



Mental Health and Well Being Policy

Bancroft's
Independent Co-educational Day School 7–18

Mental Health and Well Being Policy

At Bancroft's we are deeply committed to safeguarding and promoting children's mental health and emotional well-being. Our role in school is to ensure that all children are taught to be resilient and are helped to manage times of change or stress. We strive to support children to reach their potential and to access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that pupils identify which factors might affect them and what they can do themselves to maintain positive mental health.

The following School policies and procedures are relevant to this policy:

- Self Harm policy
- Eating Disorders policy
- Safeguarding (child protection) policy
- Anti-bullying Policy

What does good mental health look like?

"Mental health is not just the absence of mental disorder. It is defined as 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 contribute to her or his community." World Health Organisation

Our Policy Statement:

We aim to have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. We wish to ensure that:

- all pupils feel safe
- all pupils feel valued and have a sense of belonging
- all pupils can identify and talk openly with a trusted adult
- positive mental health is valued and promoted in school
- bullying and unkindness are not tolerated

At Bancroft's we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a proactive way to avoid problems arising. We do this by:

- developing an open culture where it is normal to talk about mental health
- supporting and training staff to recognise and support mental health issues as part of their safeguarding duty to all pupils
- building positive relationships with the class teacher in the Prep School or Form Tutor and House staff in the Senior School; they are at the very centre of all that we do pastorally
- embracing a positive and reflective approach to behaviour management
- helping pupils to form and maintain healthy social relationships
- helping pupils to feel comfortable about sharing their concerns
- teaching pupils emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they better understand their emotions and feelings
- promoting self-esteem and ensuring that pupils understand their importance in the world
- helping pupils to manage setbacks
- identifying pupils who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging
- promoting pupil voice
- celebrating all achievements, both academic and non-academic
- providing pupils with opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- encouraging reflection
- mental health assemblies and PSHEE for all year groups in the Prep School and assemblies and Learning for Life for all year groups in the Senior School. Parents are informed of topics discussed in these lessons so that material covered is supported by wider discussion at home
- publicising information around school about sources of support and reporting channels

Staff Roles in the Prep School

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of children, staff roles with a specific remit include:

Designated Safeguarding Lead) and MHFA (Mental Health First Aider)

Assistant Head (lower phase) and SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator)

Assistant Head (upper phase) and SENCO (Special Educational Needs Coordinator)

ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)

MHFAs (Mental Health First Aider)

Staff roles in the Senior School

The promotion of safeguarding, pupil well-being and mental health is everyone's responsibility led by the Pastoral team who have a specific pastoral remit.

Pastoral Team:

DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) and Deputy Head Pastoral (DHP)

DDSL (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) and Assistant Head Pastoral (AHP)

All DDSLs, Junior and Senior Housemasters / Housemistresses

PA to the Deputy and Assistant Head (Pastoral), Pastoral Support and Safeguarding Administrator

School Nurse (Mental Health First Aider)

SENCO

School Counsellors

Early Identification and Warning Signs

- All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health, including:
 - attendance and punctuality
 - friendships and behaviour
 - academic performance
 - changes in family circumstance
 - changes in appearance and self-care
 - recent bereavement
 - poor physical health indicators such as regular illness and tiredness
 - changes in eating/sleeping habits
 - visible weight gain or weight loss
 - becoming socially withdrawn
 - changes in activity and mood
 - talking about self-harm or suicide (see Appendix)
 - expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
 - repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

All concerns are to be reported to the DSL / DDSL / School Nurse and recorded on CPOMS. Needs are assessed through a triage approach with DSL, Assistant Heads, class teachers (Prep) and Pastoral team / House staff (Senior School) and other teaching and support staff to ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service.

Strategies

Our mental health leads work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school and targeted activities to promote positive mental health. These activities include examples such as:

- Teaching skills and knowledge through our PSHEE/ Learning for Life curriculum, form times and assemblies
- Outside speakers to deliver key messages (Openview Theatre Company, RAP project etc), other mental health speakers (Senior School)
- Counselling Services (Whole School)
- Drawing and Talking Therapy (Prep School)
- Lego Play Therapy (Prep School)
- Targeted use of ELSA resources (Prep School)
- a co-curricular programme which includes therapeutic activities such as yoga, Lego and jigsaw clubs

In addition, the Prep School makes use of Steer's AS Tracking tools to assess and track the well-being of all children and write targeted action plans accordingly

Strategies in the Senior School:

- Visiting speakers (The Wellbeing Hub, the Self-Esteem Team, Tanya Marwaha, Natasha Devon)
- A rich co-curricular programme which enables pupils to discover and explore intellectual, creative, artistic, sporting and social opportunities
- An individual Pastoral Support Plan

Working with parents and carers

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher (Prep School) or Form Tutor / Junior or Senior Housemaster / mistress (Senior School) or School Nurse if they have concerns regarding their child's mental health. This will be communicated to relevant staff via CPOMS.

To support parents and carers we will:

Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.

Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHEE (Prep) and Learning for Life (Senior School) and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.

Organise workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience and steps to wellbeing.

When a concern has been raised, teachers or the relevant member of the relevant pastoral team will:

- contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment (although there may be cases in which parents and carers cannot be involved due to safeguarding issues)
- discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies
- agree mental health care and protection plan / Risk Assessment where appropriate, including clear next steps such as starting Drawing and Talking Therapy (Prep School)

In the Senior School, in some instances, a Risk Assessment will be advised which will be reviewed as appropriate and will address areas such as attendance / a phased return if appropriate, supervision at break / lunchtime, arrangements for the journey to and from school, trigger lessons / topics, recognising support that is required and where to go, using our Individual Pastoral Support Plan if appropriate. Also to be discussed and considered are lifestyle changes e.g. mindfulness, massage, yoga, nutrition, exercise, avoidance of alcohol and drugs which could exacerbate negative feelings and emotions.

Training

As a minimum, all staff 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 pupils safe. Educare learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

Prep SLT all have Level 3 Safeguarding Training. The named Mental Health First Aiders are Mental Health First Aid England trained.

The key Pastoral staff in Senior School, Pastoral Office, House Masters, Heads of Section and Heads of Year are Level 3 trained. Specific members of the Pastoral Team have had MHFA training.

Appendix – Actions for staff when a child might pose a risk to themselves

The ALGEE principle is promoted by Mental Health First Aid England (MHFA England) and is one we would adopt when encountering a child who we know, or even mildly suspect, is having suicidal thoughts.

A – Ask, assess, act; once a concern has been raised, the child in question will be spoken to right away by the DSL or most appropriate staff member always ensuring own personal safety. The parents will be informed and involved immediately. When talking to the child in question the staff member is exploring whether they believe there to be an imminent risk of harm or death.

L – Listen (without judgement). Give the child your full attention and encourage them to talk about their thoughts and feelings.

G – Give (reassurance and information to both the child and their parents). Reassure those involved that it is not uncommon to have thoughts of suicide but with help and support children can work through these thoughts and stay safe.

E – Enable (enable the child to get professional help). This could be a referral to the GP or EWMHS (Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service) or CAMHS. Urgent cases should be taken to A & E.

E – Encourage; encourage access to a range of support services such as school counselling services, the Samaritans, Hopeline UK, GP, CAMHS, Crisis Mental Health Team via A&E if serious concerns, voluntary services such as MIND.

Suicidal ideation in any form will always be taken very seriously. Parents will be notified immediately; child will be referred to Crisis Team in A&E for urgent review. Dial 999 if any serious concerns.