



# **Beaudesert Lower School**

## **Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

<b>Date of Policy</b>	<b>November 2024</b>
<b>Review Date</b>	<b>November 2027</b>

## **Contents:**

### Statement of intent

1. Legal framework
2. Roles and responsibilities
3. The curriculum
4. Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing
5. Targeted support and appropriate referrals
6. Healthy lifestyles
7. Staff training and development
8. Monitoring and review

## Statement of intent

Beaundesert Lower School aims to be a safe, calm and supportive learning environment in which pupils can receive early targeted support when they need help. Pupils' health and wellbeing, as well as that of staff, is a top priority for the school, and we firmly believe that pupils receive the best outcomes when they are happy, healthy and prepared to deal with the challenges that come their way.

According to the World Health Organisation:

***Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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 contribute to her or his community. Mental health is fundamental to our collective and individual ability as humans to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living and enjoy life. On this basis, the promotion, protection and restoration of mental health can be regarded as a vital concern of individuals, communities and societies throughout the world.<sup>1</sup>***

At our school, we are committed to the protection and promotion of positive mental health for all students and staff. We will continuously endeavour to improve the mental health of the school community by utilising a whole school-approach to mental health, and via the identification and implementation of positive processes and practices which promote good mental health and wellbeing.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we recognise that one in six children and young people<sup>2</sup> and one in six adults<sup>3</sup> may meet the criteria for a diagnosable mental health problem, with emerging evidence of a recent rise in anxiety and depression in some groups (as of 2020).<sup>4</sup> We aim to identify and provide timely and

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organisation. Mental health: strengthening our response. 2018. Available from: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response>

<sup>2</sup> NHS Digital. Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2020: Wave 1 follow up to the 2017 survey. 2020. Available at: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2020-wave-1-follow-up>

<sup>3</sup> McManus S, Bebbington P, Jenkins R, Brugha T. (eds.) Mental health and wellbeing in England: Adult psychiatric morbidity survey 2014. (2016) Available from: <https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/adult-psychiatric-morbidity-survey/adult-psychiatric-morbidity-survey-survey-of-mental-health-and-wellbeing-england-2014>

<sup>4</sup> Kwong A, Pearson R, Adams M, et al. Mental health before and during the COVID-19 pandemic in two longitudinal UK population cohorts. British Journal of Psychiatry. 2020. 218(6).

appropriate support for all members of the school community affected both directly and indirectly by mental health problems.

This strategy provides details on what the school is currently doing to support the health and wellbeing of its pupils and what it intends to do in the future to improve the support on offer through the creation of a cohesive school culture.

## 1. Legal Framework

This document has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2024) 'Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2021) 'Learning outcomes for senior mental health leads in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2013) 'National curriculum in England: PE programmes of study'
- DfE (2021) 'Physical health and mental wellbeing (Primary and secondary)'
- DfE (2023) 'School food standards: resources for schools'
- Office for Health Improvement and Disparities and DfE (2023) 'Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing'
- DfE (2021) 'Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education'
- DfE (2021) 'Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education'

This strategy works in conjunction with the following school policies and documents:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Anti-Violence and Aggression Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- E-Safety Policy
- Relationships Education Policy
- Parent/Carer SEND and Mental Health Questionnaire
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan

## 2. Roles and Responsibilities

**The Governing Body will be responsible for:**

- Appointing an individual on the board with the knowledge and understanding of mental health and wellbeing issues to champion the organisation of practices and the whole-school approach to health and wellbeing (Mrs C Taqi - Safeguarding Governor).

- Overseeing the school's implementation of this strategy.
- Seeking out opportunities to improve this strategy and the whole-school approach towards health and wellbeing.
- Supporting the work of the senior mental health lead and wider initiatives to improve the way in which the school supports health and wellbeing.
- Investigating the success of school initiatives to improve health and wellbeing and make suggestions on how such initiatives could be improved.

**The Headteacher, Mrs V Pearce (Designated Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer) and Mrs C White (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead), will be responsible for:**

- The overall implementation of this strategy.
- Appointing a senior mental health lead.
- Approving changes to the school's curriculum surrounding health and wellbeing.
- Arranging health and wellbeing training and workshops for staff and pupils.
- Ensuring that the school's ethos and values surrounding health and wellbeing are communicated to the school community and are easily accessible in a written document.

**The Senior Mental Health Lead, Mr J Douglas-Rose, and the SENDCO/Safeguarding Officer, Mrs A Gaulton, will be responsible for:**

- Undertaking robust training and development to become an expert in their field.
- Supporting the training and development of other staff members to enhance their knowledge and understanding of mental health and wellbeing and how to reflect this in their teaching.
- Devising initiatives to enhance the school's offering of mental health and wellbeing support for staff and students.
- Enabling pupil voice and acting on the results to support pupil wellbeing.
- Providing targeted support and making appropriate referrals.
- Working with parents, families and the wider school community to communicate what the school is doing to support health and wellbeing and what it plans to do in the future, and to seek feedback on existing and potential initiatives to employ.

