



PACE مدرسة بيس البريطانية ذ.م.م
BRITISH SCHOOL L.L.C.
== SHARJAH ==

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Head of Pastoral Care Ms Sue

Wellness is the complete integration of body, mind, and spirit - the realization that everything we do, think, feel, and believe has an effect on our state of well-being.

Greg Anderson



1. Connecting with other people. Good relationships are important for your mental wellbeing.
2. Be physically active. Being active is not only great for your physical health and fitness.
3. Learn new skills.
4. Give to others.
5. Pay attention to the present moment (mindfulness)

PACE British School believes that these steps are important for both the mental and physical development of children and are strongly supported not only by our teaching staff but by our SEND and Pastoral department, who offer support and advice throughout the whole school by providing an outstanding education to all pupils. Our success is measured not only by academic results but with the pupils' general wellbeing and happiness which underpins their confidence to succeed.

We believe that if children's wellbeing is healthy, their minds will be open and free to focus on their learning.

Why is mental health and wellbeing so important?

At PACE British School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, 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 during their time in school and some face significant life events. According to the latest available estimates, since Covid 19, more than 1 in 7 adolescents aged 10–19 is estimated to live with a diagnosed mental

disorder globally (UNICEF) and these can have an enormous impact on quality of life, relationships and academic achievement. In many cases it is life-limiting.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that:

“in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy”.

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 children’s wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role at PACE British School is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where all children are valued and have a sense of belonging, feel safe and able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma and where positive mental health is promoted and valued and know that bullying is not tolerated.

In addition to children’s wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

Purpose of the policy

This policy sets out:

- ★ How we promote positive mental health.
- ★ How we prevent mental health problems.
- ★ How we identify and support children with mental health needs.
- ★ How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent or address mental health problems
- ★ Key information about some common mental health problems.
- ★ Where parents, staff and children can get further advice and support.

Definition of mental health and wellbeing

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing

“a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community”.

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems, rather an individual must encompass these characteristics in a broader sense within themselves. We want all children/young people to:

- ★ feel confident in themselves. be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- ★ be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- ★ cope with the stresses of everyday life.
- ★ manage times of stress and be able to deal with change.
- ★ learn and achieve.

How the policy was developed and who was consulted

The development of this policy was led by our Head of Inclusion and SENDCO, with reference to:

Children and Young People's Mental Health: State of the Nation 2016. Education, Education, Education, Mental Health 2016 (secondary). Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing, Public Health England 2015. Preparing to teach about mental health, PSHE Association 2015. Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools, DfE 2014. Supporting children with medical conditions, DfE 2014.

Links to other policies

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying and SEND. Links with the School's Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

At PACE British School we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise. This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
2. Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.

3. Helping children to be resilient learners.
4. Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
5. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6. Effectively working with parents and carers.
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues. Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility.

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 problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

Specialised staff understand the possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a family member who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They should 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.

The Head of Inclusion works with staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, including E.safety, Safeguarding CPD's, provides advice and support to staff and organises training and updates, is the first point of contact with mental health services, and makes individual referrals to them.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional 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 children with mental health needs and their families. Sources of relevant support include our:

- ★ Senior Leadership Team
- ★ Safeguarding/Child Protection
- ★ SENDCO who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including children whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision

- ★ School Nurse
- ★ Head of Pastoral Care
- ★ Transition Programme to secondary school which includes all Year 6 children having a staff mentor to support a smooth transition to secondary school
- ★ Wellbeing week – whole school focus on doing things which make us feel good.
- ★ Displays and information around the School that promote positive mental health and guidance to seek help and support
- ★ Resilience Training R.J. sessions – small group intervention to improve children’s communication skills around turn taking, dealing with issues, resolving conflict

KS 3&4

Secondary students learn about mental health and emotional wellbeing through Moral and Social lessons, we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help children to be more resilient, understand about mental health and be less affected by the stigma of mental health problems.

We have regular assemblies that focus on certain subjects, including wellbeing, bullying, personal care and self worth.

There are regular celebrations in school including National day, Anti bullying week, world teachers day, Ramadan, Sports Day, Maths week, Mothers Day, World Down Syndrome Day, World Book Day, Science Day and many more that bring all our students together in celebrations. We decorate our corridors and walls which enhances the wellbeing of our stents and staff and gives a sense of belonging, inclusion and pride.

EYFS & Key Stage 1 children learn:

- ★ To recognise, name and describe feelings including good and not so good feelings.
- ★ 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.
- ★ About change and loss and the associated feelings (including moving home, losing toys, pets or friends).
- ★ 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 children learn:

- ★ What positively and negatively affects their mental and emotional health (including the media).
- ★ Positive and healthy coping strategies.
- ★ About good and not so good feelings.
- ★ To describe the range and intensity of their feelings to others. 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.
- ★ About the consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including online bullying, prejudice-based language), as well as how to respond and ask for help if they are victims of this themselves.
- ★ About the importance of talking to someone and how to get help.

