



Policy title	Children's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy
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1. Introduction

- 1.1 *“We all have mental health, just like we all have physical health. It’s about how we think, feel and act. Sometimes we feel well, and sometimes we don’t. When our mental health is good, we feel motivated and able to take on challenges and new experiences. But when our mental health is not so good, we can find it much harder to cope”. (www.youngminds.org.uk)*

At The Baird Primary Academy we recognise that children’s mental health is everyone’s responsibility. Working together we will support and empower the children to be mentally healthy children who, through continued support, are provided with the tools to support their own emotional wellbeing now and in their future lives.

We recognise the powerful impact that mental health and emotional wellbeing has on children’s academic achievements and that unmet needs will impact considerably on children’s learning. If children feel adequately supported and successful in school, this improves their self-esteem and emotional health. By developing and implementing a practical, relevant and effective mental health policy and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for the children and colleagues affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

At our academy, we are committed to working together to protect and promote a mentally healthy academy for all children and colleagues. We will continuously endeavour to nurture and improve mental health by utilising our whole academy approach. We will implement practice that incorporates the Department for Education Mental Health Guidance and Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory legislation.

This document describes the academy’s approach to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for our academy community. The policy and procedures will also be made available for the perusal of children and their parents and carers.

2. Aims and objectives

- 2.1 Implement effective practice and policies relevant to our academy community that have been developed in conjunction with children, parents and carers. Promote a safe and supportive environment and culture which is conducive to the mental health and emotional wellbeing of the whole academy community.

We will support the academy community to:

- Understand how they feel and why
- Develop language that enables us to talk about our bodies, health and emotions
- Seek support as early as possible when a worry arises and to share concerns
- Build a toolkit of healthy strategies to navigate change and adversity
- Use a consistent approach for managing feelings, emotions and behaviours

2.2 By creating this framework our objective is to:

- **Adopt a whole school approach:** promoting a culture of awareness to mental health and emotional wellbeing across our academy community.
- **Reduce discrimination and stigma:** Increased awareness and understanding of the signs and symptoms of mental health among our academy community. Provide training and support to colleagues to work effectively with children who have mental health issues fostering a compassionate and inclusive environment.
- **Provide support to pupils and their families:** Offer guidance and assistance to children experiencing emerging mental health challenges. Provide information on referral options and partner agencies for families seeking advice and support.
- **Promote a culture of understanding and positive mental health:** Fostering a whole school approach that celebrates equality and diversity, embracing the importance of mental well-being. Encourage an atmosphere where individuals feel accepted, safe and supported.
- **Encourage self-care strategies:** Create opportunities for colleagues and children to explore and identify individual, positive self-care strategies that effectively support their mental health and emotional wellbeing. Empower individuals to take an active role in their own mental health.

3. Academy Senior Leaders

3.1 All colleagues share a responsibility for promoting children's mental health, colleagues listed below are there to support you:

- Carly Welch – Principal / SENCO / Behaviour Lead / Attendance Lead
- Steph Jarvis – Safeguarding Officer and Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Amber Peacock – Senior Mental Health Lead / PSHE and RSHE Leader
- Roz Adie – Designated LAC Teacher
- Hayley Luck – Lead First Aider
- Kirsten Rule – Curriculum Leader
- Jennifer Poulter – Inclusion Coordinator / Staff Wellbeing Lead
- Remi Duangphrachanh – Education Mental Health Practitioner

Any colleague who is concerned about the mental health or emotional wellbeing of a child should speak to the Senior Mental Health Lead in the first instance.

In the event of any concerns that a child may be at risk of immediate harm, the academy's child protection procedures should be followed, with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL in their absence.

If the child presents as a medical emergency, then the academy's procedures for medical emergencies and [UoBAT Medical and First Aid policy](#) should be followed, including the involvement of first aiders, and contacting the emergency services.

Where a referral to Children and Young Peoples Mental Health Services (CYPMHS, also sometimes known as CAMHS) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Jennifer Poulter (Inclusion Coordinator), supported by Carly Welch (SENCO).

4. Individual Health Care Plans (IHCP)

- 4.1 Where there is concern about potential mental ill health or in instances where a child has received a diagnosis of a mental health condition, following statutory guidance within Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions, an IHCP may be appropriate. Care plan development should be a collaborative process, involving the child, the parents and carers and any relevant professionals. For further information please refer to our Trust Policy, Supporting students and pupils with medical conditions.
- 4.2 Other applicable resources supporting children at our academy with potential mental health challenges or following the diagnosis of a mental health condition for our academy are listed below:
- Support from an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant to carry out an ELSA intervention
 - Support from our Social, Emotional and Mental Health Teaching Assistants
 - Support from one of our Mental Health First Aiders
 - A referral to our Education Mental Health Practitioner
 - A referral to Eggtooth (a local counselling organisation)
 - A safeguarding risk assessment and safety plan
 - Alternative arrangements for key times of the day e.g. coming into school, lunchtimes etc. These would be planned on an individual basis, dependent on the needs of the child and provision available.

