality of life, relationships and academic achievement. In many cases it is life-limiting. The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: *"Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children by developing whole school approaches tailored to their particular needs, as well as considering the needs of individual pupils"*. DfE Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools November 2018.

Schools can be a place for children 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 they are able to manage times of change and stress, be resilient, are supported to reach their potential and 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 difficulties 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 difficulties and 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 and concerns without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Bullying is not tolerated.

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing. This is also covered in this policy.

COVID and the subsequent lockdowns had, and continue to have, a huge impact on children's mental health, as well as on their families and on staff. Some will have experienced anxiety, stress, loss and bereavement and trauma that continue to have a lasting impact on their mental health and wellbeing.

Purpose of this policy

This policy sets out

- How we promote positive mental health.
- How we prevent mental health difficulties.
- How we identify and support pupils with mental health needs.
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health difficulties and spot early warning signs to help prevent them getting worse and support pupils.
- Key information about some common mental health difficulties.
- Where parents and carers, staff and pupils can get advice and support.

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Definition of mental health and wellbeing

The World Health Organisation defines mental health as *“a state of mental wellbeing that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and wellbeing that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.”* 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.

What do we mean by wellbeing?

Wellbeing is defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as *“the state of being comfortable, healthy, or happy,”* however, it is recognised as being a much broader concept than moment-to-moment happiness. While it does include happiness, it also includes other things, such as how satisfied people are with their life as a whole, their sense of purpose, and how in control they feel. In this respect, the New Economics Foundation describes wellbeing as the following: *“Wellbeing can be understood as how people feel and how they function, both on a personal and a social level, and how they evaluate their lives as a whole.”* At Emmanuel, we consider 10 dimensions of wellbeing: mental, physical, emotional, social, relational (connection), societal, environmental, spiritual, intellectual and economic wellbeing.

How the policy was developed

The original development of this policy was led by our Mental Health Lead and Inclusion Leader in consultation with pupils, staff, parents and carers, the school nurse and local mental health professionals (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Educational Psychologists. We used the Camden example policy as the basis of our policy. In line with the school’s process for policy development, the policy was discussed and approved by governors. In developing this policy we have taken account of:

- State of the Nation 2020: Children and Young People’s Wellbeing
- Teaching about mental health and wellbeing PSHE Association 2019
- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges DfE 2021
- Mental Health and Behaviour in schools DfE 2018
- Camden’s example Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy March 2022
- Promoting children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing Public Health England 2021

This updated version of the policy has been developed with comments from Camden’s Mental Health in Schools Group, responses to a survey with Mental Health Leads and discussions and comments from a group of Mental Health Leads from primary, secondary and special schools, specifically set up to review and update the policy (March 2022).

In addition, the policy has been updated following the development of our school-wide mental health and wellbeing strategy as part of the Wellbeing Award for Schools accreditation in 2023-24.

Links to other policies

This policy links to our policies on safeguarding, supporting pupils with medical conditions, anti-bullying, online safety, PSHE, SEND policy and the staff code of conduct/staff handbook. It also links to our SEN Information Report. Links with the behaviour policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, is a form of communication and may be related to an unmet mental health need.

Roles and Responsibilities

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Staff

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health difficulties and ensure that pupils with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need. All staff understand possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems; such as a physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy (*see appendix 1 on risk and protective factors*).

Mental Health Lead / Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)

- Leads on and works with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health.
- Provides advice and support to staff about teaching and organises training and updates.
- Provides coordination and signposting of mental health support.
- Keeps staff up to date with information about what support is available.
- Liaises with the PSHE Coordinator on teaching about mental health.
- Is the first point of contact and communicates with mental health services.
- Leads on and makes referrals to services.
- Is involved in strategic decision making around mental health across the school.
- Liaises with relevant staff including Inclusion Lead/SEND Co and Designated Safeguarding Lead.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to pupils with mental health needs and their families. Support includes:

- Safeguarding/Child Protection Lead.
- Support staff to manage mental health needs of pupils.
- Inclusion Leader who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including pupils whose mental health difficulties mean they need special educational provision.
- Our family support/home school link worker/parent support advisor supports families and leads mindfulness sessions for pupils.
- School nurse.
- Camden Educational Psychologist.
- Mental Health Support Team (MHST).
- Psychotherapist from Camden's CAMHS who provides therapy and group work to pupils who are referred and support staff to manage mental health needs of pupils-support can be offered in school or at an external agency.

