



Barlby Primary School

Mental Health Policy

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Mental Health Policy

Rationale

Barlby Primary School is committed to providing a supportive and nurturing environment for all students, recognising the importance of Social, Emotional, and Mental Health (SEMH) and Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) in their overall development and well-being. This policy outlines our approach to identifying, supporting, and managing SEMH needs among our students, ensuring that every child has the opportunity to thrive, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Objectives

- To promote positive mental health and emotional well-being for all students and staff.
- To provide tailored support for students with SEMH difficulties, including those affected by ACEs.
- To create an inclusive environment where all students feel valued and supported.
- To equip staff with the knowledge and skills necessary to support students with SEMH needs.
- To engage parents and carers in the mental health and well-being of their children.
- To ensure that mental health and well-being are embedded in the school's curriculum and culture.

Common SEMH Difficulties

Anxiety: Refers to feelings of fear or panic, including symptoms such as breathlessness, tension, irritability, and difficulty sleeping. It can significantly affect a pupil's ability to develop, learn, and maintain friendships. Key diagnostic categories include:

- Generalised Anxiety Disorder (GAD)
- Panic Disorder
- Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)
- Specific Phobias
- Separation Anxiety Disorder
- Social Phobia

Depression: Involves persistent feelings of sadness or low mood that can impair a pupil's ability to develop and learn. Key types include:

- Major Depressive Disorder (MDD)
- Dysthymic Disorder

Attachment Disorders: Excessive distress when separated from a significant person, which can hinder secure attachments with peers.

Eating Disorders: Serious mental illnesses affecting an individual's relationship with food, often driven by concerns about weight.

Deliberate Self-Harm: The intentional infliction of physical pain upon oneself.

Post-Traumatic Stress: Recurring trauma following deeply shocking experiences, which may develop into post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) if symptoms persist.

Common Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs):

- Loss or Separation



- Life Changes (e.g., birth of a sibling, changing schools)
- Traumatic Experiences (e.g., abuse, neglect, domestic violence)
- Other Traumatic Incidents (e.g., natural disasters, terrorist attacks)

Mental Health and Well-being

Barlby Primary School recognises that positive mental health and well-being are fundamental to learning, personal development, and overall life satisfaction. Our approach to mental health is embedded in the school's ethos, ensuring consistency across all areas.

1. Promoting Positive Mental Health:

- Integrating mental health education into the curriculum, including PSHE and circle time.
- Organising assemblies and discussions to normalise conversations about emotions and well-being.
- Encouraging a culture of openness to reduce stigma and promote self-expression.

2. Pastoral Support:

- Ensuring access to pastoral care for all students.
- Providing trained Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSAs) for targeted interventions.
- Offering a designated calm space for students needing time to self-regulate.
- Involving parents in the support process through communication and workshops.

3. Early Intervention and Support:

- Implementing a system for early identification of SEMH difficulties.
- Developing Individual Education Plans (IEPs) for identified students in collaboration with parents and professionals.
- Providing targeted interventions, including social skills groups and mindfulness sessions.

4. Support for All Students:

- Ensuring all students feel safe and supported in seeking help.
- Creating an inclusive environment where well-being is prioritised.
- Encouraging strong peer relationships to support emotional resilience.

5. Staff Training and Development:

- Providing regular professional development on SEMH and ACEs.
- Ensuring staff are equipped with strategies to support student well-being.
- Promoting a positive work-life balance and fostering a supportive staff environment.

Role and Responsibilities

Mental Health Lead:

- Overseeing the whole-school approach to mental health, including policies and pastoral support.
- Coordinating SEMH support across the school.



- Collaborating with the SENCo, SLT, Headteacher, and governing board.
- Providing training and resources on SEMH and ACEs.
- Leading early identification processes for students with SEMH needs.
- Liaising with external agencies for comprehensive support.

SLT:

- Monitoring and reviewing pupils' academic and emotional progress.
- Ensuring the SENCo has sufficient time and resources.
- Reviewing the quality of teaching for at-risk pupils.
- Maintaining a culture of high expectations for all pupils.

SENCo:

- Managing the day-to-day implementation of the SEMH policy.
- Supporting teachers in assessing and addressing pupils' SEMH needs.

Class Teachers:

- Recognising signs of SEMH difficulties.
- Planning and reviewing support in collaboration with parents and the SENCo.
- Setting high expectations and ensuring accessibility to learning.

All Staff:

- Recognising signs of SEMH difficulties and ACEs.
- Providing initial support and referring students when necessary.
- Engaging in professional development on SEMH.
- Understanding the safeguarding implications of SEMH and reporting concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL).

SEMH and SEND

Pupils with certain types of SEND may have an increased likelihood of mental health problems. Early intervention is essential, with collaboration among professionals to identify and address underlying causes. The SENCo ensures staff understand how to meet pupils' needs and liaises with external professionals as needed.

Mental Health Services in RBKC

Barlby Primary School is situated within the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea (RBKC), which offers various mental health services for children and families, including:

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
 - Family Support Services
 - Early Help Services
 - School-based Counselling Services
- The Mental Health Lead, in collaboration with staff, will guide families in accessing these services.



Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of the SEMH policy will be regularly monitored through:

- Feedback from students, parents, and staff.
- Analysis of behavioural and attendance data.
- Regular reviews of IEPs and intervention programmes.
- Continuous professional development updates for staff.

This policy reflects Barlby Primary School's commitment to supporting the mental health and emotional well-being of all students, ensuring a positive and inclusive learning environment that fosters resilience, growth, and success.

'Learning together, hand in hand to be the best we can be'