5. Teaching about Mental Health

- 5.1 The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally safe are included as part of our personal development provision through the RSHE and PSHE curriculum.
- 5.2 The content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching, but there will always be an emphasis on empowering children to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to identify any mental health changes and to seek support when needed, for themselves or others.

6. Early Indicators

- 6.1 Colleagues may become aware of warning signs which may indicate a child is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. The academy Senior Mental Health Lead is responsible for ensuring that colleagues have received the relevant training and are aware of the signs and symptoms. These warning signs should **always** be taken seriously and colleagues observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns via CPOMS to the Designated Safeguarding Leads who would then notify the relevant individuals. We all differ in outward manifestations of distress, so it is important to consider any signs of change, for example someone who is normally

outgoing and communicative becoming less talkative and more withdrawn. It is important to emphasise that for some children experiencing distress, there may not be any apparent warning signs, or the child may actively be trying to hide their distress.

Potential warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Evidence of any changes to eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family; becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Evidence of use of non-prescribed drugs or alcohol
- Expressing thoughts of feelings of failure, hopelessness or worthlessness
- Unsuitable clothing (for example, long sleeves in warm weather), considering cultural observance
- Secretive or unusual behaviour
- Avoiding attendance at PE or getting changed secretly
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Expressing unusual ideas or beliefs

7. Supporting children's mental wellbeing

- 7.1 If a child chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to an academy colleague, their response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgmental.
- 7.2 Colleagues should focus on listening in the first instance, rather than thinking about giving advice or offering solutions. Our first intent should be on the provision of a safe and secure space to discuss the child's concerns and promoting their emotional and physical safety.
- 7.3 All disclosures need to be recorded on the academy's Child Protection Online System (CPOMs)

8. Children's Voice

- 8.1 *“Every child has the right to say what they think in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously “ (NICEF UK, 1990)*

We recognise the unique perspective of our pupils, and the inclusion of children's voices in developing a mentally healthy school. By involving them in decision-making, we continue to create and implement effective support systems, so that children can emotionally develop and achieve academically.

In designing this policy, representatives from each academy across our Trust joined an online Grand Virtual Pupil Parliament and provided the following response to our question:

‘What does feeling good in your mind and emotions mean to you?’

The below responses were received and provided an insight into how pupils across our Trust perceive mental and emotional well-being:

- **Feeling Happy and Purposeful:** They expressed that this emotional state motivates them to engage more actively in their school lives.
- **Sense of Peace:** Pupils mentioned that a sense of peace is essential to feeling good emotionally. It contributes to a feeling of calm and tranquillity, allowing them to focus and develop.
- **Confidence:** The children described how confidence positively impacts their ability to tackle challenges and interact with others.
- **Motivation:** Several pupils stated that when they feel good, they are more motivated and enthusiastic. This emotional state drives them to help others and engage in various activities with enthusiasm.
- **Positive Mood:** Pupils informed us that feeling happy and light-hearted empowers them to overcome obstacles and achieve.
- **Safety and Understanding:** Feeling good was linked to feelings of safety, understanding of upcoming situations, and being prepared for what lies ahead. Pupils informed us that these elements contribute to an overall sense of well-being.
- **Impact on Others:** Childrens emphasised that their emotional well-being not only affects them but also influences the well-being of those around them. Feeling good can make their day better and have a positive ripple effect on their peers.
- **Social Connection:** Feeling good is often intertwined with being with friends, having fun, and engaging in healthy activities, elements are which are vital for emotional well-being and support the development of a positive mindset.

To encourage pupil voices at The Baird, we provide a breadth of opportunities for children to participate such as:

- The use of worry boxes in all classrooms
- A central worry box that links to the Designated Safeguarding Lead
- The use of key adults to gather pupil voice informally on a day-to-day basis
- Pupil Parliament which gathers the voices of all pupils and feeds into Senior Leaders
- Whole school formal pupil voice surveys – completed three times per year
- Individual pupil voice surveys completed when we are concerned about a pupil
- A safeguarding specific pupil voice survey managed by our Designated Safeguarding Lead

9. Confidentiality

- 9.1 We recognise that all matters relating to safeguarding and child protection are confidential.
- 9.2 The Principal or the DSL will disclose information about a child to other members of staff on a need-to-know basis, and in the best interests of the child.
- 9.3 All colleagues are aware that they cannot promise a child to keep secrets which might compromise the child's safety or wellbeing.

