



**Bishop
Hogarth**

Catholic Education Trust

Promoting Positive Emotional Health & Wellbeing Policy

A Whole School Approach

THIS POLICY APPLIES ACROSS ALL TRUST SCHOOLS AND SERVICES

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Change Log	
Update:	Updated to reflect latest DfE Guidance 'Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges' DfE (2024) and the roles and responsibilities of the Senior Mental Health Lead. Details the responsibilities of other staff including the Headteacher. Updates strategies to encourage positive mental health. Refers to the wellbeing support provided to staff. Includes a new section on training and development. Provides updated links to guidance, resources and training
Location:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Legal & Policy Framework 2. Roles & Responsibilities 3. Strategies to encourage positive mental health 4. Staff health and wellbeing 5. Staff training and development
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Completed by:	Director Governance – Julian Kenshole

Promoting Positive Emotional Health & Wellbeing

[New] Legal & Policy framework

This document has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'
- DfE (2024) 'Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2021) 'Learning outcomes for senior mental health leads in schools and colleges'
- DfE (2021) 'Physical health and mental wellbeing (Primary and secondary)
- DfE (2021) 'Personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education'
- DfE (2021) 'Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education'

Rationale

Research has found that in an average class of 30 15-year-old pupils:

- three could have a mental disorder
- ten are likely to have witnessed their parents separate
- one could have experienced the death of a parent
- seven are likely to have been bullied
- six may be self-harming

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: 'in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy'. Ofsted has highlighted that children and young people themselves say that they want to learn more about how to keep themselves emotionally healthy.

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) advises that primary schools and secondary schools should adopt a comprehensive, 'whole school' approach to promoting the social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people. Such an approach it says should move beyond learning and teaching to pervade all aspects of the life of a school, and has been found to be effective in bringing about and sustaining health benefits.

The DfE also identifies a whole-school approach to promoting good mental health as a protective factor for child and adolescent mental health. The report of the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce (2015) identifies a national commitment to "encouraging schools to continue to develop whole school approaches to promoting mental health and wellbeing".

[New] Good mental health and wellbeing helps pupils:

- attend school
- develop key life skills, particularly social and emotional skills
- engage in learning
- achieve academically
- have better longer-term outcomes, such as future employment

This document should be read alongside statutory guidance on 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions and existing advice on targeted approaches for supporting pupils with, or at risk of developing mental health problems including:

- [Mental Health and Behaviour advice for Schools](#)
- [Promoting children and young peoples emotional health and wellbeing](#)

[New] Roles & Responsibilities

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this strategy.
- Appointing a senior mental health lead.
- Approving changes to the school's curriculum surrounding health and wellbeing.
- Arranging health and wellbeing training and workshops for staff and pupils.
- Ensuring that the school's ethos and values surrounding health and wellbeing are communicated to the school community and are easily accessible in a written document.

The senior mental health lead will be responsible for:

- Undertaking robust training and development to become an expert in their field.
- Supporting the training and development of other staff members to enhance their knowledge and understanding of mental health and wellbeing and how to reflect this in their teaching.
- Devising initiatives to enhance the school's offering of mental health and wellbeing support.
- Enabling pupil voice and taking action on the results of pupil wellbeing support.
- Providing targeted support and making appropriate referrals.
- Working with parents, families and the wider school community to communicate what the school is doing to support health and wellbeing and what it plans to do in the future, and to seek feedback on existing and potential initiatives to employ.

All staff will be responsible for:

- Engaging in training and development to enhance their understanding of health and wellbeing and to reflect this in their teaching.
- Looking after their own health and wellbeing and seeking support if they have any concerns.
- Supporting the health and wellbeing of all pupils and raising concerns to the senior mental health lead, DSL or other appropriate staff member depending on the circumstances.
- Liaising with parents on any concerns that have been raised about their child's health and wellbeing.

Factors that put children at risk

Certain individuals and groups of pupils are more at risk of developing mental health problems than others. These risks can relate to the child themselves, to their family, or to their community or life events. These risk factors which are listed in **Table 1** below are cumulative. Children exposed to multiple risks such as social disadvantage, family adversity and cognitive or attention problems are much more likely to develop behavioural problems.