A whole-school approach to promoting positive mental health

We take a whole-school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils become more resilient, be happy, successful and prevent difficulties before they arise or get worse. This encompasses 7 aspects (that incorporate Public Health England's 8 principles of a whole school approach):

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1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands, including leadership and management that supports and champions efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing and listen to the views of pupils.
2. Helping pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to
3. Helping pupils to be resilient learners.
4. Teaching pupils social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
5. Early identification of pupils who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services and monitoring the impact of interventions .
6. Effectively working with parents and carers.
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health difficulties and aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health difficulties. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the scale of mental health difficulties and our aim is to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health to ensure that everyone feels able to ask for help if they need to be able to talk about their feelings and manage their emotions.

Our approach to deliver this

We have developed a 6-step process to ensure we support our pupils, parents/carers and staff, from helping to inform and improve understanding of mental health through to reviewing the success of support/intervention outcomes.



1. **Prevent**: Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing.
2. **Identify**: Having robust mechanisms in place to identify needs.
3. **Refer**: What do we do if we believe a child or member of staff needs support?
4. **Assess**: Processes in place to assess the wellbeing need of a child.
5. **Support**: 'Wave approach': Identify appropriate support for pupils based on their needs.
6. **Review**: all interventions to be assessed for their impact and outcomes.

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1. Prevent

We believe we have a key role in promoting pupils' positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health difficulties:

- Share information and understanding of both internal and external support services available to the school community.
- Encourage and support the whole school community to be positive and proactive in its approach to mental health and wellbeing.
- Provide strategies and tools for all pupils, staff and parents/carers to manage their own emotional regulation and mental health needs and to support others around them.
- Provide appropriate training and information to staff on mental health and emotional wellbeing and to be able to spot the signs of poor mental health.
- Have named Wellbeing team/Mental Health Leads for parents/carers; Wellbeing committee members for staff; and Wellbeing Champions for the pupils who are the contact point at Emmanuel School.
- Seek to embed mental health and wellbeing support across the curriculum and school policies.

We deliver a range of informative/awareness building activities to support our pupils, including:

- PSHE lessons, timetabled mindfulness, themed workshops.
- Zones of Regulation framework used across the whole school
- Take 5 calming tool
- Class interventions e.g. Year 6 Secondary transition, Zones of Regulation, circle time
- Wellbeing Champions provide peer to peer support and lead Collective Worship and MHW class lessons
- Themed weeks to raise awareness and reduce stigma e.g. Anti-Bullying week, Children's Mental Health week, Diversity week
- Special assemblies and workshops from outside professionals e.g. NSPCC, Whisper me happy
- Wellbeing corridor and classroom displays/posters and library area
- Emmanuel Express pupil newspaper – led and written by pupils for the pupils
- School Council to champion pupil voice, organise fundraising and fun events
- PE, sports opportunities and a range of after school clubs
- Sense of belonging and team work through school houses
- Enrichment opportunities and positive experiences e.g. music, brass, assemblies, trips
- Clear rewards/celebration of achievement and effort linked to our school values
- Close links/weekly connection to church

Teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing

Through PSHE we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help pupils to be more resilient, understand about mental health and help reduce the stigma of mental health difficulties.

Pupils at EYFS learn:

- To begin to recognise and name up to six emotions and associate these with the colours of the Zones of Regulation.
- How to calm down.
- How their behaviour affects other people.
- Begin to learn about empathy and understanding other people's feelings.
- About change and loss and the associated feelings (including moving home, losing toys, pets or friends).
- Who to go to if they are worried.

Key Stage 1 pupils learn:

- To recognise, name and describe a wider range of emotions including good and not so good feelings – linked to the Zones of Regulation.

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- Simple strategies for managing feelings.
- How their behaviour affects other people.
- About empathy and understanding other people's feelings.
- To cooperate and problem solve.
- To motivate themselves and persevere.
- How to calm down and self-regulate.
- About change and loss and the associated feelings (including moving home, losing toys, pets or friends).
- The importance of talking about feelings and who to go to if they are worried.
- About different types of teasing and bullying, that these are wrong and unacceptable.
- How to resist teasing or bullying, if they experience or witness it, whom to go to and how to get help.

