

HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

SERVING THE COMMUNITY

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

With Christ at the centre, we live, love and learn together, reaching out to all.

Together, with Jesus, we can do it!



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Date of next review: September 2023

Signed: Mr P Bradley

Role: Chair Curriculum and Standards Committee

Adopted by the Governing Body:

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Policy statement

At Holy Family, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and governors. Those experiencing mental health difficulties should not face discrimination and the school are committed to helping to identify these difficulties and supporting people to overcome them.

This policy sets out our approach to mental health and wellbeing for all parties.

Through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

Links to Other Policies

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Holy Family’s approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies:

- Personal Development
- Child Protection Policy
- Equality
- Appraisal
- Positive Behaviour
- SEND
- Health and Safety
- Whistleblowing
- Menopause
- Intimate Care
- Medicines
- RSHE

Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in themselves and in their pupils.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support for themselves and their pupils, when with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support for staff and students with mental health issues,
- To signpost parents/carers for specific support whose children are experiencing mental health issues
- Develop resilience amongst staff students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Instil a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

Ethos

We recognise that everyone will experience mental health difficulties at some point in their lives. At Holy Family, we have an inclusive ethos, which encourages support and respect for both staff and pupils who are experiencing challenged to their mental health.

We aim to recognise those in need and will endeavour to support them as best we can, possibly signposting them to others who can help. We do not judge or blame, we act to provide a support network for those experiencing difficulties.

At the same time, we also recognise the importance of taking care of our own mental wellbeing, taking actions and encouraging others to include positive mental activities as part of a healthy lifestyle. Whether this is providing opportunities to talk to others, learn from others (including key speakers), or take part in activities promoting mental health.

Role of the Mental Health Lead

Designated Mental Health Lead – Mrs Davey

Holy Family has a designated Lead for Mental Health. She acts as a champion for mental health and wellbeing, and is a member of the Senior Leadership Team.

Their role is not to necessarily provide interventions, but to have a whole school overview and to coordinate the school's approach to positive mental health and wellbeing.

As endorsed by the Department for Education, they will:

- Oversee the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing, including how it is reflected in the design of behaviour policies, curriculum and pastoral support, how staff are supported with their own mental wellbeing and how pupils and parents are engaged;
- Support the identification of at risk children and children exhibiting signs of mental ill health;
- Knowledge of the local mental health services and working with clear links into children and young people's mental health services to refer children and young people into NHS services where it is appropriate to do so;
- Coordination of the mental health needs of young people within the school or college and oversight of the delivery of interventions where these are being delivered in the educational setting;
- Support staff in contact with children with mental health needs to help raise awareness, and give all staff the confidence to work with young people;
- Oversee and monitor the outcomes of interventions, on children and young people's education and wellbeing.

Other Key Staff members

The Designated Mental Health Lead works alongside side other key members of staff who have specific roles to play:

- Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mr Quigley
- Deputy Safeguarding Lead – Miss Barr
- SENDCO – Mrs Davies
- Learning Mentors – Mrs Reeves and Mrs Powell

Leadership

The Mental Health Lead reports directly to the Headteacher and meets regularly with him to discuss the provision for staff and pupil mental health and wellbeing. The agenda for these meetings may consist of:

- Staff wellbeing provision and activities
- Pupil wellbeing provision and activities
- Parental engagement provision and activities
- Monitoring of identification and outcomes of pupil interventions
- Monitoring individual support needs (not minuted)
- Policy review (if required)
- Review of Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan (if not covered in the points above)

General issues and provision discussions are minuted to provide a formal record; however notes on discussions related to the support of individuals are kept confidential and are not attached to the minutes.

The Mental Health Lead presents a written report for the Governing Body on Mental Health and Wellbeing across the school, each term.

The Mental Health Lead may also need to be involved in meetings to support staff or pupils with mental health needs. She may also need to review provision as a result of individual mental health needs, even if they are not directly involved in organising the support.