Factors that make children more resilient

Some children, despite being exposed to significant risk factors, continue to develop into competent, confident and caring adults. An important key to promoting children’s mental health is therefore an understanding of the protective factors that enable children to be resilient when they encounter problems and challenges.

‘Resilience seems to involve several related elements. Firstly, a sense of self-esteem and confidence; secondly a belief in one’s own self-efficacy and ability to deal with change and adaptation; and thirdly, a repertoire of social problem-solving approaches.’

There is a complex interplay between risk factors in children’s lives and promoting their resilience. As social disadvantage and the number of stressful life events accumulate for children or young people, more factors that are protective are needed to act as a counterbalance. The key protective factors, which build resilience to mental health problems, are shown alongside the risk factors in **Table 1**, below.

The role that our can schools play in promoting the resilience of their pupils is vital, particularly so those children where their home life is less supportive. Our school will be safe and affirming places for children where they can develop a sense of belonging and feel able to trust and talk openly with adults about their problems.

Table 1

	Risk factors	Protective factors
In the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genetic influences • Low IQ and learning disabilities • Specific development delay or neurodiversity • Communication difficulties • Difficult temperament • Physical illness • Academic failure • Low self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being female (in younger children) • Secure attachment experience • Outgoing temperament as an infant • Good communication skills, sociability • Being a planner and having a belief in control • Humour • Problem solving skills and a positive attitude • Experiences of success and achievement • Faith or spirituality • Capacity to reflect
In the family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overt parental conflict including domestic violence • Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) • Inconsistent or unclear discipline • Hostile and rejecting relationships • Failure to adapt to a child’s changing needs • Physical, sexual, neglect or emotional abuse • Parental psychiatric illness • Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder • Death and loss – including loss of friendship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education • Supportive long-term relationship or the absence of severe discord

In the School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Deviant peer influences • Peer pressure • Poor pupil to teacher relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems • A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences
In the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Other significant life events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider supportive network • Good housing • High standard of living • High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying • Opportunities for valued social roles • Range of sport/leisure activities

Difficult events that impact pupils

Form tutors and class teachers see their pupils day in, day out. They should know them well and be well placed to spot changes in behaviour that might indicate a problem. The balance between the risk and protective factors set out above is most likely to be disrupted when difficult events happen in pupils' lives. These include:

- **loss or separation** – resulting from death, parental separation, divorce, hospitalisation, loss of friendships (especially in adolescence), family conflict or breakdown that results in the child having to live elsewhere, being taken into care or adopted, deployment of parents in armed forces families
- **life changes** – such as the birth of a sibling, moving house or changing schools or during transition from primary to secondary school, or secondary school to sixth form
- **traumatic events** such as abuse, domestic violence, bullying, violence, accidents, injuries or natural disaster
- **other traumatic incidents** such as a natural disaster or terrorist attack. Some groups could be susceptible to such incidents, even if not directly affected. For example, schools should ensure they are aware of armed forces families, who may have parents who are deployed in areas of terrorist activity and are surrounded by the issues in the media

Our Schools will provide to support children at such times, intervening where possible to help prevent mental health problems from developing.

Promoting pupils' mental health

The following diagram presents the eight principles that will be adhered to by our schools to promote emotional health and wellbeing.



We will promote the emotional health & wellbeing of our pupils through:

- **a committed Senior Management Team** that sets a culture within the school that values all pupils; allows them to feel a sense of belonging; and makes it possible to talk about problems in a non-stigmatising way.
- **adopting an ethos of setting high expectations of attainment for all pupils with consistently applied support.** This includes clear policies on behaviour and bullying that set out the responsibilities of everyone in the school and the range of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour for children. These are available and understood clearly by all, and consistently applied by staff.
- **an effective strategic role Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo),** ensuring all adults working in the school understand their responsibilities to children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), including pupils whose persistent mental health difficulties mean they need special educational provision. The SENCo will ensure colleagues understand how the school identifies and meets pupils' needs, provide advice