Key Stage 2 pupils learn:

- That mental health and wellbeing is a normal part of life, just like physical health.
- Continued development of their understanding of the Zones of Regulation framework and how to manage a range of strong emotions.
- That mental health difficulties are common and with support, especially if sought early, can help resolve them.
- What positively and negatively affects their mental and emotional health (including the impact of the media, isolation and loneliness).
- The benefits to mental health of physical activity, time outdoors, community participation.
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect mood and ability to learn.
- That humans experience a range of emotions in relation to different experiences and situation.
- Positive and healthy coping strategies and self-care techniques, including rest, sleep time with friends and family, hobbies and interests.
- About good and not so good feelings and how to recognise and talk about their emotions.
- To be able to talk about the range and intensity of their feelings to others and judge whether what they are feeling is appropriate and proportionate.
- To recognise and respond appropriately to a wide range of feelings in others
- To recognise that they may experience conflicting emotions and when they might need to listen to their emotions or overcome them.
- About resilience.
- How to motivate themselves and bounce back if they fail at something.
- How to empathise and be supportive of others.
- About change, including transitions (between Key Stages and schools), loss, separation, divorce and bereavement and the impact they have.
- About the consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including online bullying, prejudice-based language) and the negative impact on mental health and wellbeing.
- About the importance of talking to someone if they are worried, recognising when they might need help and how to get help.
- About how to manage friendship problems positively.

2. Identify

We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse.

- Provide a safe environment to enable pupils to express themselves and be listened to.
- Ensure the welfare and safety of pupils as paramount.
- Promote a culture which supports and encourages self-disclosure (e.g. using our Let's Talk lunch time drop in service in the Bubble room, worry boxes, table top/display check-ins in class).

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- Recognise that staff have the responsibility to alert others to potential and actual indicators of mental health needs and to take this action whenever necessary: for Pupils alerting teachers or the Wellbeing team through our CPOMS information/incident recording system and following our Safeguarding Policy; and for staff, via their line manager or the Senior Leadership Team.
- To use our MHW assessment model to help identify concerns and seek support from the school's Wellbeing Lead - see appendix 4.
- Provide a framework for responding appropriately to mental health and wellbeing concerns.
- Co-operate with other professionals involved in the delivery of mental health and emotional support services.
- Observe the principles of confidentiality and general data protection in respect of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- To have opportunities for staff to be able to talk about and raise concerns.
- Provide parents/carers with information on MHW topics to support them from home.

Training our staff

Teaching, Support and Mealtime supervision staff have had training on the protective and risk factors (see Appendix 1), types of mental health needs (see Appendix 2) and signs that might mean a pupil is experiencing mental health problems. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and talk to the Mental Health Lead. These signs might include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits.
- Lowering 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 get changed 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 eg stomach aches and headaches or nausea with no evident cause.
- Anxiety around the impact of social media and gaming chat rooms, such as online bullying.

Staff are aware that mental health needs such as anxiety might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, previous trauma, 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-judgmental to pupils who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of pupils is paramount and staff listen rather than advice. Staff are clear to pupils that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health Lead and recorded in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil, and that specific safeguarding disclosures will be shared with the Safeguarding Lead. 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.

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3. Refer

- Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Inclusion Leader or Mental Health Lead and record observations/conversations on CPOMs (our information and incident reporting system). If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and recorded on CPOMs.
- Pupils can self-refer through worry boxes in their classrooms; talking to any adult in the school or going to our Let's Talk lunch time drop in service in the Bubble room.
- For their own mental health and wellbeing needs or those of others, staff can raise concerns via their manager or the Senior Leadership Team or during Performance management reviews. Alternatively raise suggestions to the Wellbeing Committee.
- Parents/carers can email the Wellbeing team through wellbeing@ or Inclusion@ school email addresses; or speak to their teacher; or arrange an appointment to meet at the bi-annual parents' evening.

4. Assess

- All concerns are reported to the Mental Health Lead and recorded. We then implement our assessment system, which is based on levels of need to ensure that pupils get the support they need, either from 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.
- Parents / carers are communicated with at the beginning and end of interventions to ensure transparency of aims and progress.
- We attend local forums, training and supervision; and share best practise with other schools to ensure we are continuously improving on our interventions and initiatives.
- All pupils will complete a wellbeing survey in September and March to review their feelings and satisfaction towards school, learning, friendship, playtimes etc.
- Staff complete an annual wellbeing survey.
- Professionals are invited into school to observe children and SDQs are used to assess needs.
- Interventions begin and finish with assessments to review and demonstrate impact.

