

# Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

**Philippians 4:6-7**



## **'Feeding Hearts and Minds'**

The peace, joy and love of Christ is at the heart of all that we do in our school. Through religious education, school policy and, primarily, our culture of prayerfulness, charity and joy, we seek to share the Gospel with our families, our parish, our community and the wider world.

Using the example of Jesus Christ, we cultivate the skills of heart and mind that allow us to develop our talents and take a shared responsibility for ourselves, each other and the world He gave us. We profess our faith proudly and recognise that we are called to a loving relationship with God through the sacraments, scripture and prayer.

Our school is animated by love and our shared faith and clear values drive our behaviour and our relationships; we are tolerant and respectful of the unique value of each person. Our individual needs and talents are recognised and nurtured in a warm, inclusive environment where we are able to use our gifts for the glory of God and in loving service of others.

We have excellent role models who empower us to believe in ourselves and provide us with an outstanding education and a wide range of opportunities – our aspirations for the future are high and we believe that through God's grace we can grow, learn and realise our full potential.

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### Policy statement

At The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families, members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows students' voices to be heard by using effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

### **2.0** Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining The Blessed Sacrament Catholic Primary School's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

### **3.0** Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing;

instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

#### **4.0 Key staff members**

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of students, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Headteacher
- Wellbeing Lead
- Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Inclusion Lead/SENCO
- Family Support Worker
- PSHE Coordinator
- Pastoral Lead
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Governor
- Pupil Support

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of student, in the first instance they should speak to the class teacher /phase leader.

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

#### **5.0 Individual Care Plans**

When a pupil has been identified as having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, it is recommended that an Individual Care Plan should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role of school and specific staff

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#### **6.0 Teaching about mental health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum.

We will follow the guidance issued by the PSHE Association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively.

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing> Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote students' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of students' own emotions as well as those of other people. Our students are encouraged to develop their sense of self-worth by playing a positive role in contributing to school life and the wider community.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing students who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting students to support any of their friends who are facing challenges. As a result of this, our students will become healthy, independent and responsible members of society who understand how they are developing mentally and socially and give them the confidence to tackle many of the moral, social and cultural issues that are part of growing up that can affect our mental health. **See Section 14 for Supporting Peers**

In 2022 teachers will be trained to deliver the NHS supported Happy Mind programme - <https://myhappymind.org/>. Children from Years 1-5 will be supplied with journals to record thoughts, ideas, and reflections within 5 modules of learning. Reception children will be introduced to characters who will allow them to verbalise feelings and develop emotional literacy. Teachers will complete short questionnaires to monitor and measure impact.

### **7.0 Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards) and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure that adults understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why should they access it
- What is likely to happen next

### **8.0 Sources or support at school and in the local community**

#### **School Based Support –**

At all stages, a holistic approach is taken, consideration of an Early Help Assessment, including referrals to other agencies and all decisions are recorded on CPOMS.

Staff can raise concerns about a child's mental health by recording on CPOMS or speaking to Family support worker/Inclusion lead. The child will then be put on the list for regular check ins from the pupil support and the appropriate number of 1:1 sessions per week. A Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire will be completed at the start of the allocated support to identify the key areas that the child needs support with.

Children and their families will be spoken to by an appropriate adult to discuss the support we are going to provide and be allowed to give input about what they feel they need

support with. This is likely to include information about pastoral staff including behaviour and learning support and school counsellors.

Any support given will be reviewed with the child and family on a regular basis to ensure that needs are met.

All children can access support from our pupil support/family support worker

It is suitable for anyone who is experiencing difficulties with their mental health

### **Local Support**

In Lancashire, there are a range of organisations and groups offering support, including the **CAMHS partnership**, Child and Family Wellbeing Service, a group of providers specialising in children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. These partners deliver accessible support to children, young people and their families, whilst working with professionals to reduce the range of mental health issues through prevention, intervention and training. These organisations may work directly with the child and family or signpost to other professionals such as Child Action Northwest. The needs of children can be discussed, with parental permission, with the CAHMS early help team to ensure we are accessing the right services for the child concerned.

### **9.0 Warning Signs**

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should alert phase leaders or DSL's and record on CPOMS.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to, or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

### **10.0 Targeted Support**

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with school nurses and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels.

Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems.

- Working closely with CAHMS, School nurses, families to identify needs and access the right support services

and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral.

- Identifying and assessing in line with the Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT), children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems.

- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers. Agree an Individual Care Plan as the first stage of a 'stepped care' approach.

- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective,

According to the child's needs;

- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur.

- Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality.

- Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and

- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

### **11.0 Managing Disclosures**

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially on the student's personal file, including:

- Date
- Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information will be shared with a DSL

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### **12.0 Confidentiality**

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the student. We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them
- When we're going to tell them

Ideally, consent should be gained from the student first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as students up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

## **13.0 Whole School Approach**

### **13.1 Working with parents/Carers**

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.
- Who should be present – students, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agree are added to the pupil's record and an Individual Care Plan created if appropriate.

### **13.2 Supporting families**

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems.
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.);
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners; and
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

## **14.0 Supporting Peers**

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the student who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend needs help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling
- Reassurance that they are in a safe space to discuss their emotions if they wish to

### **15 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 to enable them to keep students safe. . We will host relevant information on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health.

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 students. Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

### **16.0 Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is **05/09/24**

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes.

This is the responsibility of **Angela Morris**

Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.



The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Headteacher in consultation with the Senior Leadership Team

This policy will be reviewed as appropriate by the Faith, Community and Curriculum committee on behalf of The Governing Body.

Intended Policy Review Date – September 2024

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ (Headteacher)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_ (Governor)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_