



## Palfrey Junior School

### **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY**

Mental Health is how we feel, how we think and how we behave. Wellbeing is our overall sense of meaning, purpose and life satisfaction. The mental health and wellbeing of children and young people, adults in school, parents and carers and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of development, learning and working.

Here at Palfrey Junior we recognise that in order to promote a positive ethos in school, all children and adults need the foundations of positive mental health and wellbeing to be able to shine both academically, personally and socially. It is about:

- Being able to form and maintain relationships with others
- Being adaptable to change and other people's expectations
- Being able to have fun
- Being open to learning
- Being able to develop a sense of right and wrong
- Being able to develop the resilience to manage ordinary setbacks

Cheryl Collis is the trained Senior Mental Health Lead and Mental Health First Aider in school and there is a wellbeing team co-ordinated by her, consisting of Angela Hill and Emily Kinsey from the Senior Leadership Team, Nona Kalra the Wellbeing Curriculum Lead, Kerry Shaw the Inclusion Lead and Hayley Thomson the Pastoral Lead. The team create and co-ordinate all mental health and wellbeing activities in school for both pupils, staff and parents.

#### **CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

##### **All children and young people need to:**

- Be able to connect with others by participating in groups and teams
- Know they are capable and able to achieve
- Know that they count in their world and can contribute to their community
- Know they have courage and can manage risks appropriately- everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable.

At times, anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop good mental health.

##### **At Palfrey Junior School there is a mentally healthy environment where children:**

- Have opportunities to participate in activities that encourage belonging (Go Givers, RE, Special themed events, WOW days, Inspire Workshops, Votes for Schools, outdoor learning)

- Have opportunities to participate in decision making (e.g. School Council, A- Stars, subject champions, librarians)
- Have opportunities to celebrate academic and non-academic achievements (e.g. celebration assemblies, special festivals events and concerts, extra curriculum awards and notifications.)
- Have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed (e.g. Children leading their own learning, extra-curricular clubs, Children's University.)
- Have opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others. (E.g. residentials, school trips, and project involvement.)
- Have opportunities to reflect (e.g. alternative lunchtime provision, nurture/social groups, Lego therapy, Mulberry Bush curriculum) and to build resilience to set backs.
- Have the opportunity to express their worries in the 'Worry Monsters' and happiness surveys and an open door policy to talk to any member of staff. Access to appropriate support that meets their needs can then be organised (e.g. Teacher and TA support in class, Pastoral Leader, Inclusion Manager, SLT and external agencies where appropriate).
- Have a right to an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for.
- Children are surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours and interactions at all times.

Children from Palfrey Junior School have opportunities arising from both within the curriculum and beyond that focus on and foster positive mental health and well being. As well as our PHSE, SMSC and Creative curricula, there are mental health and wellbeing activities each week, special themed weeks around aspects such as kindness and loneliness, positive affirmations are shared with children, and wellbeing trackers are produced each half term. We also have a half termly wellbeing newsletter so that parents and guardians can keep up to date with work in school.

Children participate in linking projects which allow them to meet and make friends with pupils from ethnically different schools, thus promoting ideals around identity equality, community and diversity. We also take part in Federation and local initiatives to enhance pupils' wellbeing, such as The Railway Club link, Daffodils Community Gardens and Climate 180.

We place a high emphasis on the importance of physical activity and exercise in promoting mental health. Alongside a full and enriching PE curriculum we also promote active playtimes and lunchtimes. We have a specialist sports coach who runs a variety of lunchtime and after school clubs throughout the year to promote physical and mental well-being. Outdoor gym and Adventure Playground equipment and outdoor learning add to the range of physical and outside activities on offer.

Each year the children complete a happiness survey. Those children who show as unhappy or having particular issues receive tailored support. The nurturing environment of our school, timetabled specialist support for children with additional needs, specialist Inclusion team, nurture- type provision for our most vulnerable children and interventions in place all contribute to mental wellbeing in school.

