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Promoting Positive Mental Health Policy

Bentley CEVC Primary School and Copdock Primary School belongs to all of us. We have a warm, welcoming and happy environment where teamwork and mutual support permeate through every aspect of our school life. We celebrate the diversity of our school family.

We have high expectations of all children in all areas. Creativity is at the heart of what we teach and learn. We reflect upon our practice to provide imaginative and stimulating opportunities and skills for life.

Our ethos is a caring one, which develops respect, self-esteem and gives a voice for all. We believe that, at Bentley CEVC Primary School and Copdock Primary School, every child does matter and we are passionate about meeting the needs of every child. We also believe that our team is an outstanding group of people who are dedicated to the work we do and always want to ensure the best outcomes for the children in our care.

We aim to be a school where:

- Our children are successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens who are well equipped for future life, whatever that may hold.
- Our children know that God is with them always Matthew 28:20 (Bentley).
- Everyone achieves their full potential.
- Teaching and learning is personalised, creative, challenging and fun.
- Children are inspired and supported to develop interests and skills both in and outside school.
- Positive links with the local community create strong partnerships.
- A sense of mutual respect, care and responsibility is shown for everyone and everything in school.
- Children can contribute positively to a changing society.
- Everyone in school feels safe, supported, valued and happy.
- Children are supported to make informed decisions for a healthy lifestyle- physically, emotionally, socially and academically.

We aim to be a school where we:

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and children.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in children.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to children with mental health issues and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst children and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Instil a culture of staff and children's welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

Rationale

The emotional health and well-being of all members of Bentley and Copdock Partnership is fundamental to our philosophy and aims. Our policies and practices are founded in the development and sustenance of a happy, healthy school, where all learning can flourish. We believe that emotional health is closely linked to mental health and that as a school we can encourage positive development of mental health in childhood. We believe that children who are mentally healthy will be able to:

- Develop psychologically, emotionally, creatively, intellectually and spiritually.
- Initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships.
- Use and enjoy solitude.
- Become aware of others and empathise with them.
- Play and learn.
- Develop a sense of right and wrong.
- Face challenges, resolve issues and setbacks and learn from them developing their resilience.

Curriculum organisation

Emotional health and well-being cover the spectrum of activities in the schools, and we have a range of educational and health/ welfare agencies who support our children. Our school is proactive in its approach and welcomes opportunities to promote emotional health and well-being through the formal and informal curriculum.

Staff use a variety of methods for ensuring sound emotional health and well-being for children. These complement and reflect the overall aims and philosophy of the school, including at Bentley, its Christian basis. Our approach includes:

- Rewarding positive behaviour and achievement.
- Setting appropriately challenging tasks.
- Encouraging co-operation and collaboration.
- Encouraging and developing coping strategies and resilience.

The schools place emphasis on problem-solving, positive self-assessment, time for reflection, quality interactions between staff and children and encouragement to participate in school and community events.

We see parental involvement as a vital part of emotional well-being. Regular opportunities exist to promote partnership with parents and carers, including:

- Family learning sessions every term to share learning journeys.
- Two face-to-face parent/carer evenings with children in attendance.
- Half a term of transition mornings (one per week) for the new children who are starting in September.
- Weekly family assemblies to celebrate children's learning and achievements.
- Communication to parents and carers – weekly newsletters, weekly blogs, access to website, notice boards on site, parish news magazine, emails and text messages.
- A parent/carer and nursery visit in the summer term for the new children attending in September.
- Coffee and chat sessions for parents and carers.
- Learning together workshops.
- Questionnaires, to help us build on what we do best and identify areas for improvement.
- Involvement in Individual Targets and termly review of learning plans for children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- Support for parents and carers accessing other external agencies.

Inclusion

Curriculum provision is based on an understanding that we may need to cater differently for individuals in order to provide equality of opportunity. This approach to equal opportunities is extended to all members of our school.

These needs include specific policies for SEND. Our SENDCo ensures targeted support for children to meet their specific needs. A priority for the school is the early identification of special needs.