- 9.4 All colleagues have a professional responsibility to share information with other agencies in order to safeguard children.
- 9.5 Colleagues receive training on information sharing to safeguard and promote children's welfare. This includes understanding the purpose of sharing information, obtaining consent and knowing when information can be shared without consent. For further details, please refer to appendix A of our Academy Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedure.

10. Support and Signposting

- 10.1 We will ensure that colleagues, children, parents and carers are aware of sources of support within our trust, academy and the local community, including what support is available, who it is aimed at and how to access it.

We will display relevant sources of information via our academy website <https://www.thebairdprimaryacademy.org.uk/> and in communal areas such as on display boards throughout the academy as well as in the pupil toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to children within the relevant parts of the curriculum.

11. Working with Families

- 11.1 Effective communication is key to addressing mental health concerns. It's important to include all stakeholders, particularly parents and carers. If you, as parents and carers, have concerns about your child, our academy maintains an open-door policy and is ready to help. We will offer further resources and guidance to access professional support and information. There is lots of support on offer, regardless of the nature of the issue, please do get in touch with your child's class teacher if they have any concerns.
- 11.2 We will highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away, where possible, as they may find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that we're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents and carers can also be helpful too, e.g., parent helplines and forums. We provide useful information for parents on children's mental health and emotional wellbeing via parent information events / information sent home and through our Facebook page.
- 11.3 We understand that, when a child is experiencing mental ill health, it can be a difficult time for their friends and family and we recognise the vital role they play in a child's wellbeing and academic success. We signpost information and resources through our academy website and offer open lines of communication to ensure that families and friends feel supported and can access the help they need. Together, we strive to create a strong partnership between the academy and the child's broader support network, fostering a nurturing environment for our children.

12. Sources or support at the academy and in the local community

12.1 Mental illness is a legitimate medical condition that requires appropriate attention and support. Just as physical health concerns warrant medical intervention, it is equally essential to recognise and address mental health with the same level of importance. Seeking professional medical advice is crucial for accurate diagnosis, treatment planning and accessing appropriate support services. We strongly encourage individuals experiencing mental health challenges to reach out to qualified healthcare professionals who can provide expert guidance and care.

12.2 Academy Based Support

All support is individualised and tailored to meet the needs of the unique child. Interventions are directed following teacher referrals. We meet regularly to discuss any pupils causing concern and referrals may take place for intervention or support as a result of these meetings.

- Building Brains approach – At The Baird we actively teach children to self-advocate and to understand their needs and how to get them met in a positive way. We believe that anti-social behaviour results from an unmet need, which the pupil does not have the executive function skills to manage. For this reason, our approach to managing behaviour advocates curiosity with our pupils about why they are behaving in a certain way and uses educational consequences or coaching to move behaviour forward. In addition to this is a taught curriculum which promotes emotional literacy, metacognition, self-advocacy and self-efficacy. Children are actively taught to understand their emotions and their responses to things and how this impacts on others.
- A nurturing environment – Staff at The Baird build highly positive, supportive relationships with pupils and offer a nurturing environment to support pupils to feel safe and secure in their environment. This nurturing and caring approach starts from the minute the children enter our care, with a warm welcome.
- Nurture provision – we offer a nurture provision every morning for a small group of pupils, usually in EYFS or KS1. This offers a safe and secure environment for pupils who are not yet ready to learn in the classroom. Children reintegrate back into their mainstream classes for the afternoons but are supported within the mornings to develop social and emotional skills. These adults are Nurture UK accredited and we have a Boxall Quality Mark for our nurture provision.
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant – we have a trained member of staff who delivered emotional literacy sessions on a 1:1 basis to a small number of pupils across the academy. This is a focused block of work which aims to support pupils to understand their emotions.
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health TA – this member of staff offers a range of support for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. They provide soft landings in the morning, offering children a better start to the day and also offer a range of interventions e.g. anger management, understanding emotions.
- Mental Health First Aiders – we have trained mental health first aiders in all areas of the academy who support pupils who are finding things difficult.

- Safe spaces – Where pupils require a space to regulate or calm themselves, they are offered a Time Out card and a safe space. This is a space that pupils can access independently with a sand timer before returning back to class. Time in the safe space is time limited but always followed up by a trusted adult.
- Worry boxes – Every class has a worry box that is checked daily by staff and any worries addressed. In addition, there is a central worry box that links directly to the safeguarding lead.
- MHST – We have an Education Mental Health Support Practitioner who works in school, offering support for key pupils using a CBT approach. Referrals are made for pupils with low-level mental health concerns by the Inclusion Coordinator. Parents can also access advice and guidance from the Education Mental Health Support Practitioner.

