

Holy Cross Catholic Primary School
'Emotionally Friendly' School Guidelines

Lead Staff:

Mrs Joanne Steers: Inclusion Manager and Mental Health/Emotional Wellbeing Lead

Mrs Paula Brás: SENDCO and PSHE Lead

An 'Emotionally Friendly' school should:

- Recognise that everyone experiences life challenges that can make them vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. Take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.
- Promote a mentally healthy school environment through a positive and caring ethos and promoting our values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Make sure all teachers are able to recognise the signs and triggers to look out for regarding emotional difficulties or mental health problems.
- Identify difficulties and track pupil's wellbeing needs and progress e.g. through the use of wellbeing trackers.



- Have a key person, co-ordinating work and providing guidance on emotional wellbeing and ensure that all are able to support the needs of children who may be experiencing emotional difficulties.
- Make staff, pupils and parents aware of places they can go to for support e.g. Young Minds, MindEd, Mental Health First Aid England etc.
- Include emotional wellbeing and mental health in the school PSHE curriculum and follow the advice from the PSHE association on how to deliver this sensitively.

- Provide support for children who may be experiencing difficulties at lunchtimes or playtimes such as playground buddies or offer lunchtime clubs as places to talk, think or play in a safe and supported environment.
- Teach skills including social skills, resilience, recognising emotions and developing growth mindsets throughout the curriculum and have daily opportunities to reflect on this.
- Ensure consistency of approaches in the schools behaviour and rewards system and celebrate non-academic successes.
- Provide mentoring opportunities for individuals, groups or key cohorts of children to build positive relationships and give pupils someone they can go to in need or someone to 'champion' their cause.
- Recognise that forms of art, play and music therapy or mindfulness and relaxation techniques can be particularly effective for children experiencing emotional difficulties.



- Be aware of the emotional wellbeing difficulties that children with medical needs, with ASD or ADHD, language and communication difficulties or learning difficulties like dyslexia may have. For instance, additional stress, anxiety and feelings of isolation or low self-esteem.
- Be aware of the vulnerabilities that pupils from disadvantaged groups may have in terms of emotional wellbeing and the additional pressures they face.
- Support families of pupils with emotional wellbeing and mental health difficulties by ensuring that they can access relevant support. Offer or signpost them to parenting classes or training where appropriate.
- Provide targeted support for those in greatest need including mental health group work, circle of friends groups, nurture activities, meet and greet and breakfast clubs.
- Provide targeted support for those experiencing recent difficulties with bereavement or loss, family illness or parental separation.

- Be aware of the relevant referral pathways to CAMHs (child and adolescent mental health service) through GPs, paediatricians and educational psychologists. Make use of the CAMHs helplines.
- Access support from a range of services including the school nurse, educational psychologists, pupil referral units and family support workers. Use counsellors and therapists or organisations such as 'Place2be' as appropriate.
- Tackle stigma around mental health and hold awareness raising events such as in child mental health week or in school assemblies.