There is a map of provision that is available to pupils for their mental health and wellbeing that identifies a consistent offer to the children in the school in Appendix 1.

## **STAFF**

### **At Palfrey Junior School there is a mentally healthy environment where all staff:**

- Have their individual needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way
- Have a range of systems in place to support mental wellbeing (e.g. performance management, briefings, training, Occupation Health, access to VIVUP counselling service, signposting to appropriate organisations).
- Have recognition of their work-life balance so that workload reduction is always a consideration by leaders when calling meetings, setting tasks or designing systems.
- Feel valued and have opportunities in the decision making processes (termly pupil progress meetings, year group planning, working parties, Quality Assurance, appraisals).
- Success is recognised and celebrated.
- Are provided with opportunities for CPD both personally and professionally from inside the school, the Federation or from outside agencies.
- Can access support and guidance from Heads of School at times of emotional need in both the short and long term.

Where possible, appointments and family commitments that fall within school hours are honoured, as we know that these things often cannot happen outside of school time and are an important part of life. We are signed up to the DfE's Wellbeing Charter which can be viewed at:  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6194eb37d3bf7f0551f2d1a5/DfE\\_Education\\_Workforce\\_Welbeing\\_Charter\\_Nov21.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6194eb37d3bf7f0551f2d1a5/DfE_Education_Workforce_Welbeing_Charter_Nov21.pdf)

We conduct an annual mental health and wellbeing survey aimed at allowing staff to express their own feelings and needs, SLT provide a response, comparing results nationally and take any issues raised on board. SLT welcome suggestions from staff for workload reduction or changes in systems that do not compromise standards. They will also be following national developments around workload reduction and the four day week with a view to adapting and implementing any new national initiatives at school.

We also operate a system of 'Freedom Fridays', where each member of staff can choose one Friday a year as a wellbeing day to do with as they wish. 'Big 0' birthdays also attract a day away from school to celebrate. Wellbeing time is regularly planned into the monitoring schedule in the place of a staff meeting. Staff can request to work their PPA from home.

A PJS Staff Wellbeing Charter is attached in Appendix 2 of this policy. There is a map of provision that is available to staff for their mental health and wellbeing that identifies a consistent offer to them in school in Appendix 3.

**At Palfrey Junior School there is a mentally healthy environment where parents and carers:**

- Are recognised for their significant contribution to children and young people's mental health
- Are welcomed, included and work in partnership with the school and agencies
- Are provided with opportunities to ask for help when needed and signposted to appropriate agencies for support (Inclusion Leader, Pastoral Leader, Community Liaison Worker, Early Help/ CAF, School Hardship Fund)
- Are clear about their role, expectations and responsibilities in working in partnership with the school (e.g. home school agreement shared annually, Parents Meetings, open door policy to discuss any concerns)
- Opinions are sought, valued and responded to (e.g. Questionnaires, Parents of Palfrey Group, clubs and classes, Head teacher meetings, senior staff on duty on before school each day, parent voice collected after workshops and special events).

The implementation of this policy for promoting mental health and wellbeing in schools:

- Should underpin all policies and practices currently used in schools such as Behaviour, Anti Bullying, Inclusion, Early Help, Curriculum including RE, RSE, SMSC and British Values, staff HR policies etc.
- Will strengthen and promote resilience throughout the whole school community and empower everyone to face life's challenges
- Will raise awareness as to how the whole school community can look after their own mental health and that of others.
- Will provide our children with the foundations for lifelong learning.

Policy date: June 2025

Review: January 2028, or sooner should changes occur.

**References:**

- Mental Health Promotion Strategy for Children and Young People (DfE 2015)
- Bright Futures: Promoting children and young people's mental health, Mental Health Foundation
- Article 28, 29, 30, 31 United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child
- Work/Life Balance National Agreement
- The Anna Freud Foundation
- DfE's Wellbeing Charter.

