



## **Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing policy**

### **St John's Catholic Primary School 2022/2023**

**This policy was adopted March 2023**

**This policy will be reviewed March 2024**

## Contents

1	Introduction .....	3
2	Aims.....	4
3	Legal basis .....	5
4	Roles and Responsibilities.....	6
5	Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis .....	7
6	Warning signs.....	8
7	Managing disclosures.....	9
8	Confidentiality.....	10
8.1	Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures .....	10
9	Supporting pupils .....	11
9.1	Assessing what further support is needed .....	11
9.2	Internal mental health interventions.....	11
9.3	Individual healthcare plans (IHPs).....	11
9.4	Making external referrals.....	12
10	Supporting and collaborating with parents and carers .....	13
11	Supporting peers.....	14
12	Signposting.....	15
13	Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness .....	16
13.1	Mental health is taught in our bespoke RESPECT curriculum.....	16
13.2	Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health.....	16
14	Training .....	17
15	Support for staff.....	18

## 1 Introduction

At St John's Catholic Primary school, we are committed to supporting mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

This policy is intended to:

- Provide guidance to school staff on our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across all communities in the school
- Inform pupils and parents about the support that they can expect from the school in respect of supporting health and well being

This policy should be read in conjunction with:

- SEND policy
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Online safety policy

## 2 Aims

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school
- Create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion
- Foster a positive atmosphere in school, where pupils feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly
- Celebrate all of the ways pupils achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom
- Allow pupils to participate in forming our approach to mental health by promoting pupil voice
- Give pupils the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Spread awareness of the variety of ways mental health issues can manifest
- 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 Legal basis

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

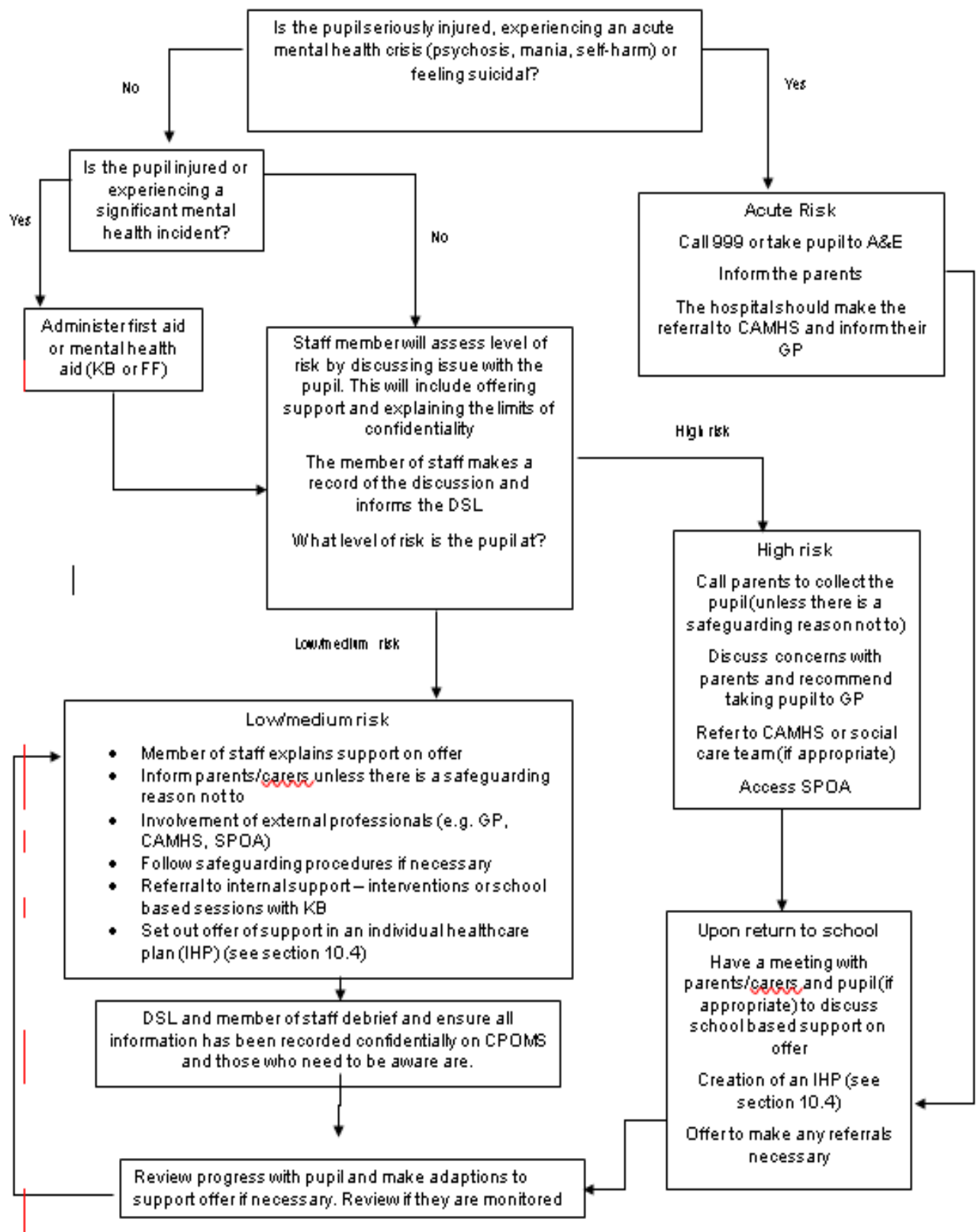
## 4 Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any member of staff is concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) Finula Farr who is also the mental health lead. She is supported by the DDSL Rachel Clough and the ELSA within school, Karen Burke.