Local Support

Full details of local support services can be found on our website, however we regularly make referrals signpost parents to the following organisations who can offer support:

- CAMHS
- MHST
- CLASS Anxiety Practitioner
- School Nursing
- My Time (through FSN)
- Eggtooth – referrals through the GP for counselling
- Butterflies
- Winston’s Wish (bereavement support)
- Dragonflies (bereavement support)

13. Training

- 13.1 As a minimum, all colleagues will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep children safe.
- 13.2 Training opportunities for colleagues who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of the professional development process. Additional Continuing Professional Development (CPD) will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more children.
- 13.3 Youth Mental Health First Aid training is available as a personal development opportunity for all colleagues. As key members in our children’s lives, academy colleagues can often spot when a child is struggling, provide support and signpost help. By learning the skills they need to support a child, they can accelerate their recovery, prevent deterioration and handle crises effectively. While this is not therapy training, the course equips them to listen, reassure and respond potentially averting crises.

Colleagues who have completed this training in our academy are:

- Amber Peacock – Upper Key Stage 2 Leader

- Tamzin Gray – EAL / LAC TA
- Steph Jarvis – Safeguarding Officer
- Hayley Luck – Senior SEN and Medical TA
- Sam Wright – Nurture HLTA
- Claire Kennedy – EYFS TA

We also have an Adult Mental Health First Aider – Jennifer Poulter, Inclusion Coordinator.

14. Policy review

14.1 This policy will be reviewed annually as a minimum.

14.2 Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to the Principal.

15. Legislation and associated policies

15.1 Legislation

- The Mental Health Act 2007
- Transforming children and young people’s mental health provision: a green paper
- Children’s Act 2004
- Mental Capacity 2005
- United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs & Disability Act 2001
- Equality Act 2010

15.2 This policy links with several other policies, practices and action plans including:

- Academy Attendance policy
- Academy Behaviour policy
- Academy Child Protection and Safeguarding policy
- Academy Online Safety policy
- Curriculum policies, such as: Computing, Personal Social and Health Education (PSHE)
- Citizenship and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE)
- UoBAT Staff Code of conduct
- UoBAT Equality and Diversity policy
- UoBAT Accessibility policy
- UoBAT Mental health and emotional wellbeing policy.
- UoBAT Social media policy
- UoBAT Complaints policy
- UoBAT Children with health needs who cannot attend school
- UoBAT First Aid and Medical Policy

- UoBAT Supporting students and pupils with medical conditions policy

Appendix A

Sources of support about common mental health issues

Apps, Online Support and Further Reading – Academy provision map can be found on our website.

A range of apps, online support and further reading covering mental health challenges most commonly seen in academy-aged children and young people. Some resources are aimed at children and/or young people experiencing mental health, whilst others are suited to parents/carers and academy staff supporting a child or young person. Some of the apps and other resources may be helpful for more than one specific issue. Please visit your academy's website for further information.

For further e-learning opportunities **MindEd** is a free educational resource hub on children, young people and adult mental health.

Appendix B: Guidance and advice documents

[Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing: A whole academy or college approach.](#)

Guidance for headteachers and college principals on the 8 principles for promoting emotional health and wellbeing in academies and colleges.

Public Health England and Children & Young People's Mental Health Coalition (2021)

[Mental health and behaviour in academies.](#)

Departmental advice for academy staff.

Department for Education (2018)

[Counselling in academies: a blueprint for the future](#)

Departmental advice for academy staff and counsellors.

Department for Education (2016)

[Teacher Guidance: teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing](#)

PSHE Association.

Funded by the Department for Education 2021

[Keeping children safe in education](#)

Statutory guidance for academies and colleges.

Department for Education (2021)

[Supporting childs at academy with medical conditions](#)

Statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained academies and proprietors of academies in England.

Department for Education (2015)

[Healthy child programme from 5 to 19 years old](#)

A recommended framework of universal and progressive services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing.

Department of Health (2009)

[Future in mind – promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing](#)

A report produced by the Children and Young People's Mental health and emotional wellbeing Taskforce to examine how to improve mental health services for children and young people.

Department of Health (2015)

[NICE guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in primary education](#)

[NICE guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in secondary education](#)

[What works in promoting social and emotional wellbeing and responding to mental health in academies?](#)

Advice for academies and framework document written by Professor Katherine Weare. National Children's Bureau (2015)

[West Sussex Be Thoughtful Mental Health Support in Schools](#)

[East Sussex Me & My Mind Mental Health Support](#)

Appendix C: Data Sources

[Children and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing profiling tool](#) collates and analyses a wide range of publicly available data on risk, prevalence and detail (including cost data) on those services that support children with, or vulnerable to, mental illness. It enables benchmarking of data between areas.

[Health behaviour of academy age children](#)

An international cross-sectional study that takes place in 43 countries and is concerned with the determinants of young people's health and wellbeing.