Appendix 1  
PJS Pupil Provision map



## Little Acorns to Mighty Oaks

### Palfrey Junior School Wellbeing Provision Map

#### **PUPILS**

##### **Universal Provision**

(These are activities that all children partake in and benefit from)

##### **Ethos:**

- Welcoming atmosphere for pupils, greeted on arrival and departure, when seen around school so that trust is built and children feel valued
- Open door policy for children to be able to speak to adults
- Children know who they can go to for help from the senior leadership through to their own friends
- Understanding across school of mental health and wellbeing needs and the continuum they follow
- Modelling positive behaviours such as listening, caring, kindness, respect, charity and inclusion
- Whole school behaviour system emphasizes the positives
- Children rewarded and praised daily, stickers, house points, Jar of Awesome, Golden Certificates
- No tolerance of negative behaviour towards others that could have impact on wellbeing
- Those that do behave in negative ways helped to understand the impact of what they have done, not just punished e.g. face to face meetings between pupils
- Wellbeing work embedded in school, not tokenistic
- Discussion around mental health and wellbeing is explicit, therefore reducing stigma
- Working with families who may have their own wellbeing needs or have concerns about their children's mental health
- Good relationships with children allowing us to know them and see changes in them that could signal need
- Safeguarding and wellbeing posters around school to give children access to services
- Attendance monitoring
- Colleagues kept appropriately informed to make sure any issues are dealt with holistically

- Meetings with parents to gain their insight and understanding of any issues raised
- Transition meetings held, class to class or school to school to make sure that a child's history is understood and that strategies and programmes can be planned in as part of the offer to that child

**Curriculum- General:**

- A broad and balanced curriculum aimed at engaging all pupils and giving them a window on the world around them
- Opportunities for children to find interests and abilities through our curriculum
- Inclusion for all- SEND and EAL catered for
- Teaching about equality, diversity, tolerance and respect throughout the curriculum
- Allowing creativity and encouraging enquiry and preference through art, DT, music, dance and drama
- Being in touch with nature through outdoor learning offer
- Healthy eating and physical activity promoted through science, PE, Body Boost
- Understanding of relationships and your own body through RSE
- Understanding of current affairs, major issues in the world and what pupils own opinions are through Votes for Schools
- Excitement and fun through special themed events, trips, projects and workshops
- Texts and stories that challenge views and encourage empathy
- Pupil voice about their own learning, interests and needs
- School policies in place to support health, mental health and wellbeing such as SEN, RSE, Child Protection, Medical Needs, PHSE, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Allergies and Anaphylaxis

**Curriculum- Mental Health and Wellbeing Specific:**

- Weekly PHSE lessons- SCARF
- Specific wellbeing keys taught in themed weeks focusing on Resilience and Growth Mind Set, Mindfulness, Be Active, Be connected, Be safe and Marvellous Me
- Wellbeing weeks focusing on Kindness, Honesty, Friendship, Thoughtfulness and Respect
- Affirmations
- Wellbeing trackers done by all children for them to chart their own wellbeing and help staff identify any prolonged dips
- Wellbeing Day celebrated in July
- Wellbeing newsletters
- Helping Hands
- Online safety
- Anti-bullying
- NSPCC pants rule

**Extra Curricular and Pupil Leadership:**

- Lunch time clubs- free
- After school clubs- free
- Choir- events and visits
- Involvement in projects e.g. My school, My planet, Linking Projects, Climate 180 eco project, Sport for Champions Olympic athlete sports project, etc.
- Library- open daily for books, board games, colouring etc.
- School Council
- Playground Leaders
- Subject Champions

**Identification and Expression of Feelings and Needs:**

- Happiness Survey (also used by staff to identify need)
- Feelings charts in every class
- Friendship Benches on playground
- Worry Monsters or jars in each class and on pastoral lead's door

**Palfrey Junior School Wellbeing Provision Map**

**PUPILS**

**Targeted Provision**

(These are strategies that small groups and individuals take part in in school)

