

Mental health and emotional wellbeing strategy

When did we adopt this strategy? Spring Term 2021

When do we need to review this strategy? Autumn Term 2021

Named mental health lead: Emma Price

Who contributed to this strategy?

- Emma, Head of Tram House School
- Jordana, Head of 6th Form
- The Senior Leadership Team
- BeyondAutism School's Governors
- The 'Change Team' ~ Parent Hub, Staff Hub and Pupil Hub
- The Wellbeing class champions
- Tram House staff team; Tram House pupils

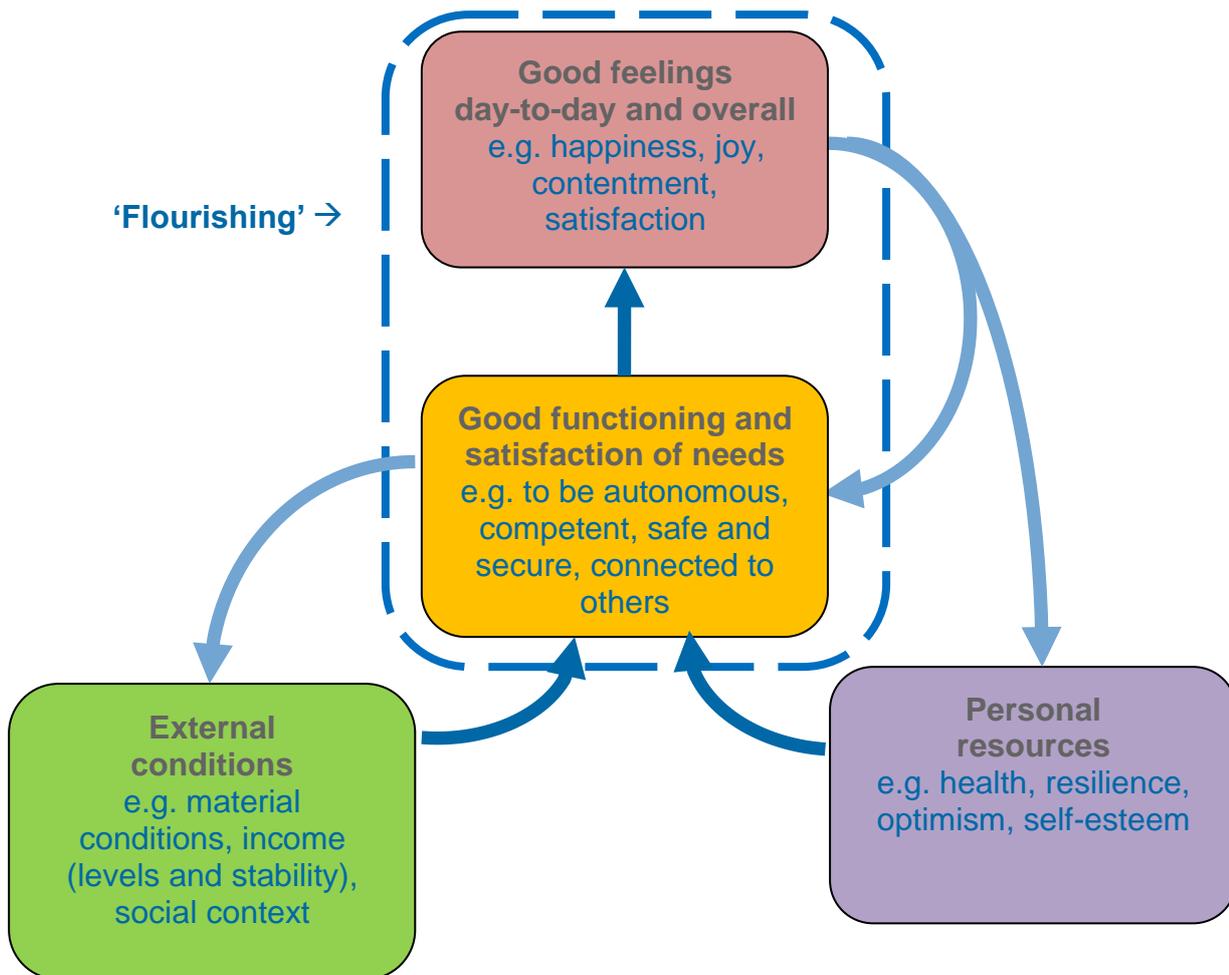
Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing at our School

