



# Ashfield Junior School

Inspiring our children to dream big, be extraordinary  
and to change the world

## Wellbeing Policy

Date agreed: June 2022

Date of next review: June 2024

## Introduction

At Ashfield Junior School we take the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff very seriously.

Our school has a supporting and inclusive ethos, which encourages respect, the development of good self-esteem and gives staff and pupils a voice.

Our school is committed to providing a caring and supportive environment for all staff and we recognise the importance of their welfare too.

This policy outlines the ways in which we, as a school care for and nurture the emotional wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

Our Mission is to provide an excellent education for all our children so that:

- Every child flourishes both socially and academically to be the best they can be; and are equipped with the skills and confidence they need to navigate in a changing world
- Our families are confident that their children are happy and safe; and that our teachers are ambitious for their children in whatever paths they wish to take

Our policy aims to support this by outlining the supportive framework within other school policies for both pupils' education and staff workplace so that everyone feels safe, supported, valued and happy.

## Rationale

The emotional health and wellbeing of everyone in the care of Ashfield School is fundamental to our mission and exemplified in our daily practice. We believe that positive emotional health and wellbeing creates happier, motivated staff and pupils who strive to get the most out of life; and promotes school improvement and success in a multitude of ways, including:

- Pupils engagement with their learning
- Attainment and progress across the curriculum
- Effective teaching
- Parents and carers who are actively involved in school life and learning
- Pupils' good self-esteem and confidence
- Pupils' excellent behaviour and attendance
- Low rates of persistent absence
- Positive and effective relationships between staff and with pupils
- Successful recruitment and retention high calibre staff.

## Promoting Emotional Health and Well Being

### Pupils

Our school council is made up of pupil representatives from all year groups who are democratically elected by their peers. The School Council meets regularly to discuss issues the pupils have, contribute to school improvement, organise events such as the Bring & Buy Sale and charity work; as well as contributing to changes in school policy.

### Promoting Emotional Health & Well-being through the Curriculum

Ashfield promotes positive health and well-being through a detailed Personal Development curriculum (see policy)

We also promote positive emotional health and wellbeing throughout the curriculum by:

- Encouraging independence in learning
- Using a range of teaching styles appropriate to pupils' age, ability and level of maturity
- A focus on Growth Mind-sets
- Opportunities for pupil leadership through School Council, Eco Council, buddy system
- An emphasis on praise and reward for effort
- Weekly assemblies
- Achievement assemblies
- Open classrooms and open evening
- Class well-being assemblies and Mindfulness

### Pastoral Support for Pupils

Pastoral support for pupils is carefully considered as part of our support for meeting the needs of Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs (SEMH). At Ashfield we promote emotional health and wellbeing of **all** pupils (Tier 1a) whilst ensuring that we have appropriate support and strategies in place for identified pupils who may need additional or further support (Tier 1b). We appreciate that some pupils may need more specialist support from outside agencies (Tier 2 & Tier 3) and the SENCO or Headteacher would refer these children accordingly to the most appropriate service, whilst ensuring pastoral support is continued in school. See appendix for overview of tiered support for SEMH.

### Parents & Carers

The school promotes the involvement of parents and carers in the life and learning of the school. Ashfield holds "Meet the teacher Evening" at the start of each academic year as well as Parent meetings in the Autumn and Spring Terms. We have an "open door" policy and teachers make time to speak with parents at collection time at the end of the day. The school holds curriculum events e.g. E-Safety talks for parents, "Moving On" meetings to help parents through transition to secondary school, as well as open classrooms in the Autumn and Summer Term. The school provides regular communication and involvement regarding pupil progress, behaviour and pastoral issues. We have a Parent Focus Group where representatives from each year group meet to discuss school initiatives changes to policy and issues raised by parents; as well as a SEND Parent Focus group which act as a support network for parents of children with SEND. Parents can also access the

school's Family Support Worker, who is available on request, coffee mornings, through workshops or works more intensively with families who require greater support.