- Small group or one to one work set up based on the responses from the Happiness Survey
- Children who receive this regularly checked to make sure improvements have been sustained post input
- A number of Social Groups run throughout the week for children in all year groups. These are aimed at creating positive interactions with both adults and peers, building confidence and giving time and space to talk. It also aims to build connections with those key adults that can help children with their feelings and needs
- Identifying specific children who would benefit from places in lunchtime clubs or inclusion in extra outdoor learning. These provide outlets for energy that some children need to burn off, those for whom unstructured play is challenging, and who sometimes struggle with the constraints of afternoon school
- Small group or one to one work addressing specific difficulties children are have, e.g. bereavement, anger management, or anxiety such as Lego Therapy and Mulberry Bush Curriculum
- Reasonable adjustments within school- risk assessments and PEEPs, fidget toys and wobble cushions, visual timetables, NAT bashing (sessions to help alleviate intrusive negative thoughts), one to one responses about feelings charts and trackers and how routines can be adapted to alleviate triggers, bereavement support in groups or for individuals
- Training for staff around presenting needs

- Referral to outside agencies who will come into school to work with individuals and groups of children- Speech and Language Therapy, Early Help, Police/PCSO workshops and discussions, Street Teams workshops, online safety due to filtering and monitoring concerns
- Supporting teachers with groups or individual pupils
- Behaviour plans
- Supporting parents and signposting them to organisations that will advise then how to help their children at home such as the school Nursing Service, Calm Halm app etc.

### **Palfrey Junior School Wellbeing Provision Map**

#### **PUPILS**

#### **Specialist Provision**

(Referral and involvement of outside agencies)

- Report to Police on potential criminal activity and radicalisation e.g. knife crime, Prevent, FGM
- Report to Street Teams on potential exploitation and county lines
- MARF
- Observations and reports from advisory teachers
- Refer to The Swing for issues around bereavement
- Support referrals to the NHS such as CAMHs or a paediatrician
- EHCP applications
- Black Country Food bank referral for financial advice, debt management and food bank voucher
- Work with parents on specific parenting issues such as This Is Me, Five Pillars of Parenting, Cygnet ( for parents of children on the Autism spectrum)
- Work with Early Help and social services on benefits, housing, parental mental health and Young Carers
- Access Cadmus Inclusive training and support offers

Appendix 2

PJS Staff Wellbeing Charter



## Little Acorns to Mighty Oaks

### **Palfrey Junior School Staff Wellbeing Charter**

At Palfrey Junior School we will:

- Make sure that any staff meetings are totally necessary and time efficient
- Make sure you have time to mark tests, input data or generate reports for assessment
- Make sure you have times for any reports you need to write
- Try to let you attend any appointments you need to
- Try to let you attend events for your children and family
- Listen to your problems, support you as best we can, or signpost you to further support
- Arrange extra time for you to catch up with things if you are feeling snowed under
- Listen to you if you feel you need to do your PPA at home
- Give you time to manage your subject/projects, courses and qualifications
- Not force you to do any after school, lunch time clubs or booster lessons
- Never clock watch when you arrive or leave. All we want is for your work to be done
- Offer you plans and resources for any special theme days
- Try to find fun and rewarding things for us to do together, such as lunches, quizzes, Biscuit Fridays, Hug Mug, Pamper Hamper, charity donations and Secret Santa etc.
- Not to send messages and emails in the evenings or weekend unless it is an emergency
- Have an open door policy
- To sign post you to medical, support or counselling services as you need
- Encourage live marking and verbal feedback during lessons to reduce the marking burden at the end of the day
- Listen to your suggestions and try to enact them where possible
- Try not to overburden part time colleagues, HLTAs or TAs with cover. They are brilliant and we are lucky to have them
- Agree to requests for Big 0 birthdays off and Freedom Fridays
- Be as flexible as we can to get you extra PPA and time at the end of term, e.g. 'visual literacy' sessions, early finishes etc.
- Plan together on agreed templates, sharing work with one another and annotating as you and your children need

