



# *St Mary's CE Primary School*

## *'Nurturing Success'*



### Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

#### 1. Introduction

At St Mary's, we are committed to nurturing every child (and every adult) as a unique individual to be the best that they can be, within a safe, friendly and welcoming community rooted in Christian values. Our vision is to provide an education of the highest quality through a rich, broad and balanced curriculum which focuses on the development of the whole person. We want children to develop as happy, confident and articulate individuals who will love learning throughout their lives.

**Our mental health and wellbeing policy is shaped by our vision which seeks to promote and celebrate all that is good and unique in every individual within our community. As it says in Philippians 4:**

***Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.***

**Our school Christian values of friendship, respect, trust, hope, wisdom and perseverance are at the heart of our positive and nurturing approach and underpin our relationships with others and our practice.**

As a Church of England School, the belief that each person is created in God's image is accepted and the uniqueness of the individual celebrated. We welcome diversity and celebrate difference and we treat each other with dignity and respect. This policy is supportive of these beliefs and everything we do is underpinned by our belief that everyone should be able to flourish in our caring school.

#### Policy Statement

At St Mary's CE Primary School we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

This policy was written in consultation with staff, parents, children and governors.

#### 2. Scope

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 mental health and wellbeing

Read this policy in conjunction with:

**SEND policy**

**Behaviour policy**

**Anti-bullying policy**

Equality Policy

**Strategic Child Protection and Safeguarding policy**

### 3

#### **Policy aims**

Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school

Embed our 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 varieties 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 for pupils experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them

#### **4. Legal basis**

This policy was written with regard to:

[The Equality Act 2010](#)

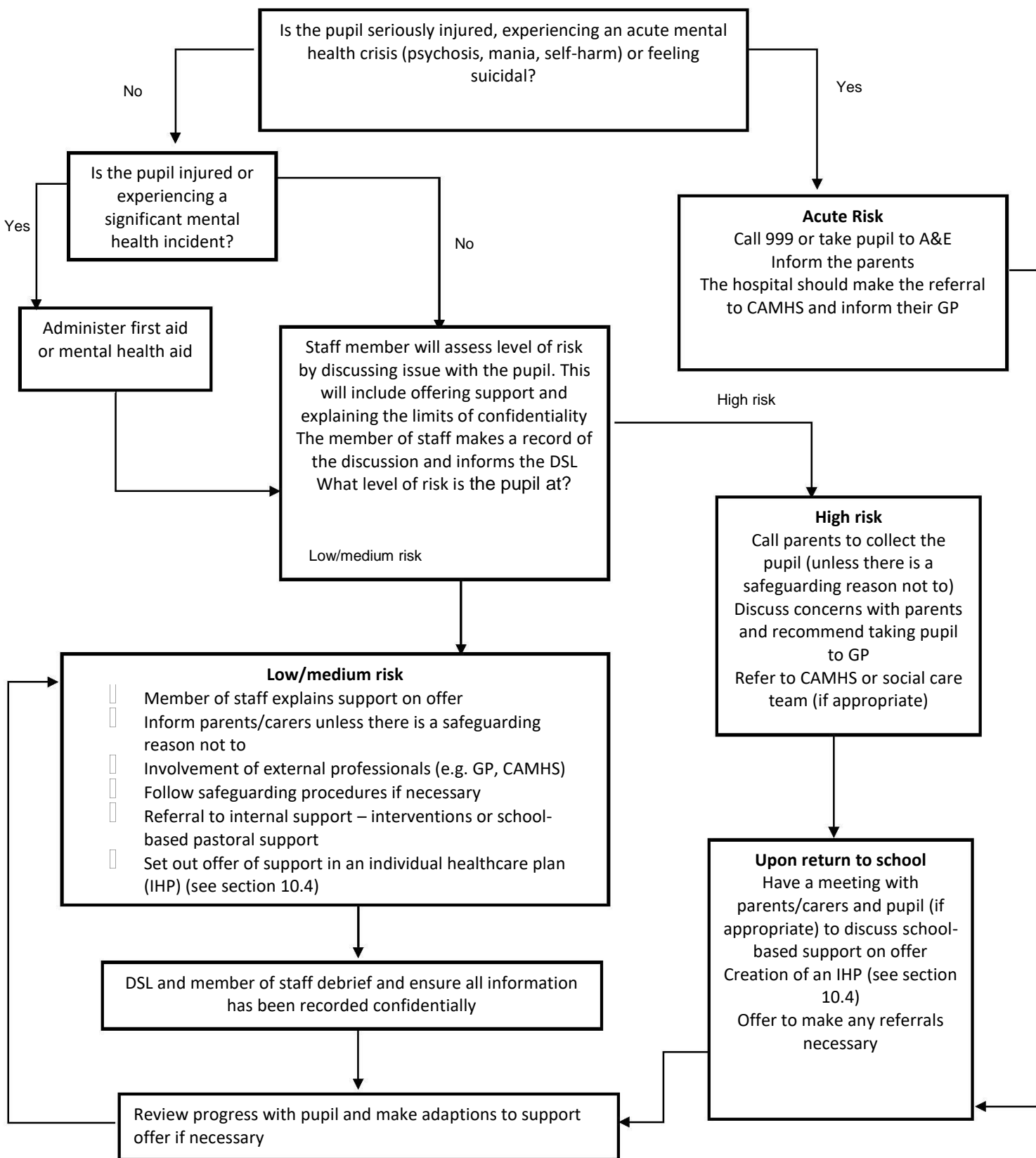
[The Data Protection Act 2018](#)

Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

#### **5. Roles and responsibilities**

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform Laura Widdowson (DSL and Mental Health Lead) or Laura Wallis (Headteacher and DDSL).

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



## **7. 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
- 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
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

## **8. 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 or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. All disclosures are recorded and stored on Cpoms.

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

- 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

## **9. 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 information with the DSL or DDSL. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, the DSL and DDSL will make this decision.

Parents will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the school's Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

## 9.1 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 DSL/DDSL
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 and share the information with the chosen elected member of staff
6. The DSL/DDSL 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

## 10. Supporting pupils

### 10.1 Baseline support for all 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 Collective Worship, PSHE, Children's Mental Health week and other charity raising awareness days
- > Signposting all pupils to sources of online support on the school website
- > Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- > Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of the school that is negatively impacting their mental health for example through the Class Council and Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- > Monitoring of all pupils' mental health through assessments and questionnaires
- > Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- > Offering pastoral support through class teachers, ELSA and Pastoral Support TAs and the AHT - Inclusion
- > Offering support for the family from the Education Mental Health Support Team (EMHST) where available
- > Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:
  - o Worry boxes
  - o Circle time

### 10.2 Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the AHT - Inclusion 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

### 10.3 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:

- > Nurture groups
- > Reduced timetable
- > The use of Safe Spaces
- > Lunchtime support
- > Key adult support
- > Support from the School Nurse or other Mental Health professionals working with the school

#### **10.4 Making external referrals**

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

A pupil could be referred to:

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

#### **11. 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

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

These meetings 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 Cpoms record.

#### **12. 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
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

### **13. 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.

The AHT – Inclusion will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

Information will also be shared with parents through the school newsletter/website.

### **14. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness**

#### **14.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE**

We will follow the [PSHE Association Guidance teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing](#).

Pupils will be taught to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Keep themselves safe

For more information, see our PSHE curriculum documentation (Autumn Term Health and Wellbeing)

#### **14.2 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
- Encouraging pupils to disclose if they think they are experiencing difficulties with their mental health

### **15. Training**

All staff will be offered training 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
- Be offered further training for their role if it involves pastoral support

### **16. 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

## **17. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by the Head, DSL, Governors, parents and children annually. The policy will be approved by governors.