



## **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

**Review of the policy will take place annually or sooner if necessary.**

St Mary's Church of England (A) Primary School keeps children safe by ensuring and promoting the safeguarding and welfare of all children in its care: all policies support the most current "Keeping Children Safe in Education Guidance" and "Safeguarding Policy", are fully consistent with the "Every Child Matters" agenda, and fully support the principles of equal opportunities for all.

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### **Our Mission Statement – Living, loving and learning in God's care**

St Mary's Church of England Primary School, offers a happy, safe and caring environment. We have a unique family atmosphere where each child is valued as an individual. We encourage a love of learning and promote a child's natural curiosity through varying challenges, experiences and opportunities. As a small church school, we develop a knowledge and understanding of Christianity and foster a respect for other people and their beliefs.

### **Aim**

That children in our school will develop the self-esteem, awareness and self-confidence to play an active part in school life and be valued and valuable members of their communities.

### **Definitions:**

'Children and young people feeling good, feeling that their life is going well and feeling able to get on with their daily lives'

'Emotional health and wellbeing is the emotional resilience that enables us to enjoy life and to survive pain, suffering and disappointment. It is a positive sense of wellbeing and an underlying belief in our own worth and of others. Emotional health and wellbeing is embedded in social relations built upon social skills that are developed from birth.' (Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer, 2001)

### **What is 'good' emotional health and wellbeing in our school?**

- The ability to recognise, acknowledge and manage their feelings
- The ability to develop caring and concerns for others
- The ability to develop meaningful, positive and long- lasting relationships
- The ability to take responsibility for themselves and make practical decisions

- For all in our school to be resilient learners

### **We want our children to:**

- Be effective and successful learners
- Make and sustain friendships
- Deal with and resolve conflict effectively and fairly
- Solve problems with others for themselves
- Manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety
- Be able to promote calm, optimistic states that support the achievement of goals
- Recover from setbacks and persist in the face of the difficulties
- Work and play cooperatively
- Compete fairly and win and lose with dignity and respect for other competitors
- Recognise and stand up for their rights and the rights of others
- Understand, celebrate and value the differences and commonalities between people, respecting the rights of others to have beliefs and values different from their own

### **Rationale**

The emotional health and well-being of all members of our school is fundamental to our philosophy and aims. Our policies and practices are founded in the development and sustenance of a happy, healthy school, where all learning can flourish. When a school promotes positive emotional health and wellbeing pupils can better understand and express their feelings. This builds their confidence and emotional resilience and therefore their capacity to learn.

### **Supporting our children**

There are key actions that schools can take to embed the whole school approach to emotional health and mental wellbeing. There are 8 core principles:

- Management and leadership
- The school ethos and environment
- Curriculum, teaching and learning, pupil voice
- Staff development, health and wellbeing
- Identifying need and monitoring impact
- Working with parents and carers
- Coordinated support

If the 8 principles are consistently and comprehensively applied across the whole school setting they can have a positive impact on:

- The cognitive development of children, their learning, motivation and sense of commitment and connectedness with learning and with school
- Staff wellbeing, reduced stress, sickness and absence, improved teaching ability and performance
- Pupil wellbeing including happiness, a sense of purpose, connectedness and meaning
- Development of social and emotional skills and attitudes that promote learning, success wellbeing and mental health, in school and throughout life

- The prevention and reduction of mental ill health such as depression, anxiety and stress
- Improving school behaviour, including reduction in low-level disruption, incidents, fights, bullying, exclusions and absence
- Developing the use of Nurture intervention when needed and the cosy corner (in the wise own room)
- Building links with Cheswardine Residential Home for the elder, builds strong intergenerational links that allow children to build positive relationships with other adults and share celebrations and events in an uplifting way
- Reducing risky behaviour, such as impulsiveness, uncontrolled anger, violence, bullying and crime

### **Curriculum organisation**

Emotional health and well-being cover the spectrum of activities in school and the range of educational and health/ welfare agencies who support our children. Our school is proactive in its approach and welcomes opportunities to promote emotional health and well-being through the formal and informal curriculum.

Staff use a variety of methods for ensuring sound emotional health and well-being for children. These complement and reflect the overall aims and philosophy of the school. Our approach includes:

- School Behaviour policy
- Class codes of conduct
- Clearly identified rewards and sanctions, understood by all
- Rewarding positive behaviour and achievement through our house point system
- Positive Growth Mindset
- Setting appropriately challenging tasks
- Providing a forum for listening and talking, e.g. Philosophy for Children (P4C), circle time or 'Come & Chat with the Head'
- Encouraging co-operation and collaboration
- Developing social competence
- Encouraging and developing coping strategies and resilience

The school places emphasis on problem-solving, positive self-assessment, time for reflection, quality feedback and encouragement to participate in school and community events.

