

**Mental Health & Well-being Policy (MH&W)**

Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence to adulthood. This also links closely to being physically active and having a healthy diet.

Mental ill health and stress are associated with many of the leading causes of disease and disability in our society. Promoting the mental wellbeing of all our staff, children and their families is important for individuals’ physical health, social wellbeing, and ability to do well.

Well-being relates to our basic needs as human beings. These are:

• Physical needs (need to eat, drink, move and sleep)

• The need for affection, warmth and tenderness (being hugged, receiving and giving love and emotional warmth)

• The need for safety, clarity and continuity (knowing the rules, being able to predict what comes next, counting on others)

• The need for recognition and affirmation (feeling accepted and appreciated by others, being part of a group and having a sense of belonging)

• The need to feel capable (feeling that you are good at something, to experience success)

***Everyone can contribute to improved mental wellbeing.***

**Our commitment**

Busy Bee Preschool will actively promote social and emotional health and wellbeing alongside physical health and will support the children to understand their feelings. All staff/managers will endeavour to look after each other’s mental wellbeing. It is the aim of this policy to raise the awareness of the importance of health and wellbeing for all children and their families.

**Tina Yeates** (Owner & Manager) is our names Mental Health & Wellbeing Lead

Intellectual development and social & emotional development are strongly influenced by a child’s experiences during their pre-school years. Emotional well-being includes being happy and confident and not anxious or depressed. Social well-being allows children to make good relationships. As part of our ongoing observation, assessment & planning cycle your child’s key person will be monitoring their well-being & involvement and planning activities to support the children in this area. This will be shared with you as part of our parent consultation process. We record children's well-being & involvement as part of our focus observations. These are collated in the child's on-line learning journal. You can view this at any time and add to it if you wish.

Early years practitioners should identify factors that may pose a risk to a child’s social & emotional well-being as part of the on-going assessment of their development. This could include

* A child being withdrawn
* A child being unresponsive
* Children showing signs of a behavioural problem
* Delayed speech or poor communication & language skills

Practitioners understand children’s emotional health needs and have the time & skills to develop nurturing relationships.

**Benefits to children & families**

* Children who are more engaged with learning
* Parents who are more engaged with the nursery and more in tune with their child’s learning & development
* High morale within the setting
* Good relationships developed between staff, parents & children.
* The good emotional health of the children

Busy Bees will actively promote MH&W by ensuring:

**Children** are included at least a daily activity specifically aimed at MH&W that every child participates in at some point in the day

Activities include –

* Small group adult led/supported activities that promote social development
* Physical exercise
* Outdoor play
* Mindfulness activities
* Rest and relaxation

**Staff** are fully supported by management and colleagues. Strategies to promote staff MH&W include:

* Regular 1:1 supervision meeting with MH&W lead or other management/supervisor if requested. These meetings will listening to how that person is feeling and what activities or support have helped.
* Managers will also join the wellbeing Wednesdays or other local networking that supports MH&W.
* New staff will be given a copy of the MH&W policy and discussion will take place around the importance of MH&W in the setting. Each new staff member will be given a mentor/buddy to support them through their induction period, sign posting to relevant information or colleagues as needs arise.
* Staff will update their own practice and knowledge of MH&W through CPD opportunities.

The following training has been accessed.

* SEN areas of need – behaviour, emotional & social development
* Promoting positive behaviour
* All staff complete safeguarding training that is updated every 3 years
* Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Training

**Parents/carers/families** – The setting will strive to develop good relationships with families. This will foster a practice of listening to family’s needs and enabling parents to raise concerns or highlight challenges they face. The setting will offer support/signpost /make relevant referrals.

**Useful guidance for Parents/carers/families**

* https://www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/parents-helpline-and-webchat
* <https://www.southampton.gov.uk/children-families/>
* <https://www.annafreud.org/parents-and-carers/>

This Policy includes links to the Statutory framework for Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2

**Supervision** **3.23** leaders should provide opportunities for staff to:

• discuss any issues – particularly concerning children’s development or well-being, including child protection concerns

• identify solutions to address issues as they arise

• receive coaching to improve their personal effectiveness

**Key person** 1.16 / 3.27 / 3.74

each child must be assigned a key person Their role is to help ensure that every child’s care is tailored to meet their individual needs, to help the child become familiar with the setting, offer a settled relationship for the child and build a relationship with their parent. Parents must be involved in decision making for their child and be provided with relevant information about their child and the setting.

**Partnership working with parents including support for parents 1:1 / 2.3/**

Practitioners must consider the individual needs, interests, and development of each child in their care, and must use this information to plan a challenging and enjoyable experience for each child in all areas of learning and development

Parents and/or carers should be kept up-to-date with their child’s progress and development. Practitioners should address any learning and development needs in partnership with parents and/or carers, and any relevant professionals

**Equality and inclusion 3 / 3.20**

Children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met, and when they have positive relationships with the adults caring for them. Providers must follow their legal responsibilities under the Equality Act 2010 including the fair and equal treatment of practitioners regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

**Learning opportunities promoting MH &W as outlined in the framework.**

**PSED-** Children’s personal, social and emotional development (PSED) is crucial for children to lead healthy and happy lives, and is fundamental to their cognitive development.

**Communication and language-** The development of children’s spoken language underpins all areas of

learning and development

**Physical development** - Physical activity is vital in children’s all-round development, enabling them to pursue happy, healthy and active lives

**Self regulation -** Children should be supported to manage emotions, develop a positive sense of self

**Links to other policies**

* Safeguarding
* Behaviour management
* Promoting inclusion, equality and valuing diversity
* Special Education Needs & Disability (SEND)
* Parents as partners
* Settling in procedures
* Healthy eating
* Observation, assessment & planning
* Aims, values & principles
* Outdoor play & lear

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| This policy was adopted at a meeting of | Busy Bee Preschools |  |
| Held on | 13/02/02023 |  |
| Date to be reviewed | 13/02/2024 |  |
| Name and role of signatory | Tina Yeates – Owner manager | |