



Mental Wellbeing Policy

Spring 2022

1. Introduction

1.1 At St Andrew's C.E. Primary School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and well-being of our children and staff. Our culture is supportive and caring, and where each individual and contribution is respected and valued.

1.2 At our school, we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that each of us may need help to cope with them sometimes. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support. At our school, positive mental health is everybody's responsibility.

2. Aims and Objectives

2.1 At St Andrew's, we aim to promote positive mental health and well-being for our whole school community; pupils, staff, parents and carers, and recognise how important mental health and emotional well-being is to our lives in just the same way as physical health.

2.2 We aim 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.

2.3 We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall well-being and can affect their learning and achievement. Persistent mental health problems may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of those of the same age.

2.4 We aim to:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better.
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries.
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count.
- encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'.
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.

2.5 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.

- Access to appropriate support that meets individual needs.

3. Management and Co-ordination

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

- Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy
- Assistant Headteacher – Responsible for Pupil Welfare
- Additional Needs Leader
- Emotional Literacy Support Assistant
- Members of the school 'Mental Well-Being Team'

3.2 Together, they are responsible for:

- Working with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health.
- Providing advice and support to staff and organises training and updates
- Keeping staff up-to-date with information about what support is available
- Liaising with the PSHE Leader on teaching about mental health.
- Being the first point of contact and communicates with mental health services.
- Making referrals to both internal and external services such as ELSA support or CASY counselling.
- Ensuring that relevant staff are kept informed and up to date following any concerns about a child.

4. Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

4.1 School staff should be aware of the warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

4.2 Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits.
- Becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity and mood.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.
- Continually reporting of feeling unwell.
- Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. a large winter coat in summer.
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption.

4.3 Staff will also be able to identify a range of issues, including:

- Attendance and absenteeism.
- Punctuality and lateness.
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education.

4.4 Finally, staff will be well placed to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact a child's mental health and wellbeing, such as family issues, bereavement and health difficulties.

4.5 These warning signs should always be taken seriously and if a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a student, then in the first instance they should speak to:

- Additional Needs Leader
- Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy
- Assistant Headteacher – Responsible for Pupil Welfare

5. Disclosures

5.1 If a child discloses concerns about themselves or a friend, to any member of staff, then all staff will respond in a calm, supportive, and non-judgemental manner in-line with the school's 'Safeguarding Policy' which should be followed in these circumstances (see Safeguarding Policy).

6. Curriculum

6.1 The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum. In addition, mental well-being is specifically addressed in a regular weekly collective worship session – Mindful Monday's. Mental well-being is also interwoven, where appropriate, into our curriculum to provide children with strategies to help keep them mentally well and develop resilience. Worry Boxes are in place throughout school for children to share their concerns.

6.2 The PHSE and RSE curriculum and lesson content will be regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the aims outlined in this policy.

7. Support

7.1 If a child is identified as needing support, they will be assessed against the 'Pyramid of Need' and a 'Strengths and Weaknesses' baseline assessment may be completed. Following this, the Welfare team will decide on the most appropriate form of support.

7.2 This may include:

- In-class or small group circle time activities
- Circle of Friends
- A one off or regular sessions with Emotional Literacy Support Assistant
- CASY Counselling

8. External Agencies and Services

8.1 As part of our whole school approach, we will also work with other agencies to support our child's emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with:

- The School Nursing Team
- Paediatricians.
- CAMHS.
- Family support workers.
- Behavioural support workers.

9. Training

9.1 All staff will receive regular training in child mental health so that they can recognise and respond to mental health issues. This will form part of their regular safeguarding training and is a requirement to keep children safe. Training will be organised by the Deputy Headteacher responsible for Staff Development and records will be held in staff files.

9.2 Additional training opportunities for staff will be arranged as needed when it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with pupils.

10. Parents/Carers

10.1 We aim to support parents as much as possible. This means keeping them informed about their child and offering our support at all times.

10.2 To support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school.
- Share and allow parents to access further support.
- Ensure that parents are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child.
- Give parents guidance about how they can support their child's/children's positive mental health.
- Ensure this policy is easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health training our school staff receive and how mental health is covered in our school curriculum.

11. Transition Support

11.1 It is recognised that the transition to secondary school can be a challenging time for children in terms of mental well-being.

11.2 To support this, we will:

- Arrange transition meetings with parent/carers, pupils and relevant staff.
- Provide all children with the opportunity to discuss their concerns/feelings.
- Have small group ELSA/CASY sessions for identified children.
- Key Adults might support secondary school visits with vulnerable pupils.
- Ensure that all records concerning mental well-being are passed on to the appropriate staff member at the receiving school.