5. Support

We have a scaled approach to supporting children with mental health and wellbeing needs. Our 'wave' approach escalates and de-escalates a level of support to ensure the child is supported at each stage. Within school, we can support children's MHW needs through in-class or teacher support, our ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) or play therapist interventions. As a school, we work with a network of external professionals to support the social, emotional and mental health needs of our children such as Education Psychologists (EP), Occupational Therapists (OT), Speech and Language Therapists, CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services), Camden Learning and the Mental Health Support Team (MHST).

Stage 4

Stage 3

Stage 5

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- Stage 1 – Classroom support – buddy, jobs, teacher time, key adult
- Stage 2 – ELSA intervention
- Stage 3 – Play therapist / MHST
- Stage 4 – CAMHS/EP/OT
- Stage 5 – ELSA check-ins
- Stage 6 – Nominated key adult/peer to peer support
- Stage 7 – Monitored by class teacher

Level of need	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, <i>for example</i>
Stage 1 – low need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classroom support – buddy, jobs, teacher or TLA one to one time • In-class calming boxes • ELSA check in • Nominated key adult • Peer to peer support (Wellbeing champion)
Stage 2 – low need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ELSA intervention – one to one or group interventions e.g. Lego therapy, friendship groups, self esteem • Transition support (Year 6 or secondary school, SEND support)
Stage 3 – some need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School play/art therapist • Child-led, parent or whole-class interventions provided by Camden MHST school practitioner • Wellbeing and behaviour communication plans • Specialised intervention e.g. Circle of friends • Family support / social worker • School nurse
Stage 4 - Highest need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CAMHS-assessment, 1:1 or family support or treatment, consultation with school staff and other agencies • EP involvement • External agency support • If the school, professionals and/or parents conclude that a statutory education, health and care assessment is required, we refer to the SEND policy and SEN School Information Report.
Stage 5 – some need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular ELSA check in time
Stage 6 – low need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nominated key adult/peer to peer support
Stage 7 – low need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitored by class teacher

For staff – following a discussion between the member of staff and the line manager/Head teacher, the appropriate course of action is taken to support e.g. sharing of support information, referred to school counsellor for one to one support.

For parents and carers – following a conversation within the wellbeing team, an appropriate course of action is taken to support the parent/carer e.g. sharing of support information (e.g. Camden counselling service), or referral for one to one support with the MHST team for instance.

6. Review

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- All pupils needing targeted, individualised support will have a Wellbeing plan - 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.
- The Wellbeing Plan is overseen by the Mental Health Lead.
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with pupils and keep parents and carers updated.
- Standard procedures in place to review success of interventions depending on level of need.

Support for friends

We recognise that when a pupil is experiencing mental health problems, it can be challenging for their friends, who often want to help them but are not sure the best thing to do and can also be emotionally affected. In the case of eating disorders and self-harm, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping strategies from each other, and we will consider on a case-by-case basis what support might be appropriate including one to one and group support.

We will involve the pupil who is suffering and their parents and consider what is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told, how they can best support, things they should avoid doing/saying which may inadvertently cause upset and warning signs that their friend needs help

We will also make information available about where and how to access information and support for themselves and healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling.

Working with specialist services to get swift access to the right specialist support and treatment

In some cases, 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 Care Plan.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Mental Health Lead/Inclusion Leader 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 and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil’s specific needs.

Specialist Service	Referral process
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	Accessed through school, GP or self-referral
School Counsellor	Accessed through the Mental Health Lead/ Inclusion Leader
Educational Psychologist	Accessed through the Inclusion Leader
Mental Health Support Team (MHST)	Accessed through the Mental Health Lead

SEND and mental health

Persistent mental health difficulties 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 a special educational need (SEN).

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Involving parents and carers

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting their children with mental health needs.

On first entry to the school, our parent's meeting includes a discussion on the importance of positive mental health for learning. We ask parents to inform us of any needs their child has and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child's mental health and wellbeing, based on a list of risk factors pertaining to the child or family (see appendix 1). It is very helpful if parents and carers can share information with the school so that we can better support their child.