## Staff

The notion of TEAM is very important to Ashfield and we work hard to ensure that everyone working here feels valued. The Teaching and TA team meets weekly for training, development and general updates. All staff contribute to policy and curriculum changes and are represented on the Governing Body. Relationships in school are positive –staff genuinely care about each other – and are not fearful of voicing opinions or concerns. There is a whistleblowing policy in place and staff are encouraged to raise any concerns with their mentor, line manager, the Headteacher or a governor.

The school environment is clean, tidy and well resourced. The staff have a good facilities for their break times. Teachers have PPA time, time out of class to carry out leadership duties and focused staff meetings to carry out specific activities. The talented and well trained TA team provide excellent support for the teaching team.

Ashfield puts a lot of emphasis on good quality training. Staff meetings address whole school areas of need, where the teaching team work together for school improvement. Much of our training is in-house and run by members of the SLT. This avoids unnecessary travel and ensures that the whole teaching team can benefit from training. Curricular planning time is planned into staff meetings so that staff can work together with their year group partner, within their milestone or as a whole staff group. Access to good quality training from external providers is available where appropriate.

The further promote the positive well-being of staff, the Headteacher will take responsibility for his/her work life balance and be aware of the role modelling they are setting for others. In collaboration with senior leaders, set positive role models and provide pastoral/welfare support for individual staff as required.

The Headteacher will ensure that all staff are treated in a fair, sensitive and confidential manner; and when issues arise, discuss options appropriate to the circumstances. The school will support, as far as possible, any initiatives and recommendations in relation to staff welfare as advised by unions.

The work of all staff is underpinned by effective policies and clear job descriptions. The Governing Body always considers the impact of new initiatives and policy changes on the work-life balance of staff. There is a Wellbeing linked Governor who will report back to the Governing Body on wellbeing.

Pupil Progress meetings with parents of children with SEND are held within the school day. The school makes effective use of technology to reduce the burden of time-heavy work such as assessment, report writing and staff appraisal.

The Headteacher has received training on supporting the Mental Health and Wellbeing of the school community (staff and pupils) and attends bi-annual refreshing training as part of their continued professional development. Any relevant training or feedback is delivered to staff.

The Headteacher will always consider any reasonable request for alterations to working patterns. Alterations to working patterns will be negotiated for a positive outcome for both the member of staff and the school. Applications for alterations to working patterns will not be granted where:

- There would be a loss to the quality of the education being provided
- There would be issues with health and safety in the school
- To grant it would have a negative impact on the well-being of other staff or children
- To grant it would be financially detrimental to the school

The Governors and Headteacher are committed to reviewing the impact of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing policy as part of the School Improvement Plan. It falls within the remit of the Welfare Committee. This policy should be used in conjunction with other policies, including, but not restricted to:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Behaviour and Discipline
- Code of Conduct for Staff
- Anti-Bullying
- Health and Safety
- Healthy Eating
- Whistle Blowing Policy

