

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) at Beecroft Primary School – September 2023

At Beecroft Primary we have a designated mental health lead and two mental health and well-being governors.

We teach SEMH across the school:

“This will mean that all schools will teach children about the benefits of a healthier lifestyle, what determines their physical health and how to build mental resilience and well-being – including how to stay safe on and offline and the importance of healthy relationships.”

(Mental Health Green Paper July 2018).

We recognise that all children and young people need a solid foundation of positive mental health to benefit fully from all of the opportunities that are available to them. We want our children to be resilient and mentally healthy, so that they can succeed. Each pupil is valued and respected and we have an ethos of high expectations.

At times, anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop good mental health. The mental health of children and young people, adults in schools, parents and carers and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of a child's development, learning, achievement and experiences. As a staff team, we understand and recognise the risk factors and indicators that may signify that a child needs additional support with their SEMH needs and we respond accordingly.

During their time at Beecroft Primary School, some children may experience short but significant periods of high anxiety, stress, distress or anger that affect their education, whilst some children may have a range of longer-term recognised mental health conditions. Through high quality whole-class teaching, we provide our children with inner resources that they can draw on as a buffer when negative or stressful things happen, which helps them to thrive even in the face of significant challenges. There is a half-termly well-being newsletter, sent out to all parents, which gives details of what teaching and learning we do in classes across the school.

Where a child needs targeted SEMH intervention for a mental health problem, we work with others to provide interventions that use a graduated approach to inform a clear cycle of support. Assessment is used to establish a clear analysis of the child's needs, a plan is set out as to how the child will be supported, the action needed to provide that support will be planned and regular reviews will be held to assess the effectiveness of the provision and lead to changes where necessary. We offer specific interventions led by specialists such as learning mentors, family outreach workers, therapists and through close work with other agencies such as GPs, educational psychologists and CAMHS; we respond reactively to meet all children's SEMH needs.

MindMate at Beecroft Primary School

Teaching SEMH skills has the potential to improve academic outcomes, keeps children safe and improves the mental well-being of pupils and future generations. There is an increasing

focus on the roles of schools in meeting the SEMH health needs of their pupils, and this is something of utmost importance to us at Beecroft.

Age appropriate content includes both broad topics such as healthy relationships and more mental health specific topics such as low mood and depression. In addition, emotional literacy skills are incorporated into all the lesson outcomes to ensure that the learning is personalised and embedded. This means that children practise a range of skills, including talking about their feelings, rather than simply developing a theoretical understanding of SEMH.

The MindMate lessons are self-contained lessons, but they join together to form a whole social, emotional and mental health curriculum. There are six themes which form the framework for primary learning. In addition, there are specialised modules which allow for a more detailed focus on selected topics and which could be used in addition to the core lessons or for targeted groups of pupils.

The 6 key themes, which are taught in the order that they appear, are:

- Feeling Good and Being Me
- Friends and Family
- Life Changes
- Strong Emotions
- Being the Same and Being Different
- Solving Problems (and making it better)

Each half term, the whole school focuses on one of the above key themes. This teaching directly complements our PSHE work.

Place2Be at Beecroft Primary School

Beecroft Primary School has enlisted and employed the services of Place2Be to specifically improve the wellbeing and mental health of our pupils and their families. Tailored counselling sessions are delivered by a trained professional during the school day in partnership with families.

Children can be referred by a parent, a member of staff at school or use the drop-in services available at school using the Place2be post box. The service is for anyone who feels they need it and is used alongside our own class procedures such as the TELL poster and class Worry Box.

Play Therapy at Beecroft Primary School

We recognise as a school that SEMH needs may not always resolve through discussion or counselling. A play therapist has been employed to work alongside pupils where needs have been identified by families.

Play therapy is another way in which we prioritise the wellbeing and mental stability of our pupils and is undertaken in partnership with parents and carers.

Support For Parents And Carers With Their Own SEMH Needs

All parents and carers are a much valued and highly respected part of the Beecroft community.

School is always open for you to come and discuss your own SEMH needs with us, and we will always endeavour to support you in the best possible way. We work with you to do what is best for your child, and sometimes that involves taking care of you first. At Beecroft we understand that everyone experiences life challenges that can make them vulnerable. At times, anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop good mental health and resilience.

To review: September 2024