Key Stage 3 & 4 children learn:

- ★ About mental health and emotional wellbeing through Moral and Social lessons. We teach the knowledge, social and emotional skills that will help children to be more resilient, understand about mental health and be less affected by the stigma of mental health problems.
- ★ We have regular assemblies that focus on certain subjects, including wellbeing, bullying, personal care and self-worth.
- ★ There are regular celebrations in school including National day, Anti bullying week, World Teachers day, Ramadan, Sports Day, Maths week, Mothers Day, World Down Syndrome Day, World Book Day, Science Day and many more that bring all our students together in celebrations. We decorate our corridors and walls which enhances the wellbeing of our students and staff and gives a sense of belonging, inclusion and pride.

Identifying, referring and supporting children with mental health needs

Our approach:

- ★ Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to.
- ★ Ensure the welfare and safety of children are paramount.
- ★ Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs.
- ★ Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.

- ★ Involve children in the care and support they have.
- ★ Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated.

Early Identification

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

- ★ Analyzing behaviour, exclusions, visits to the medical room/school nurse, attendance and sanctions.
- ★ Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons.
- ★ Worry boxes in each class for children to raise concerns which are checked by the Class Teachers and Head of Pastoral Care (these are anonymous but give an indication of needs in particular classes regularly).
- ★ Pupil Progress Review
- ★ Regular meetings for staff to raise concerns.
- ★ A parental information and health questionnaire on entry to the School.
- ★ Gathering information from a previous school at transfer.
- ★ Parental meetings.

Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff.

Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff. All staff at PACE British School have had training on the protective and risk factors, types of mental health needs 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 Head of Pastoral Care or the SENDCO, a 'Cause for Concern form' is available in shared drives which can be filled in and sent directly to our Head of Pastoral Care. These signs might include:

- ★ Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- ★ Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits.
- ★ Falling academic achievement.
- ★ Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- ★ Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- ★ Secretive behaviour.
- ★ An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- ★ Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE.
- ★ Wearing long sleeves in hot weather.
- ★ Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental. Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the School's child protection procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency, then the School's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

Disclosures by children and confidentiality

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgmental to children who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of our children is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff make it clear to children that the concern will be shared with the Head of Pastoral and Safeguarding Lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil. All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps.

Assessment, Interventions and Support

All concerns are reported to the Head of Pastoral Care and recorded, an assessment is made, to ensure that children 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, the level of need is based on discussions at the regular Inclusion meetings and with key members of staff involved. If the school, professionals and/or parents conclude that a further assessment is required, we will refer to the SEND policy.

All children needing targeted individualised support will have an Individual Care Plan drawn up setting out the needs of the child and how the pupil will be supported, children and parents/carers will be involved in the plan. The plan and interventions are monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess and if needed a different kind of support can be provided. The Care Plan is overseen by the Head of Pastoral Care and Safeguarding Lead.

Some need: Access to the school nurse, 1:1 interventions and small group intervention.

Low need: General support E.g. School Nurse drop in, class teacher/TA, Children are informed that the Head of Pastoral care is available when a pupil is dissatisfied with the level of care and support.

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. Support for children after inpatient treatment. We recognise that some children will need ongoing support and the Head of Inclusion will meet with children on a regular basis.

We are careful not to “label” children with diagnoses without prior and sensitive consultation with family/carers and other relevant professionals. We have a duty of care to support children and will seek advice from medical staff and mental health professionals on the best way to support children. We will carry out a risk assessment and produce an Individual Care Plan to support children to re-integrate successfully back to school.

In some cases, a pupil’s mental health needs require support from a specialist service, we work with specialist services to get swift access to the right specialist support and treatment. 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 children’ Individual Care Plan.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Head of Pastoral Care or the SENDCO 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. A Specialist Service Referral or an Educational Psychologist is recommended by our SENDCO.

Persistent mental health problems may lead to children 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).

Involving parents and carers Promoting mental health

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 children who do have mental health needs. On Admission 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 mental health 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.

It is very helpful if parents and carers can share information with the School so that we can better support their child from the outset. All information will be treated in confidence.

Supporting parents and carers with children with mental health needs

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 aim 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 almost all cases, parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions).
- ★ Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- ★ Be available for follow up calls.
- ★ Make a record of the meeting.
- ★ Agree an Individual Health Care Plan including clear next steps.
- ★ Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child.
- ★ Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions provided.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and children may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves. We give children the option of informing their parents and carers about their mental health needs for themselves or of accompanying and supporting them to do so.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate, but our primary concern is the child 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 for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

Involving children

We seek pupil's views about our approach, curriculum and in promoting whole school mental health activities. We always seek feedback from children who have had support to help improve that support and the services they received.

Supporting and training staff

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 children and know what to do and where to get help.

We support a healthy work-life balance, having a four-day working week. All staff are encouraged to talk to each other about any issues arising, so that we can avoid any underlying problems that could cause stress and anxiety.

Our SLT team is accessible for staff meetings and drop ins and we encourage all staff to be open when talking about any matters that are affecting their mental health and wellbeing, without judgment and in confidence and offer support and guidance.

The Wellbeing Policy is monitored at an annual review meeting led by the Head of Pastoral and involves staff with a responsibility for mental health and wellbeing.

SLT January 2022