Mental Health and Well Being of Staff

As employees, staff who feel they need support are able to access the following services:

- The Education Support Partnership – a free service for all those working in education in the UK, 08000 562 561, <https://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/>

Staff have access to the Employee and Member Assistance Programme:

- The service provides a 24/7 helpline - Any member of staff can call day or night
- It is a self-referral programme for all staff in school
- They can ring about any issue – work-related or non- work-related
- It is completely confidential; staff do not need to inform school about accessing the service and the service will not inform school either.
- From the initial phone call, if deemed necessary/appropriate, the staff member can then receive 6 x 30 minute counselling sessions, with a clinician, free of charge
- The sessions will take place via phone
- The service also offers reading materials and audio books that can support, give advice and help the staff member understand a range of related issues
- If an issue is deemed too 'big' or complex to be dealt with in 6 sessions, the Occupational Health Service can be sought

Monitoring Arrangements

In addition to regular meetings between the Mental Health Lead, Headteacher and Mental Health Governor, staff wellbeing is monitored through an annual staff survey.

Mental Health and Well Being of Pupils

Identification

Pupils with mental health needs are often identified by those closest to them: their parents or the classroom staff. These concerns are discussed with either the SENDCO or the Mental Health Lead depending on their nature.

Staff all receive training on helping them recognise the symptoms that a mental health difficulty is affecting their daily lives.

Support

This school tailors its support for our children and young people according to their needs. As a school we have access to the following services, provided by ourselves, through the Learning Mentor or externally:

- **‘Relax Kids’ Intervention.** This intervention provides Social and emotional support for those children who are experiencing difficulties. This is done in small groups and on a one to one basis delivered by our school learning mentor.
- **‘Circle of Friends’** intervention. Social and emotional support for those children who are experiencing friendship, confidence or social interaction difficulties. This is done in small groups delivered by our school learning mentor.
- **Bereavement support.** This is delivered on a one to one by our school learning mentor. Where necessary, Bereavement counselling support is offered by school and delivered by outside specialist ‘Butterflies’ Bereavement Counselling.
- **Early Help Assessment/Team Around the Family.** These meetings are in place at Holy Family to support children and their families who are experiencing a variety of difficulties
- **One to one support.** This is offered to those children who are experiencing a wide range social and emotional difficulties. This is delivered by our school learning mentor.
- **Counselling support.** This is offered by school and delivered by outside specialist ‘KOOH’ counselling and in some circumstances CAMHS may become involved.

Activities used by Learning Mentor to support Mental Health and Emotional Well-being

- Meditation – Breathing exercises (candles/gentle music/soft cushions used)
- Hand/Head Massage
- Water Therapy
- Painting
- Baking
- Food Tasting
- Embroidery
- Social Stories
- Play Doh Therapy

Targeted Support

At Holy Family, 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 school nurses and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working closely with Knowsley City Council Children's Services, Knowsley CAMHS and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;
- Identifying and assessing in line with the Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT), children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers. Agree an Individual Care Plan as the first stage of a graduated approach
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective
- Host regular Teams Around the Family (TAF) meetings to monitor the pupil's well-being and progress or lack of

According to the child's needs;

- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including Knowsley CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality;
- Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

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 pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role of the school and specific staff

<https://www.knowsleyinfo.co.uk/content/camhs-team-knowsley>

Links to Other Services

In some cases, involvement from outside agencies may be required when the pupils' needs cannot be met by the school alone. Some of these services include:

- Social Services
- Kooth Counselling
- Bereavement support (Butterflies)
- School Nurse

- Educational Psychology Service
- Speech and Language Therapy
- Children and Adult Mental Health Service (CAMHS)
- Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy
- Education Improvement Team (EIT)
- Specific Learning Difficulty support.

Supporting Pupils' Well-Being

The school provides the following wellbeing activities for our children and young people:

- **Superstar celebration assemblies.** Each Friday, all the children and staff in the school, come together for an assembly with a well-being/feel-good focus, celebrating pupils' achievements and talents, both in and out of school
- **Topic based Assemblies.** Visitors are invited and welcomed into the school to talk to the children throughout the school on a wide range of topics such as; Science, NSPCC, Fire Safety (leading up to Bonfire Night), Police talks, Internet Safety, Recycling etc.
- **'Well-Being' Days.** Throughout the school academic year, days dedicated to pupils' health and emotional well-being are celebrated. Namely, Children's Mental Day, World Mental Health Day and Happiness Day.
- **Aspire Teams.** All children at Holy Family are involved in 'Aspire Teams.' This programme links our Catholic Values and British Values. The children study influential British citizens, past and present who have either demonstrated resilience and perseverance and overcome a barrier, or have celebrated and championed their individuality, or have shown care and compassion for others and made a difference to our society.
- **Trips and Residential.** All children at Holy Family have the opportunity to experience going out on school trips/visits every term. In Year 6, the children have the opportunity to experience going on a residential trip to PGL.
- Class Workshops/lessons taught by outside agencies to support children with their learning and well-being including; Junior Chef, Music lessons etc
- Family Learning Workshops that support parents/carers in helping and working with their children to learn.
- Mindfulness space set up in Early Years – quiet time which allows the younger children time to sit and look at pictures of their families during school time.
- **Extra-curricular Activities.** Holy Family offers a wide range of other After School Clubs for children in Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 that support their well-being, provided by both internal and external providers.