Pastoral organisation for pupils

We pride ourselves on the whole school, team approach that is integral to our way of working at Bentley and Copdock Partnership. Our methods include:

- Having a Senior Mental Health Lead, who is responsible for creating a whole-school approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing as well as an open culture in which staff and children alike can discuss their mental health and wellbeing openly.
- Implementing the principles of Restorative Practice helps us to focus on building better relationships with each other, taking the time to ensure that every member of our school community feels listened to, valued and respected. It supports pupils to understand how their behaviour affects and impacts on others, enabling them to develop the skills necessary to maintain positive relationships and to resolve disagreements and problems themselves. The approach used encourages individuals to think about how their behaviour and interactions have affected others and find positive ways of repairing any harm caused. This creates a community that is supportive, accountable and respectful. We believe that every individual is responsible for their own behaviour.
- Recognising and responding positively to a child's emotional and/ or behavioural needs, through individual targets, Behaviour Plans and Behaviour Risk Assessment.
- Communicating with parents and carers positively and realistically to create a partnership approach to children's emotional health and well-being.
- Liaising with appropriate agencies to enlist advice and/or support, in particular, Specialist Education Services (SES), Common Assessment Framework (CAF) and the Emotional Wellbeing Hub.
- As part of the Suffolk Wellbeing service our schools have been allocated with a Primary Mental Health Worker (PMHW). We can contact them for advice, support, and training specifically for our schools.
- Nurture area and weekly nurture sessions.
- Peer Mentoring.
- Having a Primary Mental Health First Aider trained in both schools – Di Rivers at Bentley and Ann Witherall at Copdock.
- Early Help to promote safeguarding.
- At each school, we have an Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) who is a trained, school-based TA. Their role is to support the emotional wellbeing of children, and we have access to a wealth of resources to support children's emotional resilience, social skills and positive mental health in children.
- Our schools have access to the Hamish and Milo wellbeing resource and staff across the federation have been trained in how to deliver the programmes. The resource aims to improve children's mental health, wellbeing and social and emotional development through [evidence-based programmes](#) and [resources](#). The programmes in the resource explore self-esteem and resilience, grief, loss and sadness, explosive feelings, anxiety, peer relationships and conflict, diversity and inclusion, change and transition.
- We have regular access to the Mental Health Support Team (MHST). MHST are an early intervention service that support children and young people, their families and school/college communities with mild to moderate mental health difficulties. Our MHST is based at East Bergholt High School. The MHST provides effective brief, low-intensity interventions for children, young people and families experiencing anxiety, low mood, emotion regulation or behavioural difficulties via both:
 - Individual therapy sessions with children, young people and their parents/carers.
 - Group work for pupils or parents

MHSTs support the senior mental health staff leads in schools to introduce or develop their whole school or college approach to support the mental wellbeing of their pupils. They give timely advice to school and college staff, and liaise with external specialist services, to help children and young people to get the right support and stay in education.

Pastoral organisation for staff

Pastoral support for all members of the school community is fundamental to the aims and philosophy of Bentley and Copdock Partnership. We believe that a well-supported, valued team, with clear and shared purpose are best placed to provide emotional well-being for children in our care.

Aims:

We aim to ensure that the governing body and senior leadership team are effective in:

- Having clear expectations of responsibilities within the school, which are understood by all.
- Keeping staff involved and informed of all the schools success and achievement as well as areas to be developed.
- Regular pupil progress meetings allow staff time to talk with the Head Teacher, Deputy Head and Assistant Head.
- Ensure staff are aware of the support available to them to access at any time.
- Recognise the value of each individual's work.
- Team structure to promote in-house support, alongside the range of agencies that can be accessed via the notice board in the staffroom.
- We are members of the Well- being support service.
- Staff well-being is promoted throughout school and outcomes and feedback from staff questionnaires inform how best to support staff.
- Staff can be provided with support, further information and advice through our Primary Mental Health First Aiders trained in both schools - Di Rivers at Bentley and Ann Witherall at Copdock.
- Refreshments for staff are funded through the well-being budget.
- Supervision sessions can be offered through the MHST.

Staff conduct and responsibility to each other:

All members of the Bentley and Copdock Schools Partnership team will ensure that we:

- Express feelings in an acceptable manner to the appropriate people
- Raise concerns in the correct forum, with a commitment to being part of the solution - see Grievance Policy and Whistle Blowing policy
- Help maintain a pleasant, comfortable and safe environment
- All staff adhere to the School Code of Conduct which is part of our induction process.

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Joanne Austin – Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Alice North and Heidi Cross – Alternate Safeguarding Lead (ADSL)
- Alice North and Heidi Cross - Senior Mental Health Lead
- Alice North – SENDCo across the Federation
- Peter Drew – SEND Governor
- Gemma Mark - Designated Governor for Safeguarding
- Di Rivers (Bentley) and Ann Witherall (Copdock) Primary Mental Health First Aiders

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance.

In the event of any concerns that a child may be at risk of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed, with an immediate referral to the DSL, ADSL or the designated governor.

If the child presents as a medical emergency, then the school's procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including the involvement of first aid staff 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 Alice North.