CUBITT TOWN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Positive Mental Health Policy

Every child grows • Every voice matters • Every day counts

This policy applies to staff, pupils, parents and carers, and governors

Contents

1. Our vision and values
2. Policy statement
3. Scope and aims
4. Lead members of staff
5. Our whole-school approach
6. Signposting
7. Warning signs
8. Managing disclosures
9. Confidentiality
10. Working with parents and carers
11. Supporting peers
12. Staff wellbeing
13. Training
14. Policy review
Appendix: Sources of support

1. Our vision and values

At Cubitt Town Primary School, **we put wellbeing at the centre of everything we do**. We know that successful children feel safe and ready to learn. Our vision is to ensure that every child reaches their full potential in an environment that supports both academic achievement and the wellbeing of all – for children and staff alike. Our promise applies to everyone in our school community:

Every child grows	Every voice matters	Every day counts
Every child and every member of staff is supported to grow. Children learn to understand and manage their feelings and build resilience, and staff have the training, time and support they need to thrive in their roles.	Children are taught the words to talk about their emotions and know that adults will listen. Staff voices matter too: staff are listened to and can ask for help or raise a concern without judgement, as can parents and carers.	Wellbeing is part of every school day for children and staff – in class routines, the playground, the curriculum and the staffroom – and we act early when we notice a change in anyone.

Our 6C values and wellbeing

Value	What it means for mental health and wellbeing
Care	We look after each other, notice when someone is not themselves, and treat everyone with kindness.
Communication	We talk openly about feelings, using the Zones of Regulation and our oracy skills, and we listen without judgement.
Collaboration	Staff, families and specialist services work together to support each child and member of our community .
Curiosity	We try to understand what is behind a person's behaviour, remembering that behaviour is a form of communication.
Challenge	We build resilience, help children learn from setbacks, and challenge stigma about mental health.
Commitment	We make wellbeing part of everyday school life, and keep our training and support up to date.

2. Policy statement

'Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community.' (World Health Organization)

At Cubitt Town Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil community. We do this through universal, whole-school approaches and through specialised, targeted support for pupils who need it.

As well as promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. NHS England data shows that around one in five children and young people aged 8 to 16 have a probable mental health condition. By putting practical, relevant and effective policies and procedures in place, we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils and staff members affected directly or indirectly by mental ill health.

3. Scope and aims

This policy describes our approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. It is guidance for all staff, including non-teaching staff, and governors. It should be read alongside our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, SEND Policy, First Aid / Medical Policy, Behaviour Regulation Policy and Anti-bullying Policy. It takes account of the DfE guidance **Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges**, **Mental health and behaviour in schools** and **Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026**.

This policy aims to:

- promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils;
- increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues;
- alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health;
- support staff working with children with mental health needs;
- support pupils experiencing mental ill health, and their peers, parents and carers.

4. Lead members of staff

All staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils. Staff with a specific remit include:

Name	Role
Emma Whitwam	Mental Health Lead
Robyn Bruce	Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Karen Ward	Designated Safeguarding Lead and Learning Mentor
Jacqui Jenkins	Designated Safeguarding Lead and Parent Liaison Officer
Angie Drew	Assistant Headteacher for Inclusion, SENCo and Deputy DSL
Rupia Begum	Learning Mentor
Sam Duggan	Mental health lead and governor
Fatima Begum	PSHCE / Relationships and Health Education Lead
Margaret Davies	Chair of Governors and Safeguarding Link Governor

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the **Mental Health Lead** or a member of the pastoral team in the first instance, and record the concern on **CPOMS**. If there is a concern that the pupil is at risk of harm, the normal safeguarding procedures must be followed, with an **immediate** report to a DSL. If the pupil presents a medical emergency, the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting first aid staff and calling 999 if necessary.

Referrals to the Tower Hamlets Education Wellbeing Service (THEWS), CAMHS and other services are led by the SENCo, the Mental Health Lead or the pastoral team.

