



St Anne's CE Primary School

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Policy written September 2024	Signature of Chair or Vice Chair
Date agreed by governing body on September 25	Frequency of Review Annually
Date agreed for review Autumn 26	Responsibility for Review PPC

Section 1	Health and Welfare of Pupils
Section 2	Health and Welfare of Parents and Carers
Section 3	Health and Welfare of Staff

Policy Statement

At St Anne's CE Primary School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all pupils, families, members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows all voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures, we aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for all affected. We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise. This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
2. Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
3. Helping children to be resilient learners.
4. Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
5. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services. 4 Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
6. Effectively working with parents and carers.
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience. We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues

At St Anne's, we define Mental Health and Resilience as:

Good Mental Health

Individuals are mentally healthy when they have the ability to:

- Develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually
- Initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships
- Use and enjoy solitude
- Are aware of others and empathise with them
- Experience happiness and can play and learn
- Develop a sense of right and wrong
- Resolve (face) problems and setbacks and learn from them.
- Develop a sense of self and identity

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from the disappointments and difficulties we all experience. It is the ability to build protective factors in our lives which promote and protect our emotional wellbeing when faced with every knockbacks and unexpected changes.

Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for our community.
- Remove the stigma of mental health issues.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in pupils and each other.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support; both for themselves and pupils; who may have mental health issues.
- Provide the appropriate support to pupils with mental health issues.
- Develop resilience amongst pupils and raise awareness of resilience building techniques, creating a safe and nurturing environment for all.
- Raise awareness amongst our community of mental health issues and encourage staff to disclose any mental health issues in a supportive environment.
- Encourage a mental health friendly environment where everyone is aware of the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and can effectively sign post pupils and families.

Key Staff Members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils and each other. However, key members of staff have specific roles to play:

Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead	Peter Hilton
Pastoral & Wellbeing Lead	Tracey Green
Designated Deputy Safeguarding leads	Stephanie Monerawela Tracey Green Debra Da Silva Lorraine Johnson
SENCo	Debra Da Silva

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need. All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy

Our Mental Health Leads:

- Leads and works with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Provides advice and support to staff and organises training and updates.
- Are the first point of contact with mental health services and makes individual referrals to them.
- Lead and support the nurture provision across whole school. We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some

children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to children with mental health needs and their families.

Sources of relevant support include:

- Our Senior Leadership Team
- Our Designated Safeguarding Team
- School support staff employed to manage mental health needs of particular children
- Our SENCO who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including children whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision.
- The Educational Psychology service who provides 1:1 therapy and group work to children who are referred and who trains support staff to manage mental health needs of children. Support can be offered in school or at an external venue.

Section 1 – Health and Welfare of Pupils

Mental health problems in children:

Some children experience a range of emotional and behavioural problems that are outside the normal range for their age or gender. These children could be described as experiencing mental health problems or disorders. Mental health professionals have defined these as:

- emotional disorders, e.g. phobias, anxiety states and depression;
- conduct disorders, e.g. stealing, defiance, fire-setting, aggression and antisocial behaviour;
- hyperkinetic disorders e.g. disturbance of activity and attention;
- developmental disorders e.g. delay in acquiring certain skills such as speech, social ability or bladder control, primarily affecting children with autism and those with pervasive developmental disorders;
- attachment disorders, e.g. children who are markedly distressed or socially impaired as a result of an extremely abnormal pattern of attachment to parents or major care givers;
- other mental health problems including eating disorders, habit disorders, post- traumatic stress syndromes; sleep disorders; and psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia and manic-depressive disorder.

Many of these problems will be experienced as mild and transitory challenges for the child and their family, whereas others will have serious and longer lasting effects. When a problem is particularly severe or persistent over time, or when a number of these difficulties are experienced at the same time, children are often described as having mental health disorders.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil or parent, in the first instance, they should speak to the Pupil and family wellbeing and support officer. If there is a concern that the pupil is a high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed. If the pupil presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

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 parents, and relevant professionals.

Teaching and learning:

For all pupils with mental health needs reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure full access to the curriculum. These may include:

- Breaks from class when required;
- Provision of stress relief toys
- Work broken into small chunks
- Individual behaviour plans

Signposting:

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services. Within the school (noticeboards, electronic display boards etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, website), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure staff, parents and pupils 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

Warning Signs:

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 SENCO and/or Pastoral & Wellbeing Lead.

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 absences

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 the school nurse in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of our pupils.

