

GOFFS OAK PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Wellbeing Policy

Date written: May 2025
To be reviewed: May 2027

Policy statement

At Goffs Oak Primary we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers). We recognise that mental health and emotional wellbeing is just as important to our lives as physical health.

We endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress. We aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

Teaching about mental health

At Goffs Oak Primary 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 pro-active way to avoid problems arising. We do this by:

- Creating and applying consistent policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands
- Adhering to Herts Steps therapeutic approach to behaviour management
- Focusing on the 5 Ways to Wellbeing
- Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the world
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks
- Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Well-being Ambassadors – leading and promoting positive well-being around the school and the local community

- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through children taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Enabling access to appropriate support
- Regular Mental Health Awareness and PSHE for all year groups
- Wellbeing week and World Mental Health Day
- Access for parents to information regarding opportunities for support
- Workshops for parents and carers

Small group activities

- Pastoral Care with Mental Health Lead to focus on mental health, resilience and wellbeing, such as Drawing and Talking, social stories, targeting support to focus on specific issues, Lego therapy
- Nurture groups to focus on social skills
- Mental Health Lead is available for 'drop in' sessions and children are aware of this provision

Well-being Ambassadors

Well-being Ambassadors are trained by the Mental Health Lead to foster a positive and supportive school culture where everyone feels valued, understood, and empowered to prioritize their mental health and wellbeing.

- Peer Support: Ambassadors act as mentors, providing a safe space for peer-to-peer about their feelings and experiences, encouraging open conversations about emotions.
- Promoting Wellbeing: They support the Mental Health Lead to raise awareness of mental health struggles, reducing stigma and encourage pupils to prioritize their well-being.
- Inclusive Environment: Through displaying positive behaviours and promoting kindness and empathy, they contribute to an inclusive school environment where everyone feels supported and valued.
- Developing Leadership Skills: The role encourages participants to undertake leadership responsibilities, develop communication and interpersonal skills and secure a greater understanding of positive well-being.
- Specific Activities: Ambassadors run lunchtime nurture clubs and deliver x3 weekly mindfulness to all classes across the school. They volunteer in the local community and form meaningful connections with the people around them.
- Training: Ambassadors meet regularly with the Mental Health Lead to raise awareness of mental health issues, for communication and conflict resolution principles and to equip them with the necessary skills to support their peers.

Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote this in and out of their classrooms. We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and to understand the protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help; all staff should have the skills to identify warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff are Mental Health Level 1 certified with regular access to e-modules to upskill from MindEd. All staff are trained STEPS providers with yearly refresher courses.

Our Mental Health Lead is Mrs Bridget Kaal. She works with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, including but not limited to:

- Leading on teaching and advice linked mental health
- Leading and implementing the Well-being Ambassador programme
- Providing advice and support to staff and organising training and updates
- Being the first point of contact with mental health services and making individual referrals to them

Supporting and promoting the positive mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school. At Goffs Oak Primary we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance. Staff are supported pastorally and have access to enriched opportunities. Staff also have access to external support systems.

Early identification, assessment, intervention and support

We aim to identify children with mental health needs as quickly as possible in order to provide early intervention.

- All staff are responsible for reporting concerns to the Mental Health Lead, noticing changes in behaviour patterns that may indicate mental health or emotional wellbeing problems.
- Needs are assessed in different way ways including: When to worry questionnaire, SDQ (social difficulty questionnaire) Herts STEPS anxiety mapping, meeting with class teachers, SENCo and parents
- Intervention and support are provided on assessments, either from within the school or using specialist services

Working with parents and carers

Parents or carers can approach their child's class teacher or the Mental Health Lead if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the Mental Health Lead for assessment.

To support parents and carers we:

- Organise workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience and the 5 Ways to Wellbeing

- Provide information online via www.goffsoak.herts.sch.uk on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes

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

- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents

- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and beyond and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home

When a concern has been raised, Goffs Oak Primary teachers or the Mental Health Lead will:

· Contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment (although there may be cases where parents and carers cannot be involved due to child protection concerns)

· Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies

· Signpost parents to further information

· Create a chronology of actions and events

· Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting support groups

Working with specialist services.

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Your child may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- CAMHS

- School Nursing Service

- Children's Services

- Family support workers

- Educational psychology services

- Counselling services

- Rivers behavioural support

- Phoenix DSPL4 behavioural support

- CHEXS mentoring programme

The mental health and wellbeing policy is on the school website and hard copies are available on request.