5. Our whole-school approach

Every day, for every child

- **Zones of Regulation** – children learn to recognise, name and manage their emotions, using a shared language across the school.
- **Oracy** – as a Voice 21 Centre of Excellence for Oracy, teachers use oracy to give children the words and confidence to discuss their emotions.
- **The Cubitt Town Peace Path** – on the playground, children use the Peace Path and its sentence stems to resolve disagreements calmly.
- **A relational approach to behaviour** – we recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and respond with understanding.
- **Ways to share a worry** – class worry boxes, Toot Toot, trusted adults and our learning mentors, so that children always have someone to talk to.
- **Our 6C values** – taught and celebrated in assemblies and across the curriculum.

Teaching about mental health

The skills, knowledge and understanding pupils need to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are taught through our PSHCE and Relationships and Health Education curriculum. Lessons are adapted to the needs of each class, with an emphasis on developing the language and confidence to ask for help for themselves or others. We follow the PSHE Association guidance on teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing safely and sensitively.

Targeted support

Children who need extra help may receive:

- regular emotional support from our experienced **pastoral team and learning mentors**;
- sessions with our **Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)**;
- **friendship groups** and special arrangements for play and lunchtimes;
- support from the **Tower Hamlets Education Wellbeing Service (THEWS)** – an education wellbeing practitioner is in school on Tuesdays and offers parent-led support for early signs of anxiety or behavioural difficulties, workshops and signposting;
- advice and support from outside agencies, including **CAMHS**, the Tower Hamlets **Educational Psychology Service**, the **Phoenix School Outreach Team**, the **Behaviour and Attendance Support Service (BASS)** and the **Tower Hamlets Learning Advisory Service**;
- early help for the whole family, coordinated by the DSLs.

How to access THEWS: parents and carers can ask for a referral form through the **school office** or **Class Dojo**. The SENCo or pastoral team completes the referral, followed by an initial meeting to agree a plan.

6. Signposting

We make sure staff, pupils, parents and carers know about sources of support in school and in the community (see the Appendix). Sources of support are displayed around the school, shared on our website and Class Dojo, and highlighted in the curriculum. Whenever we share them, we help pupils understand what help is available, who it is for, how to get it, why they might use it, and what will happen next.

7. Warning signs

Staff may notice signs that a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing difficulties. These should always be taken seriously. Staff should record their concern on CPOMS and speak to the Mental Health Lead or a member of the pastoral or safeguarding team. Possible warning signs include:

- physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental;
- changes in eating or sleeping habits;
- becoming isolated from friends or family, or socially withdrawn;
- changes in activity, mood or behaviour, including more frequent dysregulation;
- a drop in learning or progress;
- talking or joking about self-harm or suicide;
- expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope;
- changes in clothing – for example, long sleeves in warm weather;
- secretive behaviour, or avoiding PE or getting changed secretively;
- increased lateness or absence from school;
- repeated physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause.

Training on warning signs is given to all staff every year.

8. Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to tell any member of staff about concerns about themselves or a friend, so all staff need to know how to respond. The response should always be **calm, supportive and non-judgemental**. Staff should listen rather than advise, and focus first on the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than on exploring 'why'.

All disclosures must be recorded on **CPOMS** (or a yellow Record of Concern form if CPOMS is unavailable) and shared with the Mental Health Lead or a DSL, who will offer support and advice about next steps.

9. Confidentiality

We are honest with pupils about confidentiality. If we need to pass on a concern, we explain to the pupil, in an age-appropriate way, who we are going to tell, what we are going to tell them and why. We never promise to keep a secret.

Disclosures are always shared with the Mental Health Lead or a DSL. This ensures continuity of care, provides extra support and ideas, and means no member of staff carries the responsibility alone.

As a primary school, we will normally inform parents and carers of any significant concern about their child's mental health, and always if a pupil expresses thoughts of self-harm or suicide or is at risk of significant harm. We will talk with the pupil about how parents will be told. **If there is any reason to believe there may be a child protection concern, parents and carers will not be informed first – a DSL must be told immediately** and will decide on next steps, in line with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

10. Working with parents and carers

When there is a concern about a child

Where it is appropriate to inform parents and carers, we will be sensitive in our approach and consider, case by case:

- whether the meeting can be face to face (preferable) and where it should take place;
- who should be present – the child, parents and carers, other staff;
- the aims of the meeting;
- whether an interpreter is needed – our Parent Liaison Officer can help.