AND that all of the above is for **EVERYONE**

Appendix 3  
PJS Staff Provision Map



Little Acorns to Mighty Oaks

## **Palfrey Junior School Wellbeing Provision Map**

### **Staff**

#### **Universal Provision**

(These are activities that all staff partake in and benefit from)

- Any staff meetings held are totally necessary and time efficient
- Staff meeting time given to mark tests, input data or generate reports for assessment
- Staff meeting time given for any reports that need writing, e.g. target day or end of year
- Staff meeting time given for wellbeing- no meeting or directed activity
- Time for any appointments given
- Time to attend events/appointments for children and family
- SLT will listen to problems, support best as they can, or signpost to further support
- Regular check-ins with colleagues currently experiencing problems
- Arrange extra time for you to catch up with work when people feel overwhelmed for any reason
- PPA at home by individual arrangement
- Management time for subject/projects
- No clock watching when staff arrive or leave, providing they are on time to start work and tasks are completed as necessary

- Plans and resources offered for any special theme days
- Arranging whole school social activities, such as lunches, quizzes, Biscuit Fridays, Hug Mug, Secret Santa, Pamper Hamper etc.
- No messages or emails in the evenings or weekends unless it is an emergency
- Have an open door policy
- Encouraging live marking and verbal feedback during lessons to reduce the marking burden at the end of the day
- Invite and listen to suggestions and try to enact them where possible
- Try not to overburden part time colleagues , HLTAs or TAs with cover and recognise the massive contribution they make to keeping classes running
- Agree to requests for Big O birthdays off
- Freedom Friday days off granted to all- with an attempt to honour preferences for dates
- Be as flexible as possible to get you extra PPA and time at the end of term, e.g. 'visual literacy' sessions, early finishes etc.
- No enforced running of after school clubs, lunchtime clubs or booster sessions
- Union representation welcomed
- Staff room facilities
- Hayes courses on wellbeing available
- Class sizes reduced in the mornings due to SEND/EAL provision
- All classes have TA support, at least in the mornings (currently)
- Support with pupil behaviour generally
- Generous offset terms for early finished at the end of each term
- Paid days for religious observance
- Support for CPD e.g. in house, whole school, apprenticeships, TA training, NPQs
- Staff questionnaire and sessions to discuss wellbeing
- Mental Health First Aider/ Senior Mental Health Lead available in school
- Employee support service Vivup promoted generally or other organisations signposted

## **Palfrey Junior School Wellbeing Provision Map**

### **Staff**

#### **Targeted Provision**

(These are strategies that small groups and individuals take part in at school)

- Responding to specific needs of individuals- time for phone calls or Teams meetings, such legal representation, counselling, medical issues, on site in school time
- Supporting year groups with particular needs e.g. planning, projects, pupil behaviour, SATs, MTC, transition in Y3
- Specific behaviour support and work with parents for particular pupils or groups of pupils
- Support with individuals who may experience aggression or abuse from parents
- Facilitating individuals who may need altered working time due to their own health or their family's needs
- Interim financial support in the form of short term loans or hardship funds
- Support with childcare if staff need to bring their own children onto site
- Short or no notice cover arrangements for individual emergencies such as bereavement, relationship breakdown, pet emergencies, property emergencies, illness of family members etc.
- Conflict resolution and conciliation meetings between colleagues
- Employee support service Vivup promoted specifically

## **Palfrey Junior School Wellbeing Provision Map** **Staff**

### **Specialist Provision**

(Referral and involvement of outside agencies)

- Working with HR to resolve attendance issues due to long term sickness or stress, disputes and other difficulties
- Referral to Occupational Health
- Reasonable adjustments made to working practices and environment
- To facilitate and provide ongoing support for phased returns
- Ongoing one to one support for mental health issues, abusive relationships
- Report to Police on potential criminal activity perpetrated against colleagues
- Where appropriate, to be available as witnesses or to contribute to statements supporting colleagues in legal proceedings
- Employee support service Vivup recommended
- Support with referral to GP, Black Country Food Bank, Citizen's Advice, Black Country Women's Aid