To support parents and carers we have established the following:

- Through the weekly parent/carer newsletter, we regularly provide information and websites on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes, which can be accessed on the school website. The information 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.
- We host parent/carer workshops, Zoom meets and coffee mornings, alongside outside professionals, to provide more in-depth information on subjects such as body image, anxiety, etc.
- We include the mental health topics that are taught in the PSHE curriculum, on the school website.
- The Mental Health Lead/ELSA hosts parents' evening consultations twice a year to be able to discuss concerns.
- We host welcome talks / 'meet the teachers' events.
- We provide topic information leaflets on our website.
- We have a dedicated wellbeing@ email address that parents can email the Mental Health Lead /ELSA in confidence.
- The school MHST team provide parent support interventions and parenting support programmes and webinars.
- We ask parents/carers for their feedback and suggestions through online surveys.
- Parents are invited to attend Wellbeing plan meetings/Individual Education Plan meetings (IEPs).

We are aware that parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health problem and we will be sensitive and supportive. We also help to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available.

When a concern has been raised the school will:

- Contact parents and carers and meet with them.
In most case parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as child protection issues.
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information.
- Be available for follow up calls.
- Make a record of the meeting.
- Where necessary, agree an Individual Wellbeing Plan together with information on how best to the child.
- Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed about any support and interventions the school has organised for their child, whether from within school or from external agencies.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and pupils may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves. We give pupils the option of informing their parents and carers about their mental health need for themselves or go along with them.

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We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern are pupils, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information on our school website for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

Involving pupils

Every year we train up a group of pupils as our Wellbeing Champions who lead on whole school campaigns on health and wellbeing. Last year the Champions led a campaign on promoting mental health, reducing stigma and the importance of talking to someone if you feel worried.

We seek pupil's views about our approach, policy, curriculum and promoting whole school mental health activities and involve them in producing information about taking care of their mental health and how to get help if they need it.

We have a wellbeing pupil questionnaire twice a year that includes questions about how well pupils think the school supports their mental health.

We always seek feedback from pupils who have had support to help improve that support and the services they received.

Supporting staff mental health

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in pupils and know what to do and where to get help (see Appendix 3). Some teaching staff have completed the national Mental Health First Aid training.

Those staff with a specific responsibility have more specialised training and where possible access to supervision from mental health professionals. Our Mental Health Lead has completed the national senior mental health lead training.

Supporting and promoting the mental health and 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 pilates, mindfulness, and physical activities.

Annual Staff Wellbeing questionnaires are used to help identify concerns and opportunities to improve our staff wellbeing provision. Staff also have access to Camden's counselling service and are offered time with our in-school counsellor. We also use different mediums and social events to help ensure members of staff feel connected and recognised as part of the team.

At Emmanuel, all staff have access to the following to support our wellbeing if needed:

- Wellbeing Committee established each year to discuss suggestions, arrange events etc.
- Time with our school counsellor and reminders about access to the Camden counselling service.
- Regular meetings or drop in times with SLT and opportunities to meet and discuss concerns with their line manager.
- Regular training, including INSET days, support staff meetings.
- Team building, wellbeing or social events arranged every half term by the Wellbeing Committee.
- Weekly 'coffee and chat' and opportunity to discuss children's or their own needs with the Mental Health Lead.

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- Free tea/coffee/milk in the staff room.
- Areas dedicated for the staff to take time out to relax and have lunch.
- Monthly information updates on mental health and wellbeing.
- Staff mental health noticeboard to share information.
- Buddy scheme for new staff.
- Opportunity to discuss wellbeing in performance reviews twice a year.
- Subscription to external support resource such as Workplace options subscription.
- Annual staff wellbeing survey to share suggestions and feedback anonymously.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The mental health and wellbeing 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 before they begin working with the school as well as external agencies involved in our mental health work.