**All staff will be responsible for:**

- Engaging in training and development to enhance their understanding of health and wellbeing and to reflect this in their teaching.
- Looking after their own health and wellbeing and seeking support if they have any concerns.
- Supporting the health and wellbeing of all pupils and raising concerns to the headteacher, senior mental health lead, DSL or other appropriate staff member depending on the circumstances.

- Liaising with parents on any concerns that have been raised about their child's health and wellbeing.

### **3. The Curriculum**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

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 enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to identify when mental health problems may be emerging, and to seek appropriate support when needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education \(RSE\) and Health Education](#) statutory guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

The school's curriculum will be kept under review and curriculum leads will seek out ways to include teaching and the promotion of positive health and wellbeing in a range of subjects.

Subjects such as PE and food technology will be structured in a manner that enables pupils to learn about healthy lifestyles, the benefits of exercise and healthy eating.

### **4. Promoting and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing**

The school's leadership will seek to ensure that this strategy supports staff and pupils to lead mentally healthy lives.

To do this, the school will continuously look for opportunities to invest in pupils' wellbeing through initiatives such as staff training, third party events, and expanding on pastoral support. The school will work closely with parents, families and carers and clearly communicate to them what health and wellbeing support is being provided.

The school will conduct mental health needs assessments to ascertain the extent to which it is delivering on its objectives and what, if any, further support needs to be put in place.

Where it becomes apparent that the school needs to do more and invest further in its offering of health and wellbeing support, the SLT will consider convening a mental health support team (MHST) to provide additional capacity for early support and meeting the mental health needs of pupils. Their core functions will be to:

- Deliver evidence-based interventions for mild to moderate mental health issues.

- Help the mental health lead to develop and introduce a whole school approach.
- Give timely advice to staff and liaise with external specialist services to help pupils get the appropriate support.

As part of the school's teaching of mental wellbeing, pupils will learn about the following:

- That mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health
- That there is a normal range of emotions and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations
- How to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings
- How to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate
- The benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness
- Simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests
- The impact that isolation and loneliness can have on people
- How to discuss their feelings and access support
- The effect of bullying on the mental wellbeing of victims
- That it is common to experience mental ill health and how the problems can be resolved.
- How to support peers to manage their emotional wellbeing.
- How to use the internet safely including how to avoid harmful content, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices, the impact of cyber-bullying and online abuse, and where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online.

## **5. Targeted Support and Appropriate Referrals**

The school will ensure that pupils who are at a greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health, e.g. pupils in care or experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse, are known by school staff and are offered support at an early stage.

The relevant staff members will undergo regular training to ensure that they can deal with mental health and wellbeing issues and to improve the support being offered by the school.

The headteacher, deputy head, SENDCO and senior mental health lead will be responsible for following the correct referral process and will be able to do the following:

- Understand the types of statutory and independent mental health services that commonly exist in each local area, the needs they meet and when they are appropriate to access as part of the whole school approach
- Understand the importance of forming strong partnerships with local services and the wider community
- Understand the threshold for making a referral to various services including NHS children and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS/CAMHS)
- Work in partnership with local service providers and mental health professionals to ensure the needs of pupils are known, understood and used to shape the local support offer
- Identify and access the most appropriate statutory or independent mental health service provision available in the local area
- Make or support effective referrals to CYPMHS/CAMHS or other services as appropriate

The senior mental health lead will undergo significant training, in accordance with the [staff training and development](#) section, to ensure that they are able to fulfil this role.

## 6. Healthy Lifestyles

### School Food and Healthy Eating

The school will always ensure that pupils can get healthy, nutritious meals whilst they are attending school; however, the catering team will continuously review the menus it provides and seek ways to improve school food to ensure that it is of the highest standard possible.

The SBM will liaise with the catering team to help them deliver on the above pledge and to assess the budget required to ensure that tasty, varied and healthy food can be prepared for pupils.

The school will avoid serving food high in fat, salt and sugar and lunches will always include:

- One or more portions of fruit and vegetables every day.
- One or more portions of starchy food, e.g. bread and pasta every day.
- A portion of food containing milk or dairy every day.
- A portion of meat or poultry on three or more days each week.
- Oily fish once or more every three weeks.

The school will make every effort to ensure that nutrient-equivalent alternatives are available for pupils with dietary requirements, and will seek to improve on any areas where pupils may not be able to consume certain foods to ensure that an alternative is available to them.

As part of the strategy to improve the school's food culture, the school will investigate how it can achieve the following:

- Making the school canteen a positive environment for eating and enjoying food
- Ensuring food looks appetising and tastes good
- Encouraging pupils to experiment with new foods whilst also having familiar options available to them
- Using seasonal, ethical and sustainable ingredients
- Ensuring the daily selection of food available enables children to make choices to get a balanced meal
- Managing packed lunches and banning items such as sugary drinks and confectionery
- Making sure that school meals are affordable and that those eligible take up their entitlement for FSM
- Ensuring pupils can learn about health and nutrition through the curriculum

The school will seek ways to improve its food culture through pupil voice surveys and working with families.