Definition of mental health – by 'The Mental Health Foundation'

"A positive sense of well-being which enables an individual to be able to function in society and meet the demands of everyday life. People in good mental health have the ability to recover effectively from illness, change or misfortune."

Emotional wellbeing is a continuum and we will all experience episodes of poor emotional health and wellbeing during our lives, whether we have a diagnosis of a mental health illness or whether we generally experience good mental health.

Figure 1: New economic foundation’s dynamic model of well-being



We believe that everyone at Tram House School has a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children and young people will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff have an awareness that our pupils are at risk of developing a co-occurring mental health condition alongside their SEN diagnosis. All members of the SLT and teaching team are aware of the possible risk factors that might make some of our children and young people even more likely to experience problems, such as physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships and family breakdown.

It is everybody in our school's responsibility to remain curious when they notice a change in a child, young person or adult's behaviour and interactions. Where this is a safeguarding concern, all members of staff, both in the classroom, and in the wider school, report this immediately to a member of the safeguarding team and after doing so, complete a 'CPOMS' entry. If you have any concerns about a child's, young person's (or adults) mental health and emotional wellbeing which are not safeguarding, report these to the class supervisor or SLT member as well as completing a 'request for support form' for a child or young person which will be discussed by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team (MHWB).

Why we need this strategy:

Our pupils:

We promote a caring, supportive environment in which every individual is valued and respected. We have high expectations for all and aspire to achieve excellence. We want all of our pupils to lead fulfilling lives.

We recognise that all children and young people need the foundation of positive mental health to benefit fully from all the opportunities available to them.

Within our schools, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole community (pupils, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives, in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children and young people's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. All children and young people move up and down the mental health continuum during their educational journey. However, some face significant life events which can seriously impact their emotional wellbeing and can include mental illness.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "Schools have a role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children"¹. (Mental Health and Behaviour in School, 2018). We want our schools to be a place for all pupils to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that have the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. The schools also offer positive role models and build successful peer relationships, which are critical in promoting the wellbeing of all young people.

¹ Mental Health and Behaviour in School, 2018

The role of the BeyondAutism Schools is to ensure that pupils are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that pupils learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, and where they can go if they need help and support.

The aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health difficulties and to ensure our schools are places where:

- All pupils are valued
- Pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- Pupils are given the tools to talk openly about their problems
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued
- Bullying is not tolerated.

Our staff:

BeyondAutism is committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of staff. We aim to support our employees and create a healthy, safe and happy workplace.

We recognise that our staff are our most important resource and are valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a caring, purposeful school community.

Mental health is just as important as physical health. It affects a person's overall health and wellbeing. In the workplace, mental health affects an employee's performance, productivity and confidence. This can lead to high turnover, absenteeism and mistakes occurring, to name a few.

At Tram House School, we believe that it is essential that all staff feel part of a supportive and valued team, have the opportunity to express their views and are supported to manage their workload within a culture that supports a healthy work-life balance.

Our aim is to be a school for our staff where:

- they are valued
- they are supported to build resilience to mental health problems
- they are supported to keep a healthy work-life balance
- they are supported to manage their family and work responsibilities
- positive mental health is promoted and valued
- we recognise and promote the importance of a happy team
- we ensure that there are effective methods of communication

- we take account of equality implications
- times of stress are addressed and staff are supported through it
- we learn from each other

Factors that increase the risk of mental ill health for our staff:

There are a number of risk factors that can increase the risk of an individual experiencing mental ill health. Factors may be temporary, causing short-term mental ill health or distress, or long-term, leading to a more serious mental disorder. The risk factors may arise from inside the work environment or from outside this environment in the individual's home and social life. It is important that line managers consider the support they can give to individuals even where factors are outside of the workplace. Often it is a combination of factors from inside and outside the workplace that can lead to stress, anxiety and ultimately mental ill health.

