

SS John & Monica Catholic Primary School

# Policy for Pupil Mental Health and Well-Being



## *Our Mission*

*'At SS John and Monica's, we learn through the example of Jesus to love, respect, understand and value each other'*

## **1. Aims**

At SS John and Monica Catholic Primary School, we are committed to promoting and protecting the mental health and well-being of pupils, parents, carers, staff and the wider school community.

This policy focuses specifically on pupils' mental health and emotional well-being. It aims to:

- Set out the school's whole-school approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils
- Provide guidance to staff on their roles and responsibilities in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing
- Support staff to recognise early warning signs of mental health difficulties and respond appropriately
- Foster an inclusive culture where pupils feel safe to discuss their feelings and experiences
- Inform pupils and parents/carers about the support available within school and how to access additional help where needed

This policy should be read alongside the following school policies:

- SEND Policy
- Positive Relationships and Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- PSHE Policy
- RSHE Policy
- Staff Wellbeing Policy

## **2. Legislation and Guidance**

This policy has been developed with reference to the following legislation and guidance:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- Articles 3 and 23 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

## **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

All staff share responsibility for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for being alert to potential risk factors affecting pupils.

If a member of staff has concerns regarding a pupil's mental health or emotional well-being, they must report this to the **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)** or the **Mental Health Lead (Mrs Elliott)** in accordance with the school's safeguarding procedures.

Key staff members with specific responsibilities for mental health and wellbeing include:

- Headteacher
- Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCo)
- Mental Health Lead(s)
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

These staff members provide strategic leadership, coordinate support for pupils and ensure appropriate interventions are implemented.

#### **4. Staff Training**

All staff will receive appropriate training to ensure they:

- Have a clear understanding of pupils' mental health needs
- Can recognise the early warning signs of mental health difficulties
- Understand the procedures for responding to concerns and accessing appropriate support

Training will be provided as part of staff professional development and safeguarding training.

#### **5. Identifying Mental Health Needs**

Staff should be vigilant in recognising potential indicators that a pupil may be experiencing mental health difficulties.

Possible warning signs include changes in:

- Mood or energy levels
- Eating or sleeping patterns
- Engagement in lessons or academic attainment
- Personal hygiene
- Social behaviour or isolation
- Attendance or punctuality

Additional warning signs may include:

- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety or worthlessness
- Substance misuse

- Rapid weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body unusually
- Avoidance of physical education or changing facilities
- Physical pain or nausea without clear medical cause
- Injuries that may be self-inflicted
- Talking about or joking about self-harm or suicide

These signs do not necessarily indicate a mental health difficulty but should prompt further monitoring and discussion with appropriate staff.

## 6. Responding to an Acute Mental Health Crisis

If a pupil presents with an acute mental health crisis or immediate risk of harm, staff must follow the school's safeguarding procedures.

This may include:

- Immediately informing the DSL or a senior member of staff
- Ensuring the pupil remains safe and supervised
- Contacting emergency services if there is immediate danger
- Recording concerns in accordance with safeguarding procedures

All actions must prioritise the pupil's safety and well-being.

## 7. Managing Disclosures

If a pupil discloses concerns about their own mental health or that of another pupil, staff should:

- Remain calm, supportive and non-judgemental
- Listen carefully without interrupting
- Avoid asking leading questions or attempting to investigate
- Focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety

Staff must report all disclosures in line with the **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy** and inform the **DSL**.

All disclosures will be recorded in the pupil's confidential safeguarding record.

Records must include:

- Name of the staff member making the report
- Name of the pupil(s) involved
- Date, time and location of the disclosure
- Context in which the disclosure occurred

- Any questions asked or support offered

## 8. Confidentiality

Staff must never promise absolute confidentiality to a pupil. Instead, they should explain that certain information must be shared in order to keep the pupil safe.

Information cannot be kept confidential because:

- It is not appropriate for one member of staff to hold sole responsibility for a pupil's well-being
- Effective support may require involvement from other professionals
- Safeguarding responsibilities require information sharing when necessary

Disclosures should be shared with an appropriate member of staff, usually the **DSL or Deputy DSL**.

Information will only be shared with other staff or external agencies on a **need-to-know basis**.

Before sharing information, staff should explain to the pupil:

- Who the information will be shared with
- What information will be shared
- Why it needs to be shared

Where appropriate, staff will seek the pupil's consent. However, the **safety and welfare of the pupil must always take priority**.