Policy reviewed	April 2024
Agreed review schedule	3 yearly
Next review due	April 2027

Appendix 1 Protective and Risk factors

(adapted from Mental Health and Behaviour DfE March 2016)

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
In the Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genetic influences • Specific development delay • Communication difficulties • Physical illness • Academic failure • Low self-esteem • SEND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being female (in younger children) • Secure attachment experience • Outgoing temperament as an infant • Good communication skills, sociability • Being a planner and having a belief in control • Humour

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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem solving skills and a positive attitude • Experiences of success and achievement • Faith or spirituality • Capacity to reflect
In the Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overt parental conflict including domestic violence • Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) • Inconsistent or unclear discipline • Hostile and rejecting relationships • Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs • Physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect • Parental psychiatric illness • Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder • Death and loss – including loss of friendship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education • Supportive long-term relationship or the absence of severe discord
In the School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Negative peer influences • Peer pressure • Poor pupil to teacher relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems • A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences
In the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Other significant life events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider supportive network • Good housing • High standard of living • High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying • Opportunities for valued social roles • Range of sport/leisure activities

Appendix 2 Specific mental health needs most commonly seen in school-aged children

For information see Annex C Main Types of Mental Health Needs
Mental Health and Behaviour in School DfE March 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Annex C includes definitions, signs and symptoms and suggested interventions for

- Anxiety (including panic attacks, phobias and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder OCD)
- Depression
- Eating Disorders
- Substance Misuse
- Self-Harm

The DfE guide does not include specific information on suicidal thought

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Suicidal Thoughts

Young people may experience thoughts and feelings about wanting to end their lives. Some young people never act on these feelings but may openly discuss and explore them, while other young people die suddenly from suicide without any apparent warning signs.

Appendix 3 Where to get information and support

For support on specific mental health needs

Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk OCD UK www.ocduk.org

Depression Alliance www.depressoinalliance.org

Eating Disorders www.b-eat.co.uk and www.inourhands.com

National Self-Harm Network www.nshn.co.uk

www.selfharm.co.uk

Suicidal thoughts [Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPHYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

For general information and support

www.youngminds.org.uk champions young people's mental health and wellbeing

www.mind.org.uk advice and support on mental health difficulties

www.minded.org.uk (e-learning)

www.time-to-change.org.uk tackles the stigma of mental health

www.rethink.org challenges attitudes towards mental health

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Appendix 4 Assessing a MHW need

We have created a set of criteria to help staff identify and assess concerns about a pupil – the higher the score, the increased concern.

NAME:	CLASS:			SCORE
Factor/observation	2	1	0	
Early life / home				
Previous known traumatic experience/ attachment/Previously Looked After (PLAC)	Experienced difficult time in early life / PLAC	Experienced a level of inconsistency / change	Happy, consistent childhood	
Changes in circumstances / traumatic experiences /parental health	Change in home circumstances e.g. bereavement, divorce, house move, fire	Low level change, parent informing, coping with changes	No changes	
Appearance	Appears a little unkept/'scruffy'	Generally well-kept	Cares about appearance	
Attendance and punctuality	A persistent absentee, frequently late.	Attendance rate of 90% -95%, sometimes late.	Attendance above 96%, rarely late.	

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	Demonstrating School avoidance			
Learning				
Learning and focus	Unable to focus on learning, unable to keep still, distracted/distracting others / low self esteem	Focused most of the time	Engaged and completing all work	
Organisation	Always forgetting what they need, losing things, not bringing things to school	Sometimes forgets things	Always have what they need	
Effort	Little or no effort in lessons/activities	Little/below average effort in lessons/activities	Good effort in lessons/activities	
Emotions				
Mood/expression / emotional regulation	Looks 'glum'/low mood Often Emotionally dysregulated / quickly triggered (often red/yellow zone) / evidence of self-harm	Occasionally smiles/laughing with others Sometimes struggles to control emotions Biting nails	Smiles readily Able to express themselves and use the zones of regulations (mostly green zone)	
Lunch times	Leaving food regularly; noticeable weight loss	Doesn't eat much	No concerns	
Social / friendships				
Bullying	Experienced incident for period of time	Experienced some targeted behaviours from others	No concerns	
Talking with peers	Sits alone and talks to no one	Will talk when prompted	Talks readily with peers	
Playtimes and friendships	Often argues and has conflict or plays alone	Incidents happen sometimes	Has friends and plays actively	
Talking with adults	Barely engages with adults	Will talk with adult when prompted	Talks readily with adults	

Scoring and action:

- 10 and above Needs immediate support; referral; meeting with parents/carers
- 6-9 Concerns to be discussed with wellbeing team, and plan to monitor arranged
- 1-5 – Monitor; Teacher/playtime staff advised

NOTE – the urgency and level of need will always need to be reviewed on a case by case basis due to the weighting needed on some of the scores and therefore cannot be decided on score alone.