



**Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy for
St Andrew's Church of England School Primary School**

Growing and learning together with God

Approved by Full Governing Body		Date:	
Signature of Chair		Date:	October 2023
Review Cycle:	Two Years	Review Date:	October 2025

Policy Aim

At St Andrew's CofE Primary School it is our vision that all children are entitled to develop to their fullest potential; academically, socially and emotionally, enabling each child to grow in confidence and be able to fully participate in everything that goes on in the wider community with confidence. It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning, as well as their physical and social health and their mental wellbeing in adulthood. The Department for Education recognises that, in order to help their pupils succeed: schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy.

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 Organisation)

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every child, parent / carer and member of staff. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at identified vulnerable pupils and families. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. We recognise as a school that by developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for children affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

This policy describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and is intended as guidance for all staff and governors. It should be read in

conjunction with and with regard to; our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue, the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need, the safeguarding policy in relation to prompt action and wider concerns of vulnerability and the Behaviour Policy with regards to the promotion of emotional well-being through the understanding of how children and young people's behaviours can be influenced by complex Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs.

Ethos

Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils, by developing approaches tailored to the particular needs of their pupils. All schools are under a statutory duty to promote the welfare of their pupils, which includes: preventing impairment of children's health or development, and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes.

Full details are set out in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) statutory guidance.

St Andrew's CofE Primary School aims to support and teach skills to pupils and staff to increase their awareness of emotional health and wellbeing.

Two key elements to support good mental health are:-

- **Feeling Good** - experiencing positive emotions like happiness, contentment and enjoyment; including feelings like curiosity, engagement and safety.
- **Functioning Well** - how a person is able to function in the world; this includes positive relationships and social connections, as well as feeling in control of your life and having a sense of purpose.

To promote **First Aid for Mental Health and Wellbeing** at St Andrew's School this policy aims to:

- Develop a whole school approach for both pupils and staff
- 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
- Create an approach based on the 8 key principles identified in 'Promoting Children and Young people's Emotional Health and Wellbeing' (Updated 2021).

The following diagram presents eight principles to promote emotional health and wellbeing in schools.



The eight identified principles will underpin the approaches used to support the development and integration of wellbeing strategies within St Andrew's.

The policy and curriculum delivery will be tailored to promote the key aspects of improving Mental Health illness and Wellbeing. It will focus on creating a socially, emotionally and physical rich environment where key relationships can thrive and children can feel secure in their learning.

Pupil voice will be promoted through developing independence and choice making decisions. Staff will have access to training and signposting to approaches and resources that will support their own emotional health and wellbeing with an aim to foster team work and create solidarity.

Clear identification, impact and outcomes measures will feed into school based interventions offered to pupils, where deemed necessary.

All staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health and emotional wellbeing of pupils.

Identified members of staff with a specific, relevant responsibility include:

Mrs N Dalibar- Head Teacher / Designated Child Protection and Safeguarding Officer

Ms A Lawrence – Deputy Headteacher and Deputy Safeguarding Lead

Mrs T Brocklehurst- Deputy Safeguarding Lead, Mental health Lead/First aider and SEND Co-ordinator.

Mrs H VanDuin – PSHE Co-ordinator.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health Lead or Head Teacher 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. If the pupil presents as 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 either the Head Teacher or the SENDCo.

Pupil Identification

It is our aim at St Andrew's School that early intervention, following identification of SEMH, which provides effective support, is crucial. The school's role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

- **Prevention:** creating 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 about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos.
- **Identification:** recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible. Staff can record concerns on the Pupil Pastoral Support sheet and give to the Pastoral Support Team, SENDCo or the Head Teacher.
- **Early support:** Supporting pupils to access early support and interventions. These will be led by our Pastoral Support Team.
- **Access to specialist support:** working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment. Work along side external agencies and support the strategies in the classroom.

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 our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead and/ or Head Teacher via the Pupil Pastoral Support sheets.

If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the safeguarding lead staff or the Head Teacher. If the child 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.

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
- Missing PE or getting changed secretly

Individual SEN support plans will identify an individual support for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil (one page profile), the parents and relevant health professionals and will have links to individual behaviour plans and risk assessments.

The plan will 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

Identified pupils will receive bespoke intervention packages delivered by trained staff who have undertaken relevant training in relation to the development of resilience, enhancing self - esteem and emotional regulation.

The waves of support for Mental Health and Well-Being

ALL pupils will need consistent care, understanding, emotional support and co-regulation support. This should be delivered through Quality First Teaching and the overall ethos of the interaction and care across all staff in the school.

SOME pupils will require access to time-limited interventions or occasional support through targeted support plans.

A FEW pupils will demand a higher level of individualised intervention programme to accelerate or maximise progress in relation to developing greater positive mental health and well-being. This may require school staff to link with Health or LA professionals in order to have the right level of expertise and knowledge required to provide the CYP with the right level of support.

Virtual School Heads in the LA will be made aware of information about all looked after children's physical, emotional or mental health that may have an impact on his or her learning and educational progress, this will be indicated in their Personal Education Plan (PEP) and the school policy will be shared with the virtual school head, linked to the statutory guidance articulated in the DFE (2021) document.

A Safeguarding Responsibility

Our safeguarding responsibilities and approaches should take into account the needs of those pupils with mental health challenges, anxiety and trauma. St Andrew's is committed supporting every staff member to understand the impact of childhood distress and adversities. In order to foster a school culture built on kindness, compassion and hope we will ensure that relationships and values are at the heart of all our policies and safeguarding practices.

"Mental Health problems can, in some cases be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Schools should have in place arrangements which reflect the importance of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of their pupils"

(Mental Health and Behaviour in schools November 2018, DFE)

Procedure for Concern in relation to mental health issues.

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?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the pupil's confidential file.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about their child/rens' mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

Staff Training and CPD

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. 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.

Working with Parents and Carers

Encouraging parental engagement and involvement is absolutely crucial when addressing and planning support for children and young people's Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs.

"The parent-child connection is the most powerful mental health intervention known to mankind" (Bessel van der Kolk)

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 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.

Staff Wellbeing Support and Interventions

It is recognised at St Andrew's that promoting staff health and emotional well-being should be an integral part of the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. Therefore training and signposting to materials about mental health and emotional wellbeing will be made available for all staff. An open door policy to senior leadership is made available if a member of staff is in need of speaking to someone about any issues of concern.

School leadership will ensure all staff have a good knowledge of the employment assistance schemes that are available nationally and in the borough.

The current scheme that St Andrew's is part of is:

The School also uses the services of Occupational Health.

Supervision and appraisal will allow for mutual communication about personal health and emotional wellbeing if both felt it is deemed necessary.

Confidentiality

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

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them