Parents or carers will normally be informed unless doing so would place the pupil at risk. In such cases, the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy will be followed.

### 8.1 Managing Confidentiality Around Disclosures

1. A pupil makes a disclosure
2. The staff member listens and provides reassurance
3. The staff member explains the limits of confidentiality
4. The staff member seeks the pupil's consent to share information where possible
5. The disclosure is recorded and shared with the DSL
6. The DSL determines next steps and informs parents/carers if appropriate
7. Relevant staff or external professionals are informed on a need-to-know basis

## 9. Supporting Pupils

### 9.1 Universal Support

As part of the school's whole-school approach to mental health, support is provided to all pupils through:

- Ensuring pupils know which trusted adults they can speak to
- Promoting mental health awareness through assemblies, tutor time and PSHE
- Creating safe classroom environments where wellbeing can be discussed
- Providing opportunities for pupils to share feedback about their school experience
- Offering pastoral and emotional support programmes such as ELSA, Compass Support and Family Support Worker provision
- Monitoring pupil wellbeing
- Developing a school mental health action plan
- Maintaining strong leadership through the Senior Mental Health Lead

## **9.2 Assessing Additional Support Needs**

Where a pupil is identified as needing further support, the **SENCo** will implement a graduated approach:

1. Assess the pupil's needs
2. Plan appropriate support
3. Implement the agreed interventions
4. Review and evaluate the effectiveness of support

## **9.3 Internal Mental Health Interventions**

The school may provide a range of targeted interventions including:

- Nurture groups
- Reduced timetables
- Self-regulation resources
- Pastoral support programmes
- Art therapy
- Play therapy
- Lego therapy
- Yoga and mindfulness
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) programmes

Support will be tailored to the individual needs of each pupil.

## **9.4 Individual Healthcare Plans (IHPs)**

Where necessary, pupils may have an individual plan of support such as:

- School support plan
- SEND Provision Plan
- Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Plans are developed collaboratively with:

- The pupil (where appropriate)
- School staff
- Parents or carers
- Relevant external professionals

Plans may include:

- Details of the mental health need and potential triggers
- The pupil's specific needs
- Strategies to support their educational, emotional and social wellbeing
- The level of support required
- Named staff responsible for providing support

## 9.5 External Referrals

Where a pupil's needs cannot be met through the school's internal support, external support may be sought.

Possible referrals include:

- GP or paediatrician
- Local mental health services
- Forward Thinking Birmingham, Pause, or Compass
- Mental health charities such as Samaritans, Mind, YoungMinds or Kooth
- Local counselling services

## 10. Working with Parents and Carers

The school recognises the importance of working collaboratively with parents and carers.

We support families by:

- Encouraging parents to inform the school of any mental health concerns
- Sharing concerns regarding pupils' wellbeing
- Working together to identify appropriate support strategies
- Providing information about mental health resources and services
- Signposting parents to local and national support organisations

Where possible, concerns will be discussed in **face-to-face meetings**.

Records of discussions and agreed actions will be kept in the pupil's confidential record.

Where appropriate, an **Individual Healthcare Plan** will be developed in collaboration with parents/carers.

## 11. Signposting Support

Information about mental health support is:

- Displayed around the school environment
- Shared on the school website
- Distributed through newsletters, emails and school communications

The **SENCo, ELSA, DSL, DDSL and Family Support Worker** are available to provide additional guidance and information.

## 12. Whole School Approach to Mental Health

### 12.1 Mental Health Education

Mental health and emotional well-being are taught through the **PSHE and RSHE curriculum**, following guidance from the **PSHE Association**.

Pupils are supported to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Understand and manage their emotions
- Challenge stigma associated with mental health
- Recognise when and how to seek help
- Keep themselves safe

### 12.2 Promoting a Positive School Culture

Staff promote a positive and open culture around mental health by:

- Encouraging discussion of mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Supporting pupils to seek help when needed
- Challenging stigma and misconceptions
- Participating in national mental health awareness events such as **Children's Mental Health Week**

### **13. Staff Well-being**

The school recognises that supporting pupils with mental health needs can impact staff wellbeing.

To support staff, the school provides:

- Staff supervision sessions
- Educational psychologist supervision for ELSA staff
- Support for staff experiencing mental health difficulties
- A supportive and positive working environment
- Access to employee assistance mental health support services

Jan 2026

Review: Jan 2028