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# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

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Approved By	Local Governing Committee
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## 1. Policy Statement

We want all of our pupils to experience success, whatever that looks like for them. But more importantly we want them to be happy and healthy so that they can grow into well balanced young people, ready to face life's challenges.

Our aim is to ensure that all our pupils feel connected with learning and with school so that they are motivated and inspired to do well. Through our school relationships, we create a safe place for children to speak up if they need to, so that every member of the school community has a voice. We empower young people to be able to recognise where there is difficulty, adversity or wrong doing and give them the tools to speak up about it.

This policy provides guidance on the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, as well as informing pupils, parents and carers about the support that they can expect from the school in this respect.

## 2. Aims of the School's Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the school
- Create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion
- Foster a positive atmosphere, where pupils feel comfortable to discuss and reflect on their own mental health
- Celebrate all the ways pupils achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom
- Give pupils the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Spread awareness of strategies for positive mental health
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Provide support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues
- Provide support and access to resources to pupils experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them

## 3. Raising Awareness

We seek to instil a culture of staff and pupil welfare where everyone is aware of warning signs and is supported in relation to looking after wellbeing. All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in mood or energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted

- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

#### 4. Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing

Through our academic and pastoral structures, we ensure pupils can develop social and emotional skills which promote positive mental well-being and mental health, in school and throughout life. Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and be a school where:

- all pupils are valued
- pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- pupils feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- positive mental health is promoted and valued
- bullying is not tolerated

We encourage pupils to identify 'their person': someone they feel comfortable speaking to. For most pupils this will be their class teacher, but it could be any responsible adult around school.

Through our curriculum, we explore strategies for leading safe, healthy lifestyles and those which promote positive mental health and wellbeing, resilience and mental toughness. We teach:

- that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health
- that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations
- how pupils can recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings
- how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate
- the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness
- simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests
- about how isolation and loneliness can affect children and the importance of discussing feelings with a responsible adult
- that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing
- when where and how to seek support, including who to speak to in school if pupils are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing
- that it is common for people to experience mental ill health but that in most cases problems can be resolved with the right support

The wellbeing curriculum is regularly reviewed by the Headteacher, so that it is kept up to date with the latest guidance and local context.

In addition to the above, as part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all, we create a positive atmosphere around mental health where there is an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging pupils to disclose when they think their mental health is deteriorating

The school offers support to all pupils by:

- Providing structured days with a variety of classroom learning and indoor and outdoor social time
- Having an open and honest culture where worries can be shared
- Daily access to their class teacher
- Character Development Projects: E.g. Robin Wood, enterprise projects and Young Voices.
- Assemblies on mental health and wellbeing and character development
- Daily meet and greet staff on the school gate
- Mental Health Awareness Week/'Hello Yellow' Day
- Rewards policy and rewards system celebrating individual achievements
- Celebration assemblies
- Leadership opportunities: EG. Ambassadors, school Council, Eco Council and Sports Leaders
- Extracurricular opportunities
- Shared values in line with the school's ethos

## 5. Signposting

Through our various modes of communications (curriculum, newsletters, bulletins, website, social media) we ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community and how to access.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils and their families understand:

- What help is available
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

### 5.1 Selected Provision

Where pupils require further support outside of the whole school offer, we provide

- Extra-Curricular timetables
- Pastoral drop in/meet and greets
- Quiet space during break and lunchtimes
- Early Break
- Additional transition
- Wellbeing questionnaires (Bee Well and Internal Questionnaires)

### 5.2 Targeted Provision

- Referral to CAMHS
- Mentoring
- Risk Assessments

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health, as well as increasing understanding and awareness of common mental health issues. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected by emotional health and mental wellbeing concerns.

## 6. Disclosures

### 6.1 Managing Disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring. Staff should focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Lead and record the information as appropriate. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file (CPOMs).

When making a record of a disclosure, where possible, staff will include:

- Date, time and location of the disclosure
- The context in which the disclosure was made
- Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff
- Any linked pupils

### 6.2 Confidentiality

A disclosure cannot be kept secret. Staff will not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret, instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

Staff should always share disclosures with the school's safeguarding lead and log on CPOMs. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil (and / or parent or carer, where appropriate) and explain:

- With whom they will share the information
- What information they will share
- Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents will be informed unless there is a child protection concern.

## 7. Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise that families play a key role in influencing children's emotional health and mental wellbeing, therefore it is vital that we work with parents/carers to promote positive wellbeing for them. We do this by signposting sources of support available within school and the local community: we will ensure this

information contains services that are available to promote positive emotional wellbeing for all pupils, as well as those for children experiencing mental ill health.

This information will be delivered via parents' information evenings, newsletters, school website. The links below signpost to an extensive directory of local agencies and organisations for staff, parents and carers:

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200368/children\\_and\\_young\\_people\\_with\\_special\\_educational\\_needs\\_and\\_disabilities](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/info/200368/children_and_young_people_with_special_educational_needs_and_disabilities)

<https://www.oldham.gov.uk/hsc/services/send/>

[https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/4710/supporting\\_young\\_minds\\_through\\_tough\\_times](https://www.oldham.gov.uk/downloads/file/4710/supporting_young_minds_through_tough_times)

## 8. Training

Training schedules will be responsive and lead by the needs of the school's context. This ensures that support matches the changing needs of the school as a whole and each cohort.

Annual safeguarding training will always remind staff of the importance of mental health and wellbeing and as a minimum, all staff have received training about recognising and responding to mental health. The training ensures staff:

- Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

Staff have free and unlimited access to training modules on <https://www.minded.org.uk/>, an online training resource which provides free training for school staff around emotional health and mental wellbeing.

Staff are also able to request relevant training as part of their Performance Management process.

## 9. Staff Wellbeing

We encourage staff as individuals to take responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional wellbeing and promote an open and compassionate culture in which staff are supported in order that they may seek any help and support they need.

We create opportunities for staff to come together through regular meetings and we encourage a culture of openness and sympathetic alertness where we remain mindful of any indication of changes in staff behaviour, performance or signs of being under stress. Staff are encouraged to speak up about concerns for themselves or others.

We are understanding of the differing needs of the staff, at different points and events during their life cycles, and offer support accordingly, if and when required. Where staff need more support, they have access to the Employee Assistance Programme for counselling and staff can also refer themselves to Occupational Health. Staff can also seek support from the Trust Chaplain Mr R Ford.

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can be distressing for staff. To combat this, we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Open door policy for staff to speak to the Headteacher for support
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment

## 10. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Designated Safeguarding Lead. At St George's, this is the Headteacher.

## 11. Cross References

See also:

- SEND Policy
- Relationships and Health Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Curriculum Policy