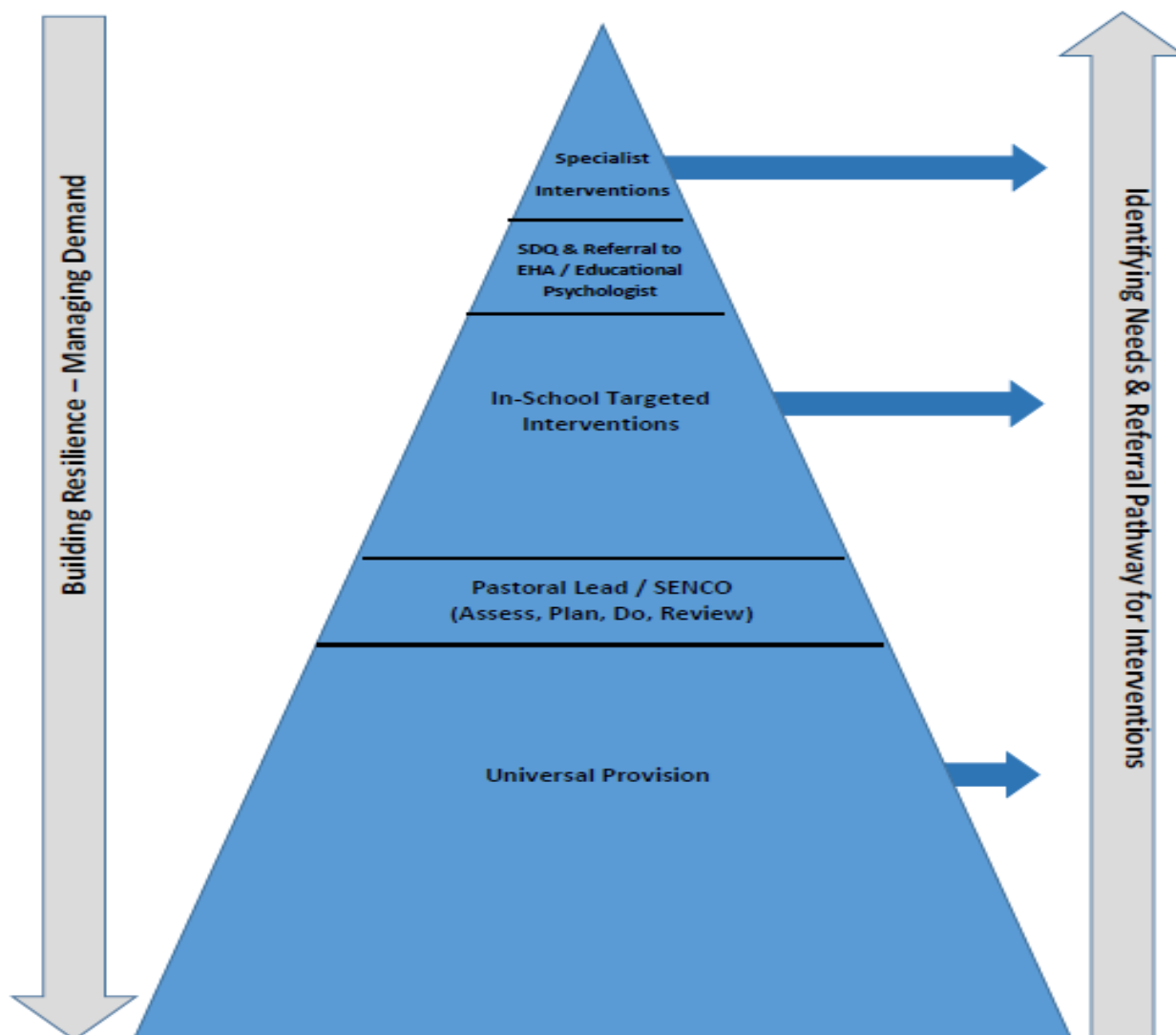
and support to colleagues as needed and liaise with external SEND professionals as necessary.