Risk factors for mental ill health in the learning or work environment can include:

- Health and safety policies that are missing or inadequate so that stress and other health and safety issues in the workplace/learning environment are not identified and managed properly.
- Poor communication which means individuals do not feel that they know what they need to do in the work or learning environment and do not feel supported.
- Poor management practices such as failing to explain roles and responsibilities, unclear reporting lines, failure to provide sufficient resources and failure to manage staff/learners effectively.
- Limited participation of individuals in decision-making and limited control over their own work/learning.
- Inflexible working/study hours which do not support individuals in managing work/life balance.
- Unclear tasks or objectives so individuals do not know what they need to do.
- Giving individuals tasks which are unsuitable for their competencies or insufficient training, knowledge and support with tasks which may lead to non-achievement of objectives.
- High or unrelenting workloads or study requirements which mean individuals do not have time to complete tasks.
- Unfair distribution of group work where one person is not doing their job properly and others have to compensate for them.
- Bullying and psychological harassment.

Risk factors for mental ill health outside the learning or work environment include:

- Individual vulnerability such as low self-esteem and insecurity or inadequate coping mechanisms.
- Lifestyle choices, for example, alcohol or drug use which can put individuals at risk of developing mental health problems.

- Family history of mental ill health which may be hereditary.
- Problems at home such as domestic violence, neglect, divorce or family breakdown.
- Feeling cut off from family and friends or from the local community which can lead to feelings of isolation or rejection.
- Negative or traumatic life experiences such as unemployment, homelessness, bereavement, sudden illness, or being assaulted or abused.
- Big life changes even where these are positive such as getting married, having children or moving home which can be stressful for individuals.
- Financial worries arising from unemployment, redundancy, business failure, mounting debt or worries about the rising cost of living.
- Community or local environmental problems such as prejudice and discrimination, violence and crime or poor living conditions.

(Ref: LCG- MHFA March 2020, Version 1 (603/5148/2))

Our parents/carers:

At Tram House School, we believe that it is essential that all parents and carers feel part of a supportive and valued community and have the opportunity to express their views and feel confident that they are being listened to.

Our aim is to be a school for our parents and carer's where:

- Parents and carers are key to understanding the child and this is supported
- Parents and carers are supported to build resilience, particularly during times of transition or additional stress
- They feel valued members of our school community
- They feel that they are actively involved within their child's education
- They feel able to come to us for support
- They feel listened to and that their voice is heard.

How do we support the mental health and emotional wellbeing of our whole school community?

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help our children and young people to feel supported, heard, accepted, valued and empowered.

To enable us to achieve this, we...

- Have engaged the whole school community to create a Tram House Vision which supports mental health and resilience and is understood by everyone. (See the [Vision statement](#) on risk and protective factors)

- Placed developing communication skills at the core of our curriculum to ensure that our pupils people develop their ability to have their own voice and choice and request help when they need it
- Help our children and young people to be resilient learners
- Teach our children and young people social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health – through the use of Zones of Regulation and Talking Mats
- Have established our own Mental Health and Wellbeing Team who lead on training for staff and providing support for pupils
- Engage with our parents and carers from the moment they start at Tram House School
- Support and train staff to develop their skills and their own resilience

