



HOLY TRINITY

A BATH AND WELLS ACADEMY

Learning, Achieving and Flourishing Together in God's Promises, Goodness and Love.

PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH IN SCHOOLS

Learning, Achieving and Flourishing Together
in God's Promises, Goodness and Love.



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This policy should be taken and used as part of Holy Trinity Church School's overall strategy and implemented within the context of our vision and values as a Church of England school.

It is consistent with the overall vision of the school in line with the Christian Foundation of the school and will be reviewed every year as part of the School Development plan.

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Introduction

At Holy Trinity Church School (the “school”), we place positive mental health and wellbeing at the centre of school life. Our Vision *‘Learning, achieving and flourishing together in God’s promises, goodness and love’* highlights the importance we place on supporting every child’s emotional wellbeing so that they are happy and ready to learn.

We aim to ensure positive mental health and well-being for every pupil, parent/carer and staff member. We promote a positive ethos in school, based on the understanding that all children need the foundations of positive mental health to be able to fulfil their potential academically, personally and socially. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable children. In addition to promoting positive mental health and well-being, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health.

By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and well-being policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and well-being in our school community, including pupils, parents and staff
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health and well-being issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their parents/carers
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues

Guidance

This policy is intended as guidance for all staff, including non-teaching staff and governors. It should be read in conjunction with our Medical Policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need. This policy should also be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding and Child Protection policies should more serious issues arise.

What does Positive Mental Health and Well-being mean?

Mental Health is how we feel, how we think and how we behave. It is about:

- Being able to form and maintain relationships with others
- Being adaptable to change and other people's expectations
- Being able to have fun
- Being open to learning
- Being able to develop a sense of right and wrong
- Being able to develop the resilience to manage ordinary setbacks

All children and young people need to:

- Be able to connect with others by participating in groups and teams
- Know they are capable and able to achieve
- Know that they count in their world and can contribute to their community
- Know they have courage and can manage risks appropriately

The school recognises that, at times, anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop positive mental health and well-being. The mental health and well-being of children, staff, parents/carers and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of development, learning, achievement and experiences.

The school believes that all children have the right to be educated in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody. We are committed to raising awareness, increasing understanding and ensuring that we can and do make a difference by providing an environment where all people feel safe, secure and able to achieve and experience success and wellbeing.

A distinctive feature of our school is the positive, caring and supportive atmosphere we have created. A consistent approach from our dedicated staff means that our school environment and school ethos all promote the mental health of the whole school community.

At school, we have regular opportunities for children to learn about and discuss wellbeing. These include community time, PSHE and worship.

Concerns about Positive Mental Health and Well-being

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

- Head Teacher: Adam Beauford
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Claire West
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL): Jo Veryard and Adam Beauford
- Mental Health Leads: Adam Beauford and Claire West

- SENDCO (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator): Claire West

School staff could become aware of changes in behaviour which may indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These changes may include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or 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
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Any member of staff who has concerns about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the SENDCO, one of the Mental Health Leads, the DSL or DDSL.

A Mental Health Lead will talk with the child and parents, where appropriate, to put support in place. This support may include providing the child with a trusted adult they can talk to, providing strategies the child can use when they are feeling worried, time with our social and emotional mental health advisor, Nina Britneff or other activities to support the child.

Where appropriate, the Mental Health Lead may also suggest making an appointment with the child's GP. On occasion, a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) may be appropriate. Any referrals will be led and managed by the SENDCO,

If there is a concern that the child is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures must be followed with an immediate referral to the DSL or a DDSL.

If the child presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff initially) and contacting the emergency services, if necessary.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum and embedded throughout our school learning community. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of each cohort, but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. There are also focused workshops throughout the year; e.g. talking about keeping safe, different special educational needs, our rainbow values and our 4 step rule.

The message '*It's best to talk to someone if you have a worry*' is embedded throughout the school so that children know that they can always talk about how

they are feeling. We have 'Worry Boxes' in school and any child who submits a worry will be spoken to individually about their worries by the class teacher, trusted adult in the classroom, the DSL, DDSL or the SENDCO.

Managing Disclosures

At times, a pupil may choose to tell a staff member concerns that they have about their own emotions or well-being. All staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

All staff should respond in a calm, supportive and non-judgemental way. Staff should listen rather than advise and their first thoughts should be of the child's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All safeguarding disclosures should be recorded on a Record of Concern form and shared with the DSL/DDSL, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

Staff must be honest about the issue of confidentiality. They should never promise the child that they will keep this to themselves and should inform the pupil who they are going to talk to, what they are going to tell them and why it is important that they pass these concerns on.

Informing Parents/Carers

Parents will usually be informed by the DSL, Head Teacher or SENDCO if a child makes a disclosure. It can be upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and staff should give the parent/carer time to reflect. A brief record of the meeting will normally be kept on the child's confidential record. Staff should always highlight further sources of information where possible to offer support to the parent. However, if a child gives reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents may not be informed and a Safeguarding referral will be made.

Working with all Parents/Carers and the School Community

In order to support parents/carers and the school community, the school will:

- Offer the support of Nina Britneff (social and emotional mental health specialist) to advise on mental health and well-being
- Highlight sources of information and support on our dedicated Mental Health and Well-being page on the school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of whom to talk to if they have any concerns about their child's mental health or well-being
- Make the school's mental health policy easily accessible to parents (which is available on the school website)
- Keep parents informed about the topics their children are learning in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home
- Make referrals for further support from other agencies such as Getset, play therapists, support groups and other health professionals.

In order to support staff, the school:

- Promotes good mental health and wellbeing as a vital part of the school ethos
- Sources and offers CPD courses, training and activities for staff
- Provides staff opportunities for professional development
- Has an open door policy for the Senior Leadership Team
- Provides flexible PPA and absence requests
- Has access to Occupational Health
- Has good quality Stress risk assessment provision
- Runs a staff wellbeing group
- Offers many staff benefits, such as discounted gym membership
- Offers supervision sessions
- Provides a good quality Employee Assistance Programme - Carefirst
- Offers access to supervision time
- Plans whole staff inset with shared lunches
- Ensures that mental health support information is displayed in school communal areas
- Support is tailored to meet individuals' specific needs

Training

We employ Nina Britneff, a social and emotional mental health advisor. She

- Carries out supervision with staff, advice and support sessions for staff and parents
- Carries out one-to-one work with children.
- Leads training for staff on a regular basis and 'drop in' sessions for staff to access at lunchtimes, depending on availability.

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health and well-being issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep pupils safe.

The school will also make information available on the school's website and the Mental Health Policy will be readily available to all staff. The Mental Health Leads will maintain an 'open door' policy for all staff who wish to discuss any concerns or questions they may have.

There are many websites, which can be accessed which provide information on mental health and wellbeing and the mental health leads have literature, which staff can use.

Staff have access to a 'staff wellbeing' group, which takes place monthly.