



# Guyhirn Church of England Primary School & Pre-school

*Member of the Diocese of Ely Multi Academy Trust*

This policy was ratified on:	13 <sup>th</sup> February 2020
Reviewed on:	
To be reviewed in:	January 2022

## Mental Health Policy

### Our Vision

**Agape – To live, to learn, to love together**

Through our Christian values we aim to inspire all of our school community to show equality and tolerance to all in a safe, challenging environment.

Developing resilient, aspirational and compassionate individuals who are enthused by all faiths and lifestyles showing faith and belief in one another.

*“Live in agreement with one another. Do not be proud but ready to mix with everyone. Do not think yourself better than others.” - Romans 12:16*

*“An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks it out.” - Proverbs 18:15*

*“Love the Lord your God, and love your neighbour as yourselves.” - Matthew 22:37*

### Our Values

We are a small, family centered Church of England Primary School that is committed to promoting our Christian values of Thankfulness, Compassion, Creativity, Peace, Hope, Endurance, Forgiveness, Tolerance, Kindness, Respect, Trust and Friendship each linked with the core value of Love.

We are determined to create an inclusive culture of learning where everyone will be challenged in their thinking, to succeed to the best of their abilities and strive to become lifelong learners.

We will empower our children to become respected citizens to enable them to make valuable contributions locally, globally and to contribute to our world's sustainable future.

## **POLICY STATEMENT**

At our school, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

Our culture is supportive, caring and respectful. We encourage pupils to be open and we want each pupil to have their voice heard.

At our school, we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that each of us may need help to cope with them sometimes. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support. At our school, positive mental health is everybody's responsibility. We all have a role to play.

## **POLICY SCOPE**

This policy is a guide to all staff, including teachers, governors, and non-teaching staff. It outlines our approach to promoting pupil mental health and wellbeing. It should be read and understood alongside our other relevant school policies.

## **POLICY AIMS**

The aim of our policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health of our staff and pupils.

### **At our school, we will always:**

- Help pupils to understand their emotions and experiences better.
- Ensure our pupils feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries.
- Help pupils to form and maintain relationships.
- Encourage pupils to be confident and help to promote their self-esteem.
- Help pupils to develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks.

### **We will always promote a healthy environment by:**

- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all pupils and staff.
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements.
- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect.
- Promoting our pupil's voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making.
- Celebrating each pupil for who they are and making every pupil feel valued and respected.
- Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and providing support to any pupil that needs it.
- Raising awareness amongst staff and pupils about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms.
- Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of mental-ill health in pupils.
- Supporting staff who are struggling with their mental health

## **KEY STAFF MEMBERS**

All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils and each other. However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process. These are:

- **Our Designated Safeguarding Officers:** Head teacher, Karen Milnthorpe, Assistant Headteacher, Emma Britchford and Pre-School Leader, Emily Garner.
- **Pastoral Staff:** Sheala Allen, Harri Bell, Diane Brown, Jacqui Epps, Jo Egginton, Aira Palisaite, Lyn Smith, Sarah Tegerdine, Carol Wellon, Laura Willis.
- **SENCO:** Head teacher, Karen Milnthorpe.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a pupil, then in the first instance they should speak to the class teacher/SENCO.

If a pupil presents a medical emergency then relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services.

## **TEACHING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH**

Our PSHE curriculum is developed to give pupils the skills, knowledge, and understanding they need to keep themselves mentally healthy. This includes resilience techniques and training.

We will regularly review our PSHE curriculum and lesson content to ensure that they are meeting the aims outlined in this policy. We will also implement this into our curriculum at all stages to provide pupils with strategies to help keep them mentally well.

## **SUPPORT AT SCHOOL AND IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

**We have a range of support available in school for any pupils struggling, as listed below:**

Restorative Approach – Whole school approach to behaviour and conflict – All Staff.

- Emotional Literacy – for learning to identify and control emotions – SEN Teaching Assistant.
- Lego Learning – An activity to engage children working together to support each other and deal with emotions and conflict.
- Play Therapist – Employed by the school to deliver bespoke play therapy to children who have emotional needs identified by adults where additional support is needed.
- Circle Time – In class led by an adult to solve issues and talk about emotions.

**There is also a lot of support networks available for children in the local community. This includes places such as:**

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Emotional Wellbeing Service
- CHUMS Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Service for Children and Young People
- Embrace
- SEND Specialist Support

## **SIGNPOSTING**

We will ensure that all staff, pupils and parents are aware of the support that's available in our school for mental health. This includes how to access further support, both inside and outside of school hours.

## **IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND WARNING SIGNS**

All of our staff will be trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems. This means that they will be able to offer help and support to pupils who need it, when they need it.

These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs will communicate their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer as appropriate.

**Staff will be able to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including:**

- Physical signs of harm.
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits.
- Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in mood.
- Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide.

- Drug and alcohol abuse.
- Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. a large winter coat in summer.
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption.

**Staff will also be able to identify a range of issues, including:**

- Attendance and absenteeism.
- Punctuality and lateness.
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education.
- Family and relationship problems.

Finally, staff will be well placed to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact a pupil's mental health and wellbeing, such as bereavement and health difficulties.

**MANAGING DISCLOSURES**

If a pupil discloses concerns about themselves or a friend, to any member of staff, then all staff will respond in a calm, supportive, and non-judgemental manner.

All disclosures will be recorded confidentially and only shared with the appropriate authorities if it's necessary to keep the pupil safe, in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

The disclosure record will contain:

- The date of the disclosure.
- The name of the staff member to whom the disclosure was made.
- The nature of the disclosure and the main points from the conversation.
- Agreed next steps.

**CONFIDENTIALITY**

If a member of staff thinks it's necessary to pass on concerns about a pupil. Either to somebody inside the school or somebody outside it, then this will first be discussed with the pupil. They will be told:

- Who the staff member is going to tell.
- What the staff member is going to disclose.
- Why it's necessary for somebody else to be told.
- When the contact will be.

However, it may not be possible to gain the pupil's consent first, such as in the case of pupils who are at immediate risk. Protecting a pupil's safety is our main priority so we would share disclosures if we judged a pupil to be at risk.

**WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH**

We take a whole school approach towards the mental health of our students. This means working with parents and carers and with other agencies and partners, where necessary.

**Working with Parents and Carers**

We aim to support parents as much as possible. This means keeping them informed about their child and offering our support at all times. To support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school.
- Share and allow parents to access further support.
- Ensure that parents are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child.
- Give parents guidance about how they can support their child's/children's positive mental health.
- Ensure this policy is easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health training our school staff receive and how mental health is covered in our school curriculum.

### **Working with other agencies and partners**

As part of our whole school approach, we will also work with other agencies to support our pupil's emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with:

- The school nurse.
- Paediatricians.
- CAMHS
- Counselling services.
- Therapists.
- Family support workers.
- Behavioural support workers.

### **SUPPORTING PEERS**

We understand that, when a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their peers. In response to this, we will consider, on a case by case basis, any peers that may need additional support.

We will provide support in a one-to-one or group setting. These sessions will be guided by the pupil, but they will discuss how peers can help, how peers can access support themselves, and healthy ways of coping with any emotions they might be feeling.

### **TRAINING**

All staff will receive regular training in child mental health so that they can recognise and respond to mental health issues. This will form part of their regular safeguarding training and is a requirement to keep pupils safe. Training records will be held on our Single Central Record (SCR).

### **POLICY REVIEW**

This policy will be reviewed every year. This is so that it remains up to date, useful, and relevant. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local and national policy changes.