



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

St Eanswythe's Church of England Primary School

2023 - 2024

Learning holistically through God's unconditional love

Vision: We radiate God's unconditional love by being accepting, inclusive and supportive. Everyone is nurtured, enabling them to reach their full potential as caring, confident members of both the school family and global community. All are educated holistically through a variety of enjoyable academic, creative, physical and spiritual experience

Date:

Signed:

Headteacher

Signed:

Chair of Directors

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Policy Statement

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (World Health Organization)

In our school, our Christian vision shapes all that we do, the unconditional love shown by staff to our pupils and each other impacts positively on mental health across all aspects of School life.

We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils. We employ a Child Liaison Officer who is also our Wellbeing Lead; she works individually with children on a regular basis through mediums such as Nurture time and targeted interventions. We also have a Family Liaison Officer who supports our families. These roles have a direct impact on the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and parents.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing for all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing and act immediately to support that pupil with their needs
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering with ill mental health and their families

Our Staff Leads

Whilst all of our staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils. Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Mrs Jacobs – Head Teacher & Deputy Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer

Mr Brinkley – SENCO & Designated Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer

Mrs Semple - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead & Child Liaison Officer and Deputy Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer

Mrs Adlington – Family Liaison Officer and Deputy Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Head Teacher or CLO in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Child Protection staff.

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This plan should be written by relevant staff that work with or teach the pupil, relevant health professionals and parents should receive a copy to approve. The plan itself can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- How the condition may affect the pupil's behaviour
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play e.g. targeted intervention/support

Mental Health and Our Curriculum

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum. Our curriculum has been designed by our Wellbeing Lead to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner as the PSHE Association would advise.

In Term 4 our whole school focus for PSHE is "*Healthy Me*", this allows us to focus on both the physical and mental aspects of keeping our pupils safe. This theme also has specific emphasis on enabling our pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community.

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs, which could indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these signs should communicate their concerns with Mrs Semple, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead or the Head Teacher.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Unsuitable Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or wanting to get changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or consistent absence

Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. All staff complete annual safeguarding training before each academic year begins.

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise, and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety.

All disclosures should be recorded on CPOMs as promptly as possible after the disclosure. This written record should include:

- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation using the child's voice/words
- Agreed next steps or actions
- The incident recorded should be assigned to relevant members of the child protection team

Confidentiality

As a staff, we should be honest with our pupils with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If a pupil makes a disclosure to us where we feel they are in physical danger or at risk from emotional neglect we will need to make it clear that it is our job to keep them safe and the information needs to be passed onto relevant staff members. We will inform them of:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a pupil without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. Particularly if a pupil is in danger of harm.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection officers, Mrs Jacobs or Mr Brinkley must be informed immediately. The Child Protection team will then make a plan of how best to move forward.

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always aim to highlight further sources of information for parents after they have been informed of their child's issue e.g. local parent support groups, helpful websites.

We should always provide a clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record (CPOMS).

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents we will:

- Ensure that all parents are aware of which staff members to talk to within school if they have concerns.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our FLO.
- Ensure that our Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy is easily accessible to parents on our school website.

- Ensure that either our FLO or Mental Health Lead is on gate duty each morning so that they are a visible presence for parents and our families.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

Supporting Our Pupils

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either through one to one or group settings guided by our Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead.

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more pupils.

Our Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead also takes regular slots in our staff meetings highlighting the needs of individual children and general mental health training.

Policy Review

This policy will be annually in order to best support our staff, pupils and parents. It is next due for review in September 2024.