- **working with parents and carers as well as with the pupils themselves**, ensuring their opinions and wishes are considered and that they are kept fully informed so they can participate in decisions taken about them.
- **the continuous professional development for staff** that makes it clear that promoting good mental health is the responsibility of all members of school staff and informs them about the early signs of mental health problems, what is and isn't a cause for concern, and what to do if they think they have spotted a developing problem.
- **establishing clear systems and processes to help staff who identify children and young people with possible mental health problems** providing routes to escalate issues with clear referral and accountability systems. Our schools will work closely with other professionals to have a range of support services that can be put in place depending on the identified needs (both within and beyond the school). These will be set out clearly in the school's published SEND policy and Local Offer.
- **working with others to provide interventions for pupils with mental health problems that use a graduated approach to inform a clear cycle of support:** an assessment to establish a clear analysis of the pupil's needs; a plan to set out how the pupil will be supported; action to provide that support; and regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of the provision and lead to changes where necessary; and
- **a healthy school approach to promoting the health and wellbeing of all pupils in the school**, with priorities identified and a clear process of 'planning, doing and reviewing' to achieve the desired outcomes.

Our Strategic Approach

The following diagram describes our strategic and whole school approach to the promotion of emotional health & wellbeing. At the base of our model is the concept of universal provision whereby all our children are offered an entitlement of support and access to a curriculum and other provision including extra-curricular opportunities which helps to build independence and personal resilience. Children that require a higher level of support or intervention will be identified through a systematic plan, do, review methodology. Children with particularly complex needs will be formally assessed before they access targeted interventions or are referred to specialist provision.

Our Strategic Approach to Promoting Emotional Health & Wellbeing



Strategies to encourage positive mental health

Creating a friendly environment – We aim to create an environment where pupils feel comfortable to approach staff or peers when they have a problem. We will listen to pupils, engaging in conversation and responding appropriately to what has been said. Building a rapport with pupils instils trust. It is important that pupils have a trusted relationship with at least one member of staff so that any issues a pupil may have can be passed on – confident that they will receive the support they need.

Talking about mental health – We will provide pupils with the opportunity to acknowledge that everyone has mental health. Talking about mental health as a concept which is owned by all can not only reduce the stigma which surrounds the term but can change pupils' perceptions on what mental health is. Discussing mental health as a concept rather than an illness can show pupils that it is not something to be embarrassed or ashamed of. We will encourage this concept by integrating discussion on mental health in the curriculum, as well as dedicating some lessons to promoting pupil wellbeing.

[New] Healthy Lifestyles - The school will always ensure that pupils can get healthy, nutritious meals whilst they are attending school. The Catering Service will continuously review the menus it provides and seek ways to improve school food to ensure that it is of the highest standard possible. The school's curriculum for PE will ensure that all pupils:

- Develop competence to excel in a broad range of physical activities.
- Are physically active for sustained periods of time.
- Engage in competitive sports and activities.
- Lead healthy, active lives.

As part of the school's curriculum for physical health and mental wellbeing, the school will ensure that all pupils are provided with the knowledge and skills needed to lead a healthy independent life and to make healthy life choices. The school's curriculum will be used to develop pupils' knowledge about health and wellbeing with the aim to develop and promote social and emotional skills through the PSHE curriculum and via RE and RSHE.

The school's curriculum will be kept under review and curriculum leads will seek out ways to include teaching and the promotion of positive health and wellbeing in a range of subjects.

Subjects such as PE and food technology will be structured in a manner that enables pupils to learn about healthy lifestyles, the benefits of exercise and healthy eating.

Lessons focussing on emotional wellbeing will be applied practically and made relevant to pupils in an age-appropriate manner.

In reviewing the school's curriculum in its relation to health and wellbeing, the school will seek to ensure that teaching focusses on aspects including, but not limited to:

- Coping with transition periods.
- Coping with the pressures of studying for exams.
- Emotional intelligence.
- Building resilience and responding to setbacks.
- Preparing for independent life.
- Digital wellbeing.

Care away from the classroom - Pupils who suffer from mental health problems can sometimes find the classroom environment or lessons overwhelming. We will seek to provide safe spaces for pupils to go to that gives them necessary time out.

Reducing the stigma - The negative stigma which surrounds mental health can be reason enough for pupils not to come forward with any issues they may be experiencing. Keeping mental health issues from peers, parents or teachers can be detrimental to pupil welfare and other aspects of learning. We will therefore encourage discussion of mental health in a positive, judgement-free environment and promote a positive outlook on mental health by:

- Integrating discussions about mental health in the curriculum.
- Creating specific lesson plans in subjects such as art, RE or PE, which encourages self-expression, interaction with others, and learning about feelings and emotions.
- Training teachers about the benefits of positive mental health so that it can be transposed through teaching, helping pupils to feel more at ease discussing mental health issues.