We work closely with other professionals such as:

- Educational Psychologist
- Child Psychologist
- Early Help service

In addition, we offer the following provision in house:

- Individual Mentoring
- Use of restorative approach
- Zones of Regulation
- School based Play Therapy

When thresholds are met referrals may be made to:

- Emotional Health Service
- CAMHS
- Young Carers
- Family Support Team
- Children's Services
- School Nurse

In some cases, a multi professional meeting will be arranged to discuss the case further. Some children will neither meet thresholds nor be able to access individual therapies. As a school we attempt to offer one to one pastoral support for these pupils. This may be delivered by an individual behaviour plan. Managing disclosures Any disclosure must be recorded on CPOMS and passed to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. All safeguarding concerns will be treated in confidence and we will follow the safeguarding policy. For more information about Safeguarding, including our policy, visit the Safeguarding page on our website.

Section 2 - Health and Welfare of Parents and Carers

We are aware that parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health problem and we will be sensitive and supportive. Parents and carers are valued and welcomed into school. We communicate regularly, consult and engage with parents/carers through newsletters, assemblies, parent meetings etc. We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. St Anne's CE Primary School works in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Working closely with our local partners including, Health Care professionals and partner schools
- Meeting all EYFS parents in person to discuss their family circumstances
- Encouraging parents into school for events such as Parent Days
- Ensuring Senior Leadership Team (SLT) attendance at all PTFA events
- Offering 1:1 SENDCO Parent meetings
- Offering parents the opportunity to meet Ed Psychologist, School Nurse or Speech and Language Therapist
- Offering Psychologist sessions for families
- Ensuring all parents are aware of how to promote social and emotional wellbeing and prevent mental health problems e.g. PATHS workshops
- 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 and academic skills, for example 'How to read with your child' morning.
- 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
- Providing an open door policy with access to the Pastoral and Wellbeing Lead
- Working hard to develop a close relationship with parents and carers which allow us to offer support

We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available. When a concern has been raised, the school will:

- Contact parents and carers and meet with them (In almost all cases, parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.)
- Offer information to take away and signpost to places to seek further information, advice and support
- Be available for follow up calls.
- Make a record of the meeting. 10 Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Agree a mental health Individual Care Plan including clear next steps.
- Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child.
- Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions provided.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and children may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves. We give children the option of informing their parents and carers about their mental health needs for themselves or of accompanying and supporting them to do so. We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern is the children, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

Section 3 - Health and Welfare of Staff

We recognise that a healthy happy workforce is required to deliver the best education for all our pupils. Our expectation is that staff have a responsibility to support their own mental health by accessing appropriate support, looking after their own mental health and to develop resilience and coping strategies. As a school we are committed to encouraging staff to develop a good work life balance and lead healthy working lives. We offer the following to support our staff's positive mental health:

- A dedicated staff room for relaxation and healthy eating.
- A dedicated staff study room.
- We are part of the Human Resources Service Level Agreement giving staff access to the Staff Wellbeing and Counselling Service.
- We organise a number of social events throughout the year for staff to participate in.
- We provide lunch on all INSET dates to promote good relationships and give time for staff to socialise
- SLT have an open-door policy for all staff.
- SLT proactively support staff who are experiencing mental health difficulties.
- Regular wellbeing Insets

- Take staff mental wellbeing into consideration when deploying staff to various roles around school.
- Reasonable adjustments for staff with recognised mental health issues.
- Sign post staff to appropriate support mechanisms such as local clergy, charities, GP, and Relate.
- Staff meetings are held weekly where individuals can air their views and feel supported. • A supportive and generous non-sickness absence policy.
- Celebrate staff special occasions.
- Recognise individual staff strengths through initiatives such as PATHS staff star of the week; First Friday Awards; positive mentions in newsletters; individual and public thanks and praise; feedback from observations; learning walks
- Staff mental health champion – this is a member of the SLT with an open-door policy who is a point of contact for all staff.
- Encourage and support staff to put into perspective the everyday challenges of working with pupils.
- Help staff to set professional boundaries for themselves such as not sharing their telephone numbers; not texting parents with personal phones and not having their phones out during Curriculum time.
- Remind staff not to share personal details such as phone numbers and not to interact with parents on social media. Staff with children in school should be aware and take measures to protect themselves. For example, set high privacy settings on Facebook.
- Flexible working applications are always seriously considered within the confines of what is best for the pupils.
- Pastoral support from the incumbent.
- No expectation to be at work outside of contracted/directed hours.

Training

Annual training takes place for all staff as part of the safeguarding training. Other specific training will be utilised as appropriate. Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our appraisal process and additional CPD will be offered throughout the year where it becomes appropriate. Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for 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 Headteacher, Peter Hilton who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Managing Sickness and Absence Policy
- Non-Sickness Absence Policy
- Code of Conduct