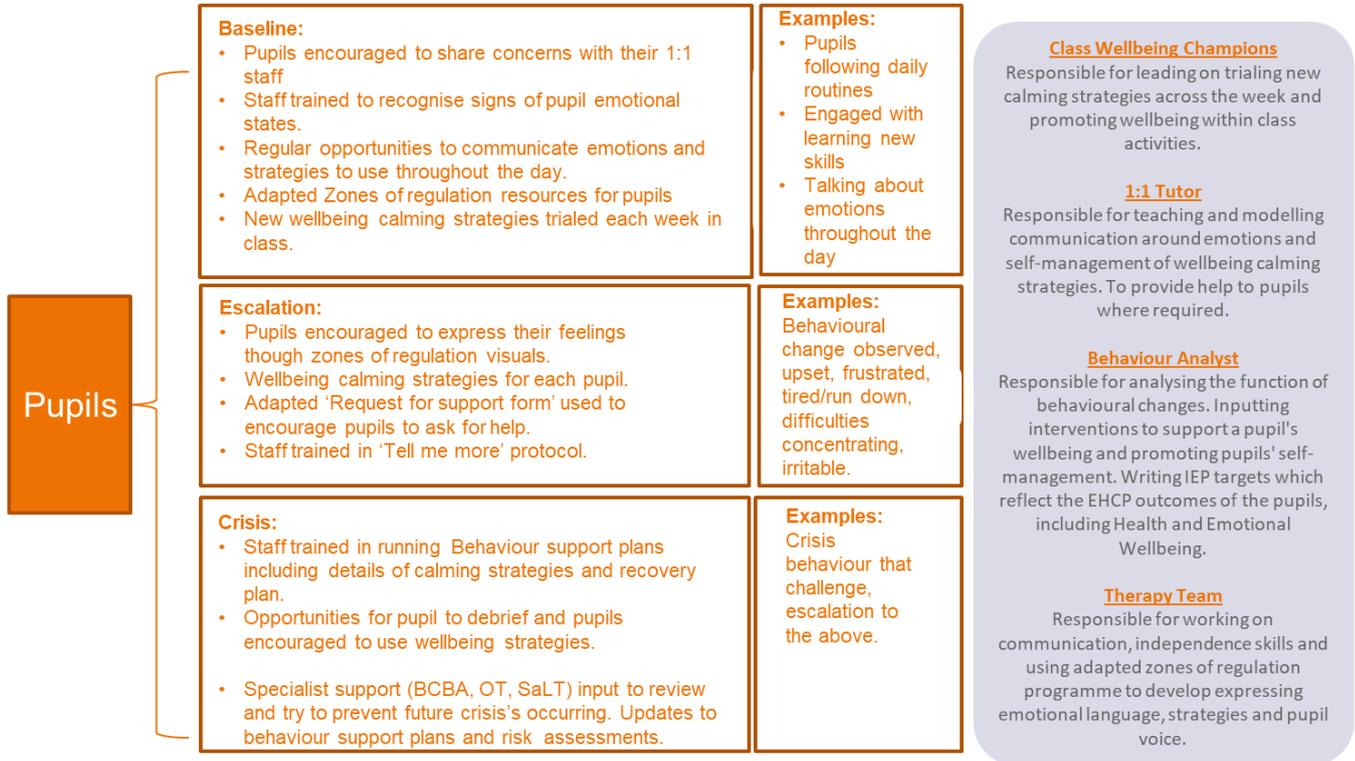
We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues [Anti-stigma statement](#).

How our pupils are supported:

At Tram House School, we believe that Emotional Wellbeing education is a priority across the school. It is explicitly taught through different areas on the curriculum; the 'Relationships, Sex Education' lessons and 'Social, Emotional, Mental Health' and 'Communication' personal curriculum plans and individual education plans which stem from our pupils EHC plan. However, it is also modelled every day, in all that we do at Tram House School, evidenced in staff, children and young people and parental relationships.

At Tram House School many of our pupils have limited or no verbal communication and therefore find it difficult to express their concerns and feelings. In order to try and assess the mental health of a child or young person at Tram House, we need to take a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary approach that considers aspects such as observations, past history, and a reliance on information from third parties, including teachers, supervisors, advanced skills practitioners, tutors, parents and social workers who know the pupil well.

