St Aidan's Catholic Primary Academy
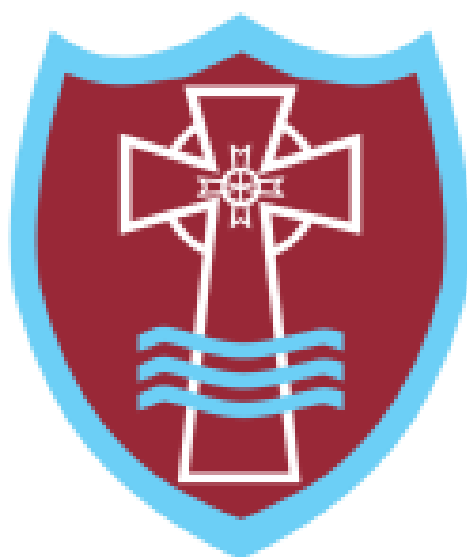
Mental Health and Well-being policy

Date: November 2022

Review date: September 2024

Mission Statement

"Together we all enjoy learning, achieving, sharing and praying. Let Jesus' love shine through in everything we do"

Our school vision statement

Here at St Aidan's we are passionate about our children being happy, safe and healthy.

We aim for children to learn in an inclusive, engaging environment; enabling them to be lifelong learners who know more, remember more and can do more in the wider world.

Mental Health and Well-being Policy

At St Aidan'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.

It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and well-being influences their cognitive development and learning as well as their physical and social health and their mental well-being in adulthood.

The Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice identifies Social, Educational and Mental Health as one of the four areas of Special Educational Need.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally health".

All children go through ups and downs through their school career and some face significant life events. About 10% of children aged 5 to 16 have a diagnosable mental health need and these can have enormous impact on their quality of life, relationships and academic achievement.

All schools are under a statutory duty to promote the welfare of their students, which includes preventing impairment of children's health or development and taking action to enable all children to have the best outcomes (KCSIE).

The DfE's document 'promoting children and young people's mental health and well-being' describes 8 principles of a whole school approach to promoting mental health and well-being. See diagram.

Figure 2. Eight principles to promoting a whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Anna Freud combines the 8 principles identified in the DfE guidance in to 5 steps to help support schools in ensuring a whole school approach is adopted effectively;

In the same way that Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility, so is Mental Health and Well-being.

Our role in school is to ensure that the whole school community is able to manage times of change and stress, be resilient, are supported to reach their potential and access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that pupils learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and where they can go if they need help and support.

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

In addition to children's well-being, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and well-being.

Purpose of the Policy

This policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health
- How we prevent mental health problems
- How we identify and support pupils with mental health needs
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent mental health problems getting worse
- Key information about some common mental health problems
- Where parents, staff and pupils can get advice and support

Definition of Mental Health and Well-being

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing: "… 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."

Mental health and well-being is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all members of our school community to:

- Feel confident in themselves
- Be able to express a range of emotions appropriately
- Be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others
- Cope with the stresses of everyday life
- Manage times of stress and be able to deal with change
- Learn and achieve

Links to other Policies

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Behaviour and Special Education Needs (SEND) Policy. Links with the Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need. We consider to be a message.

A Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help our school community become more resilient, be happy and successful and prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses seven aspects;
1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands
2. Helping pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to
3. Helping pupils to be resilient learners
4. Teaching pupils social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
5. Early identification of pupils who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services
6. Effectively working with parents and carers
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and aim to create and open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health issues. We aim to be a 'talking school' with an 'Open Door Policy'

Roles and responsibilities

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that pupils with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems; such a physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such

as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

The school's Mental Health Team (Designated Safeguarding Team, Mental Health and Well-being lead):

- Leads on and works with other staff to coordinate while school activities to promote positive mental health
- Provides advice and support to staff and organises training and updates
- Keeps staff up-to-date with information about what support is available
- Liaises with the PSHE leader on teaching about mental health
- Is the first point of contact and communicates with mental health services
- Leads on and makes referrals to services

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to pupils with mental health needs and their families.

Support includes;

- Safeguarding/Child Protection Team/ Mental Health and Well-being Lead
- Support staff to manage mental health needs of pupils
- SENCO who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including pupils whose mental health problems mean they need special education provision.
- School nurse
- CAMHS core meetings to support staff to manage mental health needs of pupils

Supporting Pupils' Positive Mental Health

We believe we have a key role in promoting pupils' positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches including;

Pupil-led Activities

- Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health
- Pupil Mental Health Ambassadors to help drive awareness throughout the whole school

Transition Support

- Support for vulnerable children, for example, Speech and Language (SALT), support small group work such as Lego Therapy or Social Communication groups
- Transition meetings with parent/carers, pupils and relevant staff
- Yearly Transition Passports for vulnerable children
- Transition Passports available for all staff to be aware of vulnerable children's needs
- Key adults might support secondary school visits with vulnerable pupils

Class Activities

- Mood gauges
- Mindfulness and breathing/meditation in class
- PSHE friendship and relationship activities
- Classroom scripts and signposting

Whole school

- Wellbeing focus
- Assembly themes
- Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support both within the school and outside the school.