The delivery of personal, social and health education, Relationships and Sex Education (Upper Key Stage 2) and citizenship is fundamental to our promotion of emotional health. Through the planned programmes and informal curriculum, opportunities exist to explore issues appropriate to children's ages and stages of development. Staff deal sensitively with these issues and differentiate according to the varying needs of the children in their care.

We also promote emotional health and wellbeing through our Christian Values which are embedded into all our learning: gratitude, kindness, courage, forgiveness, friendship, perseverance and thoughtfulness.

Children are grouped in a variety of ways to promote the achievement of their best. In the classroom, there are opportunities for children to work in both friendship and ability

groups. Regular review of seating arrangements helps to ensure that children gain maximum benefit.

We see parental involvement as a vital part of emotional well-health. Regular opportunities exist to promote partnership with parents, including:

- Welcome meeting in July and September – a chance to meet the staff, find out about the organisation and routines and curriculum in each class.
- Termly parent consultation evenings (preceded by a progress report)
- Parental workshops- phonics, reading, early writing, report, maths calculations including a Bedtime story session for the children.
- Annual parental questionnaires sent out by Parent Governors, to help us build on what we do best and identify areas for improvement.
- Termly 'Family Finish' sessions in each class for parents/carers/ grandparents to come and work with the class.
- Involvement in pupil support plans and reviews for children with special educational needs.
- Inviting parents to achievements/ celebration assembly.
- Inviting parents to monthly children's church services, Harvest and New Starters Service, Christmas Nativities, Carol Service, Easter Service and End of Year Service.
- Regular updates on website and face book page

### **Inclusion**

All curriculum policies make reference to inclusion being key to our school ethos. Curriculum provision is based on an understanding that we may need to cater differently for individuals in order to provide equality of opportunity. This approach to equal opportunities is extended to all members of our school community and included in our Equal Opportunities Policy. These needs include specific policies for SEND children. Differentiation and awareness of a variety of teaching and learning styles are used to provide appropriate curriculum approaches for different children's needs.

### **Pastoral organisation for pupils**

We pride ourselves on the whole school, team approach that is integral to our way of working at St Mary's C of E Primary School. Our methods include:

- Recognising and responding positively to a child's emotional, mental health and/ or behavioural needs
- Communicating with parents positively and realistically to create a partnership approach to children's emotional, mental health and well-being'
- Liaising with appropriate agencies to enlist advice and/or support
- Nurture sessions as necessary (Abi Jackson – Mental First Aid and pastoral lead for school)

Clear policies for Behaviour, Child Protection, Anti-Bullying and Attendance are promoted in school. Together, they provide the foundations for emotional, mental health and well-being. Alongside our policies are a range of practices to promote positive mental health;

- A School Council with elected membership from Y1-Y6.
- Lunchtime Champions
- 'random acts of kindness'
- Achievement assemblies.

- A whole school system of rewards for individuals: star writers, Headteacher awards, house points and enrichment time
- Anti-bullying buddies

Where appropriate, our SENDCO (Headteacher) may become involved to support a child experiencing emotional, mental health and / or behavioural difficulties. If appropriate, the child will be given time to work with our Pastoral Support (Abi Jackson). We recognise the effectiveness of our early intervention approach and our commitment to pastoral care for all.

### **Pastoral organisation for staff**

Pastoral support for all members of the school community is fundamental to the aims and philosophy of St Mary's C of E Primary school. We believe that a well-supported, valued staff with a clear and shared purpose are best placed to provide emotional well-being for children in their care. We follow L.A. guidelines and policies for supporting personnel, including those for harassment, anti-bullying, race equality and managing staff absence.

Mrs Abi Jackson is the school's named Mental Health and Wellbeing First Aid point of contact for staff and pupils.

We have a named Governor for health and well-being (Mrs Denise Keen) and a sub-committee which meets to implement and monitor the procedures for supporting emotional well-being within our school.

### **Monitoring and evaluation**

Provision across the school is monitored by the Headteacher and the health and well-being committee.

The Head teacher together with members of the health and well-being committee will provide support and advice to members of our school community about the provision and implementation of pastoral care in school. Regular staff meetings and termly full governing board meetings provide regular opportunities for the quality of care to be evaluated and developed.