Pupil Wellbeing Support at Tram House School



We also have a developed multi-tiered approach to supporting our pupils' mental health:

Our core offer for all pupils:

School is a safe place for all our pupils
 Staff have been trained how to deal with disclosures sensitively
 The school does not immediately ring parents on discovery of self-harm
 SLT understands the importance of positive well-being
 The school embraces all the achievements of students, not just academic
 A variety of school clubs are available, not just sporting or academic clubs
 Undue pressure is not put on the students regarding academic achievement
 Behaviour systems are a combination of positive measures
 All departments coordinate regarding pupils' welfare
 Families are consulted following bereavement to ensure continuity of support for the child
 The school has a culture of respecting and embracing all parents
 Behaviour systems and exclusions are regularly checked to ensure that pupils with protected characteristics are not being discriminated against
 Pupils with SEMH needs all have EHCPs
 We teach our pupils choice and give them a voice.
 We embed flexibility into the pupils' timetables- can amend schedule accordingly
 We form links to the pupils' wider community

We work as a multi-disciplinary team and share information both internally and externally. We regularly update our behaviour plans (RAG plans) and they are easily accessible by external audiences. They are compiled by the staff team in collaboration with the therapists and parents and include an overview of their behavioural needs and how they present within each zone of their communication needs.

All pupils risk assessments include- emotional wellbeing as a risk factor and have individualised protective factors.

Pupil mental health is explicitly taught to the pupils through their PSHE lessons and zones of regulation.

Opportunities for parents to feedback to the school across the year regarding their child's wellbeing.

Staff complete on-going training focused on pupils' mental health needs.

Sensory room available to support pupils sensory processing needs.

Targeted support:

Trainee music therapist to support pupils' mental health

The mental health and wellbeing team are responsible for communicating with the wider staff team at Tram house school regarding pupils' mental health and well-being. The mental health and well-being team meet 3 times each half term to discuss what is going well and where further support is needed: this is both strategic and targeted.

All pupils have access to a 'request for support form' in order to make a self-referral to the mental health team.

All staff have access to a 'request for support form' in order to make a referral to the mental health team if they have concerns regarding a pupil.

Pupils access targeted support, alongside staff support and training from the mental health and wellbeing team in order to provide targeted mental health well-being support in order to ensure pupils fully engage in their learning, achieve and progress.

Specialist offer:

Staff de-briefing meetings following any serious incident in order to improve outcomes for pupils. Referrals to external agencies: clinical psychologists; CAMHS, educational psychologists; medical professionals; social workers; PBS teams; BCBA supervision for the behaviour analysts where needed and appropriate

How our staff are supported:

Staff Wellbeing Support at Tram House School



Our core offer for staff:

- Request for support form available for staff to support their peers in getting some additional support.
- Worry box placed in staffroom to support anonymous completion of 'request for support forms'.
- Confidential and free access to the Assured Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)
- Training for all staff regarding their own mental health needs
- Staff focused surveys and communication to staff of changes implemented as a result
- Dedicated time for a mental health and wellbeing discussion in every staff member's 1:1
- BeyondAutism Staff Wellbeing policy
- Tram House School mental health and wellbeing strategy
- Dedicated staff room
- Staff mental health wellbeing team established and supported to offer regular support and improvements
- A dedicated staff committee
- 4 members of staff who are trained Mental Health First Aiders
- Each class has a wellbeing champion
- Access to perk box- a staff reward system
- INSET and twilight training sessions on mental health and wellbeing
- Culture of no blame and stigma for mental health needs of school community

'Open door' policy for all SLT
A build it together community wall display in staff room for staff to share positive messages and problem solve together
Mindfulness sessions offered
Free flu vaccinations for all staff
Free use of the staff massager
Staff social events
Wellbeing week
Personalised wellness action plan
Work recovery plans if needed

Targeted support:

MDT meetings to develop pupil and staff plans
Flexible working offered
Teachers peer-to-peer observations to share ideas and problem solve
Significant incidents- debriefing sessions for all staff involved in a significant incident
Induction process
Mental health support plans for support with medical/ mental health condition

Specialist offer:

Confidential access to the school's counselling team
Referral to occupational health
Referral to a CBT trained counsellor via line manager and HR referrals.

