St James CofE Primary School
Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

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Author : Camilla McGregor

Approved : Chris Sale

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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. We value everyone and work in partnership to ensure everyone reaches their full potential.

In addition, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. 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 policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

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:

Mrs McGregor - Designated Safeguarding Lead
Mr Abbey – Lead Parent Support and Safeguarding Officer (Lead of Well Being Team)
Mrs Bains – Child and Family Support Worker (Well Being Team)
Mrs Dooley – Well Being Mentor (Well Being Team)
Mr Grafton - Well Being Mentor (Well Being Team)
Mrs Thomas/Miss Melia - Head of PSHE
Mrs Bullock – Inclusion Manager

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the DSL or Safeguarding Officer 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 DSL or deputy. If the pupil presents 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 is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Mr Abbey or Mr Bullock.

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 we're teaching 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 Guidance 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. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined in Appendix A.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas 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

- Why 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 should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with Mr Abbey, our Safeguarding Officer and 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

- 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 secretively

- Lateness to or absence from school

- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

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 should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' For more information about how to handle mental health disclosures sensitively see the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

All disclosures should be recorded in writing on My Concern. This written record will 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 should be shared with Mr Abbey who will provide store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on then we should discuss with the pupil:

- Who we are going to talk to

- What we are going to tell them

- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a pupil without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. Particularly if a pupil is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Emotional Wellbeing Lead Mr Abbey, this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the DSL must be informed immediately.

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents we should consider 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, 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. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting 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
- 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 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

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 in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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 pupils.

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.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Mrs McGregor, our CPD Coordinator who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

Appendix A

Signposting for Support Services

Hub of Hope Mental Health Database

The Hub of Hope is the world's first of its kind mental health database bringing grassroots and national mental health services together in one place for the first time ever. Using the location of web browser or mobile devices, the cloud-based web application allows anyone, anywhere to find the nearest source of support for any mental health issue, from depression and anxiety to PTSD and suicidal thoughts, as well as providing a 'talk now' button connecting users directly to the Samaritans.

It is currently the biggest and most comprehensive resource of its kind, with more than 1,200 validated support networks already registered on the web app and this number increasing each day. It has been endorsed by the Samaritans and 25 other national mental health support organisations and trusts.

Find Mental Health support in your area here: https://hubofhope.co.uk/

BEAM - provides a safe space for young people who may need support with their emotional and mental health. Young people can simply drop in for a chat with volunteers and staff.
https://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/what-we-do/helping-children/sandwell-and-dudley-emotional-health-and-wellbeing-service

Murray Hall Community Trust – provides a number of services aimed at improving young people's mental health.
https://www.murrayhall.co.uk/

Edwards Trust - offers a holistic bereavement care service to children and young people following the death of a parent, carer or sibling.
https://edwardstrust.org.uk/

Young People First - a registered charity working to improve young people's lives.
http://www.youngpeoplefirst.org.uk/

Kooth - free, safe and anonymous online support for young people.
https://kooth.com/

Childline – a counselling service for young people.
https://www.childlineorg.uk/

Krunch - offers a range of services for young people in providing mentoring support and supporting young people to become more self-aware and achieve their potential, overcome barriers to learning and improve their overall emotional health and wellbeing.
http://krunch.org.uk/krunch-sandwell/

Kaleidoscope – works to promote and support positive health and wellbeing including suicide bereavement support service.
https://www.kaleidoscopeplus.org.uk/

NHS Black Country Partnership (CAMHS) - provides a range of services for children and young people who are experiencing mental health problems
http://www.bcpft.nhs.uk/services/children-young-people-and-families/84-camhs

Esteem Team through the Sandwell Well-Being Hub
https://fis.sandwell.gov.uk/kb5/sandwell/directory/service.page?id=6VP9CYo5adE