Next formal review of this policy is Summer 2024

### Appendix 1 - A Tiered Approach to Provision for SEMH

Focus Area	Tier 1a Universal Provision Available for ALL children	Tier 1b	Tier 2	Tier 3 Available for a FEW Children
		Available for SOME Children		
Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Herts STEPS approach, reflected in whole school behaviour policy</li> <li>• Home/school agreement</li> <li>• Fair and consistent classroom management</li> <li>• Safe, secure classroom environment</li> <li>• Negotiated class rules</li> <li>• Built in 'Reward Time' as a class</li> <li>• Praise</li> <li>• Achievements Assembly to reward academic and non-academic achievements</li> <li>• Family Assemblies incorporating children across all year groups</li> <li>• Facilitated play through Play Leaders</li> <li>• Use of 'Incredible Five Point Scale' across the whole school</li> <li>• Use of 'Blob Tree' in every classroom</li> <li>• Access to 'worry box' in every classroom to disclose any worries/concerns.</li> <li>• Mindfulness &amp; breathing/calming strategies</li> <li>• Snack and Chat sessions</li> <li>• Regular meetings with parents/carers to share good/poor behaviour</li> <li>• 'R' Time and 'T' Time activities</li> <li>• Close monitoring of behaviours through Class Diaries</li> <li>• Opportunities to chat to class teacher / TA</li> <li>• Weekly class assemblies with focus on Mental Health and wellbeing</li> <li>• Protective behaviours: safety &amp; network</li> <li>• Access to Chill Out Club on a 'sign up' basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personalised reward chart / behaviour support</li> <li>• 'Time out' / sensory breaks to other classrooms</li> <li>• Small group support for social skills / anxiety</li> <li>• 1:1 targeted mentoring from Pastoral Mentor or INCO for a specified period of time</li> <li>• 'Talkabout Targets' containing details of targeted support regularly shared between Pastoral Mentor / teacher / child</li> <li>• Drawing &amp; Talking Therapy</li> <li>• Extended, targeted use of Protective Behaviours</li> <li>• Access to GP for onward referrals</li> <li>• Possible referral to School Nurse for support</li> <li>• Access to support websites e.g. <a href="http://www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk">www.healthyyoungmindsinherts.org.uk</a></li> <li>• Open access to Chill Out Club at lunchtimes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to School Counsellor from SafeSpace (Herts Counselling Service)</li> <li>• Support from SWHP Family Support Worker</li> <li>• Referral to Step 2 via SPA for more specialist support</li> <li>• Referral to CAMHS</li> <li>• Advice &amp; support from ESCs e.g. Chessbrook</li> <li>• Advice &amp; support from DSPL9 Behaviour Hub</li> <li>• Referral to Educational Psychologist (EP)</li> <li>• Free online Counselling from <a href="http://www.kooth.com">www.kooth.com</a> (ages 10-25yrs)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support from Specialist CAMHS</li> <li>• Support from PALMS</li> <li>• FFA in place</li> <li>• EHCP detailing support required to meet SEMH needs</li> </ul>

## Appendix 2

### Support for pupils and staff during the COVID Pandemic.

At Ashfield we realise that events surrounding the pandemic can have a huge impact on the emotional health of both staff and pupils and have adapted our working practices to cater for these emerging needs. Adaptations have included (this is not an exhaustive list):

- Adapting the curriculum during lockdown to provide home learning tasks that are manageable in the home environment to be delivered by parents and carers
- Providing a blended remote learning experience for the children which takes into account those who have limited access to technology and seeks not to disadvantage those pupils more
- Personalised learning packs for children with SEND that relate directly to the targets on their Personalised Provision Map
- Access to live teacher sessions to maintain the feeling of the class community and maintain social aspects of learning
- Daily checks on our most vulnerable children to ensure their safety and well-being during lockdown, including home visits if necessary. And following up on those children who appear not to be accessing Learning From Home
- Encouraging families to send in responses to home learning tasks so that these can be celebrated on the Social Media Wall and given feedback to by teaching staff
- Teachers and HLTA with a pastoral role keeping in touch with pupils who need it, via Zoom meetings and telephone calls
- Sharing Mindfulness techniques through the Mindfulness App
- Counselling and therapy work moving to on-line to maintain levels of support for our most needy pupils
- A Recovery Curriculum which acknowledges all pupils' emotions and experiences during lockdown, renews good learning habits, reignites old learning and gradually increases new materials and the cognitive demands
- Considering the demands on staff wellbeing when making all changes including:
  - Individual staff stress levels
  - Staff workload
  - Staff family commitments and commitments to vulnerable people they care for outside the school setting
- Maintaining staff community spirit during social distancing

Ashfield continues to evaluate all systems and adapt them to improve the quality of wellbeing for our whole community.