Staff are responsible for:

- Treating one another with empathy, respect and kindness.
- Taking care of their own health and safety at work and communicating with key staff where they need support.
- Being committed to the ethos of staff wellbeing and keeping in mind the workload and wellbeing of colleagues.
- Valuing all members of staff in the school and acknowledging the important role that everyone takes.
- Contributing to the values and social aspects of school life where possible to build morale and effective team spirit.

- Developing and respecting shared areas where possible so that there is space to relax as well as appropriate workspaces.

Parent and Carer Wellbeing Support at Tram House School

Parent Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent governor's attending meetings each term.
Communication with our families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home/school communication books to communicate to parents and carers about their child's day. • 6-week baseline review when pupils first join the school • Open door policy for parents to come and talk to class team and SLT. • Parent portal • Tram House parent WhatsApp • Weekly bulletin updates about special events. • Regular updates on organisation Facebook page.
Involvement within their child's educational journey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent's evening meetings and 'open day' to observe teaching and learning. • Parent training and support at home on behaviour support, communication, self-help skills, independence. • Pre- Annual review and annual review meetings each year to discuss progress and next steps. • Inviting parents to special events such as sports day, graduation and award ceremonies, Christmas production. • Weekly data sheets sent home to parents each week so parents can see progress and work on targets at home. • Support to complete homework tasks at home with child.
Family MHWB Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parent coffee mornings throughout the year to provide training and opportunities to meet other parents focusing on mental health and wellbeing, behaviour support, communication and SaLT and OT. • Culture of no blame and stigma for mental health needs of school community. • Siblings' day • Tram House Mental Health and Wellbeing strategy

Tools for individuals:

Self-care

As a school we are equally committed to promoting and maintaining the wellbeing and resilience of children, their families and staff. All adults that work with children have an abiding ethical imperative to engage in self-care.

Good self-care is sound prevention, guarding staff against severe or chronic distress and professional impairment. Tram House School actively promote a culture of self-care amongst its staff. We believe it is important that all staff are supported to look after their own wellbeing. This is not only important for them as individuals, but also for the quality of input and care they give the children and their families/wider school community.

Self-care activities should be tailored to your individual circumstances and needs. The suggestions below are intended as healthy food for thought to help you develop a personal action plan that works for you:

- Make personal and professional self-care a priority, retaining a healthy work/ life balance. Work on a well-balanced weekly routine that works for you, potentially trial apps such as 'Plum'.
- Make time for activities that are personally restorative, for example, mindfulness activities: use of the Headspace app, being in nature, spending time with animals, meditation, reading, yoga, exercise, creative activities such as art or music or travel and take holidays to new places.
- Avoid isolation. Identify social groups whom you feel you can have open discussions with, this could include, family, friends or local community groups. This could include professional connections that offer an opportunity to share stressors within the workplace. Pay attention to possible warning signs such as feelings of helplessness, emotional swings, tendency to ruminate, loss of empathy or disconnecting from family and friends.
- Take time to work on your psychological and physical health. Maintain good sleep habits, eat food with positive nutritional value, maintain activity.
- Pursue opportunities for intellectual stimulation, including some outside your area of interests/occupation.
- Take the time to spoil yourself with a treat day
- Support an open culture and workplace- it's ok to not be ok – *Take* occupational risks seriously and be aware of the particular risks that challenging behavioural situations can present. If appropriate, educate yourself more fully about topics such as compassion fatigue, professional burnout, vicarious traumatisation, and colleague assistance.
- Develop realistic and reasonable expectations about work and your capabilities at any given time. Make appropriate accommodations or adjustments – such as seeking support before things become challenging.

- Take steps to enhance your job satisfaction; utilise discussions with line managers and performance reviews.

The Good Thinking website provides links and access to a range of mental well-being apps and resources for Londoners – <https://www.good-thinking.uk/>