



OUR CHRISTIAN VISION

An inclusive Church School with a *commitment* to providing quality education that meets the needs of ALL. Creating successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens through a Christian approach of love, *care and cooperation*, so that everyone has *confidence* and a lifelong love of learning in order to flourish as human beings.

Love learning, enjoy life and care for one another- LOVE-LIGHT-ALL.
Care, Commitment, Cooperation, Confidence.

*Love is patient, love is kind... Love never fails (1 Corinthians 13) **LOVE***

*In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven (Matthew 5:16) **LIGHT***

*Suppose one of you has a hundred sheep and loses one of them. Doesn't he leave the ninety-nine in the open country and go after the lost sheep until he finds it? ⁵ And when he finds it, he joyfully puts it on his shoulders ⁶ and goes home (Luke 15) **ALL***

The most important of these is love- guided by the teaching and love of Jesus.

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

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 we do. In addition, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and all our pupils. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils. In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing 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 in 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
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

Lead Members of Staff

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

Janet Adsett - Designated Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer
Janet Adsett- Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead

Sue Riley - Lead First Aider

Janet Adsett - Pastoral Lead, PSHE Lead, CPD Coordinator

Amanda Smithson- SENDco

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health Lead 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 Office staff /head teacher. If the pupil presents with a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary. Where a referral to CAMHS CAST and/or CAMHs is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Mental Health Lead.

Individual Care Plans

Individual care plans are developed for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. They are drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- 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

Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

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 developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort being taught but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance¹ to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. Our Early Help offer includes details of these support agencies.

We will display relevant sources of support on our website and on our newsletter and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
 - Who it is aimed at
 - How to access it
-

- When to access it
- What is likely to happen next

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs are taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead.

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
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Not wanting to join in with PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

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.

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 will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff will listen, rather than advise and the first thoughts will be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the pupil's confidential file. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information will be shared with the mental health lead, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

Confidentiality will be taken seriously and explained clearly to the pupils so that they understand why it might be necessary to pass on concerns in their best interests.

Parents will be informed if there are concerns about their child's mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves with the support of staff at school.

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 officer must be informed immediately.

Working with Parents

A sensitive approach is taken when informing parents. Before disclosing to parents consideration is taken to the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, and other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

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 highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide 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. Every meeting should finish with agreed next steps and where appropriate a brief record of the meeting kept on the child's confidential record.

Working with All Parents

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:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through regular parent forum meetings
- 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 Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. 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 in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil 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

Training

The designated mental health lead currently holds a Mental First Aid Qualification.

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 to developing situations with one or more pupils.

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

September 2021