## **Exercise**

The school's curriculum for PE will ensure that all pupils:

- Develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities.
- Are physically active for sustained periods of time.
- Engage in competitive sports and activities.
- Lead healthy, active lives.

All pupils will engage in at least two hours of physical activity per week whilst at school. In addition, the school will make a range of extracurricular activities available for pupils to engage in further physical activity.

To ensure that the school's curriculum for physical activity is accessible and inclusive for all, alternative arrangements will also be made for pupils with reduced mobility and SEND are able to participate in some form of physical activity suitable for their ability.

The school will work closely with pupils and families to further develop and expand the PE curriculum and extra-curricular activities to ensure that pupils can experience a broad range of sports and activities and lead healthy and active lifestyles.

## **Making Healthy Life Choices**

As part of the school's curriculum for physical health and mental wellbeing, the school will ensure that all pupils learn about the following and are provided with the knowledge and skills needed to lead a healthy independent life:

- The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle
- The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines
- The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle

- How and when to seek support if they are worried about their health
- What constitutes a healthy diet
- The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals
- The characteristics of a poor diet and the risks associated with unhealthy eating
- How to recognise the early signs of physical illness
- Safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep
- Dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene
- Personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing
- The facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination

The school will help pupils access support if they have any concerns about their health and wellbeing and teaching staff will be trained to answer any questions pupils have about their health and wellbeing.

The teaching of health and wellbeing will be reviewed annually, and teaching may sometimes be altered to account for trends, local circumstances and 'hot topics'.

## **7. Staff Training and Development**

Staff members will have access to training to increase their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to identify mental health difficulties in their pupils and know what they should do if they have a concern.

While staff will be appropriately trained to understand and talk about mental health problems, they will be aware that making a diagnosis should only be attempted by an appropriately trained professional. They should spot and be aware of the following warning signs nonetheless:

- 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 and feelings of failure, hopelessness or worthlessness
- Unsuitable clothing (for example, long sleeves in warm weather)
- 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

Staff will also be aware of how to manage disclosures. If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff 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 student's concerns and promote their emotional and physical safety.

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the student's confidential file, and uploaded on to CPOMS. This written record should include:

- The date and time of the disclosure
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed actions

This information should be shared with the head teacher, Mrs V Pearce who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

### **The Senior Mental Health Lead**

The school will ensure that the senior mental health lead receives regular high-quality training updates and newly appointed mental health leads receive the appropriate level of training and investment to ensure that they can effectively oversee the whole school approach towards health and wellbeing. In doing this, the school will explore funding streams available to it such as the DfE's [Senior mental health lead training grant](#).

Through robust training and development, the senior mental health lead will be able to:

- Bring about strategic change to deliver an effective whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.
- Identify need and monitor the impact of interventions.
- Ensure that pupils can get timely and appropriate support with their mental health and wellbeing.
- Support the development of their colleagues in their understanding of mental wellbeing, including how to manage their own mental wellbeing and support that of pupils.
- Create an ethos and environment that promotes, respects and values diversity.
- Enable the voice of pupils to ensure that every pupil is heard, valued and able to influence decisions.
- Seek ways to improve and develop the school's curriculum, teaching and learning in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

### **Staff Health and Wellbeing**

The school will ensure that, as part of the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing, the promotion of staff health and wellbeing is given due consideration in accordance with the Staff Wellbeing Policy.

The school will ensure that all staff members:

- Are able to voice concerns about their wellbeing and whether their workload is having a negative impact on their mental health.
- Can access mental health and wellbeing support.
- Are provided with support to reflect on and to take actions to enhance their own wellbeing.
- Are able to have a positive work-life balance.

The whole-school approach to health and wellbeing will encourage everyone, including staff members, to practise self-care, look after their mental health and seek help if they have any concerns about their health and wellbeing.

### **Staff Buddy System**

Upon the arrival of any new member of staff, SLT will allocate a current member of staff to be their 'Staff Buddy'. This buddy will ensure that the settling-in process at Beaudesert is smooth and well-informed. This system will enable new members of staff to:

- Ask questions.
- Meet the staff teams
- Feel welcome in their new working environment.

The Senior Mental Health Leader will also offer check-in sessions to check on the individual's wellbeing, as necessary.

### **8. Monitoring and Review**

The Policy will be reviewed on a three-yearly basis by the headteacher, senior mental health lead and governing board and in accordance with input sought from pupils and families.

The next review date for this policy is November 2027.

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 [office@beaudesert.school](mailto:office@beaudesert.school) who will direct suggestions on to relevant members of staff.

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.