- Words 'talk' signposted around the school to remind children to talk, display acronym 'talk to anyone they will listen know you are heard'

Small Group Activities

- Small friendship, social skills groups
- After school clubs
- Lunch time Nurture group for those who find lunch times overwhelming

Teaching about Mental Health and Emotional Well-being

- Through PSHE and Catholic Social Teaching we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help pupils to be more resilient, understand about mental health and help reduce the stigma of mental health problems.

Early Identification

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including;

- Identify individuals that might need support
- Working with the School Office staff who are often the first point of contact with families seeking support
- Transition days in school for new pupils
- Analysing behaviour, exclusions and attendance
- Daily mood gauge to see patterns in moods
- EHCP meetings
- Staff report concerns about individual pupils to the teachers and/or Designated Safeguarding Team
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer or transition
- Meetings with parents
- Enabling pupils to raise concerns to class teacher and support staff or any other adult they wish to speak to
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns through the school class teacher to any member of staff

All staff have had information on the protective and risk factors (see Appendix 1), types of mental health needs and signs that might mean a pupil is experiencing mental health problems. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and talk to the Class teacher or Designated Safeguarding Team.

These signs might include;

- Non-verbal behaviour
- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits
- Lowering academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE
- Drug or alcohol misuse
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Staff are aware that mental health needs such as anxiety might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention nor hyperactivity. This may include home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then that school's child protection procedures are followed. A risk assessment and plan will be made.

Verbal Disclosure by Pupils

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to pupils who verbally disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of pupils is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff are clear

to pupils that the concern will be shared with the inclusion Manger/Designated Safeguarding Team and recorded in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

Non-Verbal Disclosure by pupils

Staff also recognise persistent and unusual non-verbal disclosures in behaviours in line with the NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) recommendation that behaviour may be an unmet need or message.

Confidentially

All disclosures are recorded on Safeguard, including date, name of pupil, and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps.

Assessment, Interventions and Support

All concerns are reported to the Designated Safeguarding Team and recorded. We then implement our assessment system based on levels of need to ensure that pupils get the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating. We recognise that just like physical health, mental health and emotional well-being can vary at any given time and is fluid and changes, there are no absolutes.

Need	Evidence-based	Monitoring
The level of need is based on discussions at the regular inclusion meetings/panel with key members of staff	**Intervention and Support** The kinds of intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents and pupils For example;	
Highest need	CAMHS – assessment, 1:1 or family support or treatment, consultation with	All pupils needing targeted individualised support will have an Individual Care

	school staff and other agencies School Mentor/counsellor – Education psychologist involvement	Plan drawn up and setting out – • The needs of the pupils • How the pupil will be supported • Actions to provide that support • Any special requirements
Some need	1:1 intervention, small group intervention, skills of life/wellbeing programmes, circle of friends	Pupils and parents/carers will be involved in the plan. The plan and interventions are monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess the impact e.g through a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire Multi-agency meetings and regular reviews and parents/carers Early Help Referral and Children's Services if appropriate Discussion, advice and support in Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) core hours for key staff, An electronic log is kept and there are monthly safeguarding team meetings.

Low need	General support e.g lunch time club, Nurture group, Class teacher/TA, Learning Mentor 'Check-in'

Working with Specialist Services to get swift access to the right Specialist Support and Treatment

In some cases a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, school refusal and other complex needs.

We make links with a range of specialist services and have regular contact with the services to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the pupils' provision.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the inclusion Manger/SENCO following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

Specialist Service	Referral process
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	Accessed through school, GP or self-referral
School Mentor	Accessed through school
Educational psychologist	Accessed through school
Early Help Referral	Accessed through school, Designated Safeguarding Team

Involving Parents and Carers

Promoting Mental Health

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular support their children with mental health needs.

To support parents and carers

- Have an open-door policy.
- Supporting parents and carers with children with mental health through sensitive and supportive regular meetings and signposting
- We provide information and signposting to organisations on our websites on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.

When a concern has been raised the school will;

- Contact parents and carers and meet with them
- In most cases parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as child protection issues.
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- Be available for follow up calls
- Make a record of the meeting
- Agree an Action Plan
- Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child
- Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Pupils are our primary concern and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

Supporting and Training Staff

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in pupils and know what to do and where to get help (see Appendix 3)

Those staff with a specific responsibility have more specialised training and where possible access to supervision from mental health professionals.

Staff training to raise awareness of Mental Health and emotional well-being topics will be accessed from a variety of organisations, such as Anna Freud, Mind..

Supporting and promoting the mental health and well-being of staff is an essential component of a healthy school. We aim to promote opportunities to maintain a health work life balance and well-being, with ideas for staff well-being activities signposted.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored by the SLT and the Senior Mental Health and Well-Being Lead and will be reported to the Governing Body. This policy will be reviewed annually initially and then every two years.

This policy has been agreed by:

…………. …………………………………………….Date: Jan 2023

Headteacher

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Chair of Governors