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents and carers to learn about their child's difficulties, and they may respond with anger, fear or upset. We will be accepting of this and give them time to reflect. We will share sources of information and support, including support for parents themselves, give clear ways to contact us, and agree a follow-up meeting or call. Each meeting ends with agreed next steps, and a brief record is kept on CPOMS.

Supporting all parents and carers

- We share information about mental health and sources of support on our website, Class Dojo and through THEWS workshops.
- We make sure all parents and carers know who to talk to if they are worried about their own child or a friend of their child.
- We make this policy easy to find on our website.
- We tell parents and carers about the wellbeing topics their children are learning in PSHCE, and share ideas for continuing this at home.
- Our Parent Liaison Officer and the Early Help offer can support families who are finding things difficult.

11. Supporting peers

When a pupil is experiencing mental health difficulties, it can be a hard time for their friends, who often want to help but do not know how. We will consider, case by case, which friends may need support, and talk with them in an age-appropriate way about what is helpful for them to know, how they can support their friend, what to avoid saying or doing, and when to tell an adult. We will also make sure they know where to get support for themselves and healthy ways to cope with their own feelings.

12. Staff wellbeing

We recognise that staff wellbeing matters in its own right and is essential to supporting children well. We have signed the DfE **Education Staff Wellbeing Charter**. We will:

- consider workload and wellbeing in all decisions, and review policies to reduce unnecessary workload;
- encourage staff to talk to their line manager, the senior leadership team or the Mental Health Lead if they are struggling;
- provide supervision or debriefs for staff dealing with difficult or distressing situations, including the DSLs and pastoral team;
- signpost staff to support, including our Employee Assistance Programme and the **Education Support** helpline (08000 562 561, free and confidential, 24 hours a day).

13. Training

All staff receive regular training on recognising and responding to mental health needs as part of their annual safeguarding training. Additional training is available through THEWS, the Phoenix School Outreach Team, the Educational Psychology Service, MindEd (www.minded.org.uk) and the National College. More in-depth training is considered as part of performance management, or when needed to support particular pupils. Suggestions for training should be discussed with the Mental Health Lead or [Andrew Robertson – CPD lead

14. Policy review

This policy will be reviewed at least every two years, and is next due for review in July 2028. It will be updated sooner if guidance changes or when there are personnel changes. Questions or suggestions about this policy should be addressed to Emma Whitwam (Mental Health Lead) or a DSL, via the school office

Appendix: Sources of support

Service	Who it is for and what it offers	How to contact
In school	Class teacher, learning mentors, ELSA, pastoral team, Mental Health Lead	Speak to any adult, use a worry box or Toot Toot; parents via the office or Class Dojo
THEWS – Tower Hamlets Education Wellbeing Service	Parents of children aged 5+ with early signs of anxiety or behavioural difficulties; workshops	Referral through the school; elft.thews@nhs.net; 020 7426 2375
Tower Hamlets CAMHS	Specialist mental health support for children and young people	Referral through the school or GP
Tower Hamlets Early Help	Support for families facing difficulties	Through the school's DSLs or Parent Liaison Officer
NHS 111 (mental health option)	Urgent mental health support for anyone, 24 hours a day	Call 111 and select the mental health option
Childline	Free, confidential support for children	0800 1111; childline.org.uk
YoungMinds Parents Helpline	Advice for parents and carers worried about a child's mental health	0808 802 5544; youngminds.org.uk
Shout	Free, confidential 24/7 text support	Text SHOUT to 85258
Samaritans	Emotional support for adults, 24 hours a day	116 123
Education Support	Free, confidential support for school staff, 24 hours a day	08000 562 561
Emergency	If anyone is in immediate danger	Call 999