- **Sports Premium Funding Opportunities** See current Sports Premium document
- **Sports Competitions.** We provide opportunities for Key Stage 1/2 and vulnerable groups to take part in sports competitions held in a variety of sports within the community of Knowsley.
- **Play-Leaders and Buddy systems.** These are in place to support friendships.

Monitoring Arrangements

The Mental Health Lead, Headteacher, SENDCO and Learning Mentors meet regularly to monitor the provision of mental health and wellbeing for pupils.

Raising Concerns

If a staff member has concerns about the mental health of a colleague, they should try and speak to them. If they remain concerned, they are able to talk in confidence to the Mental Health Lead or Headteacher.

If someone (staff, parent or pupil) has a concern about the mental health of a pupil, they should initially speak to their class teacher, the Learning Mentor, the SENDCO or the Mental Health Lead. If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mr Quigley, should be informed and the school's child protection procedures should be followed. If the child presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student or colleague 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 alert Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mr Quigley or Mental Health Lead - Mrs Davey, as appropriate.

Possible warning signs, to 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 (pupil)
- Changes in usual patterns of behaviour e.g. avoiding colleagues and/or staff room (staff)
- Lateness to, or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Managing Disclosures

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially on the student's personal file, including:

- Date
- Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps
- The MASH Team will be notified, if necessary/appropriate
- Adult disclosure

Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the student. We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them
- When we're going to tell them

Ideally, consent should be gained from the student first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as students up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a member of the safeguarding team, where appropriate, this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

Parents must always be informed, but students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, a timescale of 24 hours is recommended to share this information before the school makes contact with the parents/carers.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk outside of school, or there are child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

Training

The Mental Health Lead has accessed comprehensive training and is working towards a *Level 4* Certificate in Mental Health Aware Leadership (Educational Leader) in addition to an accreditation as a National Educational Leader in Mental Health.

As part of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan, the Senior Leadership Team assess and review the training needs of teaching and non-teaching staff, Governors, Senior Leaders, student teachers, volunteers and others who may be working in our schools.

During the induction process, those who have not received the mental health training identified appropriate to their role will be offered the training at the first available opportunity.

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 to enable them to keep students safe. A nominated member of staff will receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent.

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 developing situations with one or more students.

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.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed initially with our Mental Health and CPD lead, Mrs Davey who can highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed. Final decisions will be taken to the Headteacher, Mr Quigley.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school and through our communication channels (newsletters, app and website), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure students 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

Teaching About Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe form a significant part of our Curriculum. In Key Stage One and Two, it is taught through; Personal Development, RE, RSE, Science, PE and Computing. In EYFS, it is taught through Understanding the World, Communication and Language, Personal, Social and Emotional Education and Physical Development.

Whole School Approach

When it is necessary to inform parents about an issue/potential issue, the following considerations will be made

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face or would they be more comfortable or more accessible through a virtual meeting?
- Who should be present – pupils, staff, parents, SENDCO, Mental Health Lead Learning Mentor
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

In more serious cases, we are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. As a result, parents may respond in various ways which we will make ourselves prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication will be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. A record of the meeting and points discussed/agreed will be added to the pupil's record and, if appropriate, an Individual Care Plan created if appropriate. It is also very likely that a follow-up meeting or phone call will be arranged.

Supporting Parents

We recognise that the family plays a key role in influencing our pupils' emotional health and wellbeing. We will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, app, newsletters etc.)
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners
- Endeavour to support parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities, to promote their social and emotional wellbeing.

Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support, but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the student who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend needs help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually. The next review date is September 2023

In between updates, the policy will be updated if necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of Mental Health Lead, Mrs Davey.

Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.

