



Saint Joseph's Catholic Voluntary Academy

Wellbeing Policy

World Mental Health Organisation

Good mental health and well-being are essential for all of us to lead fulfilling lives, to realise our full potential, to participate productively in our communities, and to demonstrate resilience in the face of stress and adversity. (WHO 2021)

School Vision

Good mental health is the ability to respond well to the challenges in everyday life. At St Joseph's we consider what shapes a person's mental health, this includes, protective factors such as our families, friends and self-efficiency. Risk factors which may impact a healthy mind and responses to difficult situations we face. We aim to promote and preserve good mental health and protect and educate against the impact of risk factors and difficult situations which can impact the mental health of our pupils, staff and parents.

At St Joseph's we believe that good mental health for our children can lead to improved attainment, attendance, reductions in behavioural problems, as well as happier, more confident and resilient young person.

The three P's

We are committed to promoting, preserving and protecting the mental health of our whole community; children, staff members and the families that can support the overall success of each child getting the best experience at school and helping them flourish. We believe that a positive and supportive environment is essential for the overall well-being and academic success of everyone in our school community.

Our intent is to create a culture that prioritises mental health, where every child, family and staff member feels safe, valued, and supported. Through a whole school approach, we aim to provide the necessary resources, education, and interventions to foster positive mental health outcomes for all.

Promotion

We will actively promote mental health awareness and understanding throughout our school. This will include regular initiatives, training, and educational programs that address various aspects of mental health. We will encourage open dialogue and destigmatise mental health discussions to create a supportive and inclusive environment. We have chosen eight principles to promoting a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing as our tool for ensuring that we have an effective approach to developing the mental health of all in our school community. Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Preservation

St Joseph's will always react to poor mental health for pupils, staff and families whilst still being dedicated to preserving good mental health by implementing strategies that nurture emotional well-being and resilience for all, not just those who are in immediate need. Our curriculum will incorporate social-emotional learning activities and mindfulness practices to enhance emotional regulation, self-awareness, and empathy among all students. We will also provide opportunities for physical activity, creative expression, and play, which are vital for mental health preservation. We are committed to protecting the mental health of our children and staff members. Our school will have a robust support system in place, including regular training, Early Help, positive relationships and communication with parents, and pastoral care from all staff who can provide guidance and assistance when needed. We will ensure consistency, confidentiality and privacy, creating a safe space for individuals to seek help and support.

Protection

We aim to create a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils and staff about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos.

We recognise that promoting, preserving, and protecting mental health is a collective effort. We will actively engage parents, caregivers, and the wider community in our initiatives. We will provide regular communication, staff training and resources to help parents understand and support their child's mental health. We will collaborate with external organisations and experts to bring in specialised knowledge and resources.

How

At St Joseph's, we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers).

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

We endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress and aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or to access help when they need it.

We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

Teaching about mental health

At St Joseph's we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a pro-active way to preventing problems arising. We do this by:

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and well-being.
- Adhering to a positive, restorative approach to behaviour management.
- Helping children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- Helping children to feel comfortable about sharing any concerns or worries.
- Teaching children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they understand their emotions and feelings better with Zones of Regulation.
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the world: ECO warriors and School Council
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks: positive language modelled by staff

- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers: we have a flowchart with a clear expectation and consistency of how everything is dealt with and a chronology.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Enabling access to appropriate support.
- Mental Health and PSHE for all year groups
- Celebrating Children's Mental Health week and access to information around the school

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment disorder.
- Nurture groups to focus on mental health, resilience and wellbeing: ELSA and Positive Play

Staff Role

Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

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

Key staff supporting Mental Health at St Joseph's Primary School

Named Mental Health Lead & Designated Safeguarding Lead – Stacey Carr (Head Teacher)

Deputy Safeguarding Lead & PSHE Lead – Mrs Webster

SENDSCO – Zoe Barrett

Pastoral Manager and assistant DSL – Sarah Shirley

Mental Health Lead – Amy Taylor

Named Mental Health Governor – Karen McCluskey

Our Mental Health Leads:

- Lead and work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Work with the PSHE leader re: teaching about mental health.
- Provide advice and support to staff and organises training and updates.
- Liaise with mental health services and makes individual referrals to them.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves 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 we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

Targeted support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.

Targeted use of resources.

Managing feelings resources e.g. Talking Boxes and Suggestion Box

Zen Den

Managing emotions resources.

Primary ELSA support groups.

Therapeutic activities including relaxation and mindfulness techniques – School Chaplain

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire

EduKey

Arbor behaviour log

Zones of Regulation

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support. There will be a clear structure/ system of how to directly

Early Identification and Warning Signs

All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health, including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstance
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

School staff may also 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 the designated child protection and safeguarding officer or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or non-attendance

Assessment, interventions and support

All concerns are reported to the designated adults within school and needs are assessed through a triage approach with SLT, class teachers and SENDCO to ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible.

Working with parents and carers.

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher if they have mental health concerns. This will be communicated to Mrs Carr, Mental Health Lead for assessment and COMPASS via Link Meetings. Mrs Carr may discuss this through SLT meetings.

To support parents and carers we will:

- Provide information online on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.
- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.
- Organise workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience and steps to wellbeing.

When a concern has been raised, teachers or the Mental Health Lead and SENDCO will:

- Contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment (Although there may be cases, parents and carers cannot be involved due to child protection issues.)
- Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies.
- Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away.
- Create a chronology of actions and events: Priority Pupil Meetings
- Agree mental health care and protection plan where appropriate including clear next steps.
- Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting support groups.
- Ensure communication through all staff is clear via briefing, staff meetings and emails.

Working with specialist services

As part of our targeted provision, the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Children may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- Behaviour support
- Educational Psychology Services
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- School Nursing Service
- Children's and Family Services
- Therapists
- Family support workers
- Counselling Services

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.

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.

Links to other policies

This policy links to our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy including Anti Bullying, Attendance and Behaviour Policy.

Monitoring and evaluation

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy will be published on the school website - hard copies are available on request. The policy will be reviewed every three years.