Identifying a problem - Pupils spend a great deal of time at school so it is essential that our staff feel confident in building trusting relationships with pupils. We will therefore ensure that staff have a basic understanding of mental health and what the telling signs of a mental health problem are.

[New] Targeted support and appropriate referrals - The school will ensure that pupils who are at a greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health, e.g. pupils in care or experiencing or witnessing domestic abuse, are known by school staff and are offered support at an early stage. Relevant staff members will undergo regular training to ensure that they can deal with mental health and wellbeing issues and to improve the support being offered by the school. The senior mental health lead will be responsible for following the correct referral process and will be able to do the following:

- Understand the types of statutory and independent mental health services that commonly exist in each local area, the needs they meet and when they are appropriate to access as part of the whole school approach
- Understand the importance of forming strong partnerships with local services and the wider community
- Understand the threshold for making a referral to various services including NHS children and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS)
- Work in partnership with local service providers and mental health professionals to ensure the needs of pupils are known, understood and used to shape the local support offer
- Identify and access the most appropriate statutory or independent mental health service provision available in the local area
- Make or support effective referrals to CYPMHS or other services as appropriate

Educational support - Once a pupil has come forward to a member of staff, they should be referred to a member of staff with responsibility for pastoral care who will assess need and provide the most appropriate intervention or referral to other agencies including CAMHS, or other NHS or specialist services.

[New] Pupil Voice - The school will engage with young people to gain an overview of the standards of health and wellbeing amongst pupils. Pupil feedback including that derived from surveys will be used to identify areas that the school needs to prioritise for the improvement of its health and wellbeing support offer.

The curriculum will support pupils to talk about their health and wellbeing.

[New] Staff health and wellbeing

The school will ensure that, as part of the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing that all staff can access mental health and wellbeing support. The Trust produces wellbeing newsletters for staff outlining the services available including those provided through Education Mutual.

The Trust will develop a Mental Health & Wellbeing strategy and associated action plan linked to the organisational commitments outlined within the [Education Workforce Wellbeing Charter - DfE November 2021](#)

[New] Staff training and development

Staff members will have access to training to increase their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to equip them with the skills and knowledge needed to identify mental health difficulties in their pupils and know what they should do if they have a concern.

The school will ensure that staff members receive regular training on health and wellbeing and receive regular updates via the DSL, senior mental health lead and headteacher on current and topical health and wellbeing issues.

While staff will be appropriately trained to understand and talk about mental health problems, they will be aware that making a diagnosis should only be attempted by an appropriately trained professional.

The school will ensure that the senior mental health lead receives regular high-quality training updates and newly appointed mental health leads receive the appropriate level of training and investment to ensure that they can effectively oversee the whole school approach towards health and wellbeing.

Through robust training and development, the senior mental health lead will be able to:

- Bring about strategic change to deliver an effective whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.
- Identify need and monitor the impact of interventions.
- Ensure that pupils can get timely and appropriate support with their mental health and wellbeing.
- Support the development of their colleagues in their understanding of mental wellbeing, including how to manage their own mental wellbeing and support that of pupils.
- Create an ethos and environment that promotes, respects and values diversity.
- Enable the voice of pupils to ensure that every pupil is heard, valued and able to influence decisions.
- Seek ways to improve and develop the school's curriculum, teaching and learning in relation to mental health and wellbeing.

[updated] Guidance & Resources

[Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges](#) – This Department for Education website signposts a range of resources and training including Senior mental health leads training to develop a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

[Mental Health and Wellbeing Resources for Teachers and Teaching Staff April 2024](#) – This Department for Education publication provides sources of mental health and wellbeing support for teachers, school staff and school leaders.

It will help you:

- find help and support in response to any feelings you are experiencing as a result of COVID-19
- signpost pupils and students to appropriate support, help and advice
- provide pupils and students with a list of resources so they can get support on a range of issues independently
- access advice on prioritising your own wellbeing and mental health

[The Anna Freud Centre](#) - The Anna Freud Centre, runs a [network](#) for schools and trusts and publish a variety of resources to support children's mental health and wellbeing.