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Headteacher and the Mental health lead
- Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO)
- Health and Well-being mentor Karen Burke (ELSA)

## 5 Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



## 6 Warning signs

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
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- 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
- Crying or low resilience evident
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide



## 7 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 will 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 / mental health lead. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file.

When making a record of a disclosure on CPOMS, staff will include:

- The full name of the member of staff who is making the record
- The full name of the pupil(s) involved
- The 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

## 8 Confidentiality

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

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing
- The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school
- Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question

Staff should always share disclosures with at least one appropriate colleague. This will usually be the DSL / mental health lead or the health and wellbeing mentor. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis through CPOMS logs or 1:1 discussion.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

- Who they will share the information with
- 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. In this case the safeguarding policy will be followed.

### 8.1 Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff offers support
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with the DSL or Health and Wellbeing mentor
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who you will share the information with and explain why you need to do this
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure on CPOMS and share the information with the chosen elected member of staff orally if it needs immediate attention.
6. The DSL or Health and Wellbeing mentor will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

## 9 Supporting pupils

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, the school offers support to all pupils by:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, circle time, RESPECT curriculum and mental health awareness week
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons and assemblies
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of the school that is negatively impacting their mental health, pupil voice is very important to us
- Monitoring of all pupils' mental health through assessments e.g. health and well-being questionnaire, school council, Governor monitoring visits for Health and Well-being
- Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support through Mrs Burke our Health and Wellbeing Learning Mentor and ELSA
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:
  - Worry boxes
  - Circle time
  - Discussion in RE lessons about worries and ourselves. Having time to reflect and be honest.

### 9.1 Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, Finula Farr, Rachel Clough and Karen Burke will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to making an assessment and providing tailored support, further to the provision of the baseline support as detailed in section 10.1. The school will offer support in cycles of:

- Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are
- Creating a plan to provide support
- Taking the actions set out in the plan
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

### 9.2 Internal mental health interventions

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

- Through sessions with Mrs Burke or an adult they feel safe with children will be able to open up to in order to express how they feel and what they are going through a non-judgmental environment is offered here.
- Nurture groups that may focus around Lego therapy, art therapy, play therapy
- Work their way through a programme or book that helps them understand what is happening to them and what tools they can use to help them.
- Time out from class if they feel overwhelmed to talk through feelings or plan next steps
- Referrals in consultation with parents to external support agencies through SPOA

### 9.3 Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)

A pupil will be offered an individual healthcare plan (IHP) if they are struggling with their mental health inside or outside of school. If they have been identified as at risk due to their current mental health situation or if their mental health has started to affect their attendance or attainment within school or if we have needed to seek external support for a pupil due to their mental health needs.

We recognise that sometimes mental health difficulties can be a result of a Safeguarding situation, we are mindful of contextual safeguarding when managing mental health concerns.

IHPs are written in collaboration with the pupil (if appropriate), their parent/carer, and any other relevant professionals.

The pupil's IHP will contain the following details:

- The mental health issue (and its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments)
- The pupil's needs resulting from the condition
- Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs
- The level of support needed
- Who will provide the support
- Who in the school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

#### 9.4 Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer the school provides, the school will make, or encourage parents to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- SPOA
- GP or paediatrician
- CAMHS
- Mental health charities (e.g. [Samaritans](#), [Mind](#), [Young Minds](#), [Kooth](#))
- Local counselling services.

## 10 Supporting and collaborating with parents and carers

We will work with parents and carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in our RESPECT curriculum, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home
- Provide an email address to parents so they communicate easily with our Health and wellbeing mentor Karen Burke quickly and easily ([listening@stjohnshorsham.school](mailto:listening@stjohnshorsham.school))

When informing parents about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face to face.

We have a tab on our CPOMS recording system called 'Mental health concern' this allows us to easily and accurately track, monitor and alert those who need to know, about any child that is experiencing difficulties.

Meetings with parents about a child's mental health can be difficult, so the school will ensure that parents are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record.

If appropriate, an individual healthcare plan (IHP) will be created in collaboration with parents/carers (see section 9.3).

## 11 Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be extremely challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

## 12 Signposting

Sources of support will be displayed around the school and linked to on the school website, so pupils and parents are aware of how they can get help.

Mental health will also be discussed in the newsletter to ensure parents know about local services, what can be done to help and that they can ask for help if it is needed.

## 13 Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

### 13.1 Mental health is taught in our bespoke RESPECT curriculum

We will follow the Develop healthy coping strategies PSHE Association Guidance teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing their guidance and coverage has been carefully woven into our new RESPECT curriculum.

Pupils will be taught to:

- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state (Zones of regulation)
- Keep themselves safe
- For more information, see our RESPECT curriculum.

### 13.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma
- Encourage pupils to disclose when they think that their mental health is deteriorating
- Take mental health seriously within school and recognize the impact it can have on pupils and their health and wellbeing.



## 14 Training

All staff will be offered training through the National College and the ELSA so they:

- 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 meeting time for both teachers and LAs will have a health and well-being focus at least once a term, more if required.

## 15 Support for staff

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
- Offer staff supervision sessions
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment