Graduated Response to Supporting Children's Mental Health and Wellbeing

6. Specialist Clinical Intervention (Referral to CAMHS)

Purpose: For children with significant, complex, or high-risk mental health needs requiring specialist clinical assessment.

Provision Includes:

- CAMHS assessment and diagnosis where appropriate.
- Therapeutic intervention (e.g., CBT, family therapy, trauma-based therapy).
- Psychiatric assessment and medical input if required.
- Multi-agency planning meetings with school, family, and professionals.
- Support with risk management and safety planning.

Expected Outcomes:

- Stabilisation and improvement of significant mental health conditions.
- Clear clinical plan to support the child and family.
- Integrated multi-agency response for complex or high-risk cases.

5. External Professional Support (Referral to Mental Health Support Team – MHST)

Purpose: Provide evidence-based interventions for children with moderate mental health needs.

Provision Includes:

- Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT-based) interventions for anxiety, low mood, or behaviour.
- Guided self-help programmes for pupils and families.
- Advice and consultation for school staff.
- Support with transitions, exam stress, and emotional resilience.
- Joint planning with DSL/SENDCo and parents.

Expected Outcomes:

- Clear improvement in targeted mental health difficulties.
- Strengthened strategies for coping and resilience.
- Reduced need for more intensive CAMHS involvement.

4. Specialist Therapeutic Support (Referral to Play Therapist)

Purpose: To provide specialist therapeutic support through boundaried sessions with a BACP Registered Psychotherapist.

Provision includes:

- 1:1 Weekly sessions to support a child who may struggle with the following - emotional regulation, low mood, attachment and anxious behaviours.
- Small group sessions to support children's social engagement/communication skills, self-esteem and ability to self-regulate.
- Pre-session suitability assessments and discussions about the potential outcomes for the intervention.
- Drop-In service for parents/caregivers with concerns for their child's emotional wellbeing.
- Suitable for children who have SEND, Trauma history and/or Attachment Difficulties.

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased ability to regulate emotions.
- More able to build safe and trusting relationships.
- Growth in self-esteem and self-belief.
- Reduction of anxious behaviours.

3. Targeted School Support (Referral to Dog Therapy)

Purpose: Animal Assisted Intervention (AAI) is a planned, structured approach that uses the calm presence of a suitably trained dog and handler to provide emotional and mental health support for children and young people, particularly during times of distress. In a school context, AAI can help pupils feel safer and more settled by reducing anxiety, supporting emotional regulation, and encouraging gentle engagement when words feel difficult. Sessions are delivered in a controlled, risk-assessed way with safeguarding, hygiene, and the dog's welfare at the centre, offering a reassuring, non-judgemental source of comfort while staff continue to implement the wider mental health plan.

Provision Includes:

- 1:1 or small group sessions focusing on calming, attachment, communication, or reducing anxiety.
- Support for children with SEND, trauma history, or high emotional sensitivity.
- Pre-session risk assessments and personalised goals.
- Weekly or fortnightly sessions for a set period of time.

Expected Outcomes:

- Increased emotional stability and confidence.
- Reduced anxiety and improved regulation.
- Strengthened relationship building and trust.

2. Targeted School Support (Referral to Learning Mentor – 1:1 or Small Group Work)

Purpose: Targeted intervention for pupils presenting with emerging anxiety, low mood, social difficulties, self-esteem issues, or early signs of distress.

Provision Includes:

- Weekly 1:1 Learning Mentor sessions focused on emotional regulation, resilience, friendships, or problem-solving.
- Small group interventions (e.g., social skills groups, nurture groups, confidence- building groups).
- Check-ins before/after difficult periods of the day.
- Mentor involvement in Early Help discussions where appropriate.
- Pupil voice captured and fed back to class staff and parents.

Expected Outcomes:

- Improved emotional regulation and social functioning.
- Reduction in behaviour incidents related to wellbeing.
- Increased engagement in learning.

1. Universal Support (Daily Check-ins, Teacher/TA Support)

Purpose: Early identification, emotional regulation, and daily monitoring for all pupils.

Provision Includes:

- Daily emotional check-ins (verbal, visual scales, wellbeing boards, or digital tools).
- Safe, predictable routines and supportive classroom environments.
- Use of protective behaviours and emotional literacy resources.
- Initial problem-solving conversations with the class teacher or teaching assistant.
- Low-level adaptations such as quiet spaces, sensory tools, movement breaks.
- Monitoring of wellbeing through observations, behaviour logs, and pastoral notes.

Expected Outcomes:

- Child feels heard, supported, and regulated.
- Low-level worries resolved within the classroom.
- Emerging needs identified quickly.