

# **Farnsfield St Michael's C of E Primary School**



**FARNSFIELD ST MICHAEL'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

## **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

## POLICY STATEMENT

Key definitions:

Mental Health – includes our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices. Everyone has mental health.

Mental Illness – covers a broad range of mental health problems, which can involve changes to our thoughts, emotions, behaviours and relationships with others. Mental illnesses are associated with distress and problems functioning in everyday life. Mental illness is treatable.

At our school, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of all of our pupils and staff. Our school vision is deeply rooted in **love**, with a desire to enable individuals to **flourish** and celebrate **life in all its fullness**. Our culture is supporting, caring and respectful, underpinned by our seven Rainbow Values. This policy outlines our approach to promoting a positive mental health culture for all members of our community and the systems in place for those who require additional support. It should be read alongside other relevant school policies.

The aim of this policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of everyone in our school community. This policy will be reviewed annually and in accordance with national policy changes.

## KEY PEOPLE

### Senior Mental Health Lead – Helen Lewis

The implantation of this policy, and the evaluation of its effectiveness, is led by our Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL). This role includes oversight of all mental health provisions and interventions, education and training related to mental health and wellbeing, and the development of spaces and resources to support mental health and wellbeing.

All staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community, but the staff with key roles to support this work include:

- **Designated Safeguarding Leads – Louise Carpenter, Deb Taylor, Rob Fry, Helen Lewis and Nicole Wilson**
- **SENDCO – Nicole Wilson**
- **PSHE and RSHE Lead – Louise Carpenter**
- **ELSA – Jo Lloyd**
- **Bereavement Lead – Emma Turner**

It is also the responsibility of the whole governing body to promote the mental health and wellbeing of our school community, but the key link governor is **Jen Hope**.

In addition to this, there is the expectation that, using the education and support provided by our school, all members of our school community will take responsibility for promoting their own mental health and that of others.

In emergency situations, relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services.

## **WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH**

We ensure that staff, parents, carers and pupils have access to knowledge about mental health and wellbeing.

Our approach includes:

- Making it explicit to all that staff and pupil wellbeing is a priority
- Providing education and training for staff, pupils and parents
- Giving wellbeing the same status as academic achievements
- Reducing the stigma surrounding mental health issues, through awareness days/events and through displays, collective worship and the positive interactions that shape the day-to-day culture of the school
- Highlighting sources of information in the school for staff, pupils and parents
- Ensuring that staff, pupils and parents know who to talk to if they have concerns around mental health or wellbeing
- Providing physical space for staff and pupils – inside and out
- Providing a calm, relaxed environment
- Ensuring staff are confident to employ non-clinical social models of intervention and are also confident about how and when to signpost to further support
- Establishing effective links with external organisations and professionals
- Providing the opportunity for staff wellbeing sessions – 1:1 if necessary
- Allowing time for staff to access formal supervision/reflection
- Regularly evaluating the effectiveness of our provision and interventions
- Teaching about the importance of looking after mental health and wellbeing, across our whole curriculum but particularly through PSHE lessons

## **SYSTEMS AND PROCEDURES**

Anyone in the school community can raise a concern, either about their own or someone else's mental health or wellbeing. The people they need to speak to regarding concerns are clearly publicised for staff, pupils and parents.

All staff are trained to respond to disclosures about mental health and wellbeing in a calm, supportive and non-judgemental way. All disclosures regarding pupils are recorded confidentially and only shared in line with the Safeguarding Policy or as outlined below.

If there is a concern about the mental health and/or wellbeing of a pupil:

1. A staff member arranges a 1:1 talk with the pupil, employs non-clinical social models of intervention, as necessary, and tells them/their parents where to access support or information.
2. Brief details will be logged on Scholarpack of: the date, the staff members name, the main points from the conversation and agreed next steps.
3. If information needs to be passed on, or discussed with another member of staff, there will be transparency and openness about:
  - a. Who will be told
  - b. What they will be told
  - c. When they will be told
  - d. Why they need to be told
4. If the member of staff remains concerned, they inform the SMHL who will liaise with other members of the team/parents/external agencies, as necessary, to arrange further intervention or signpost to professional support.
5. If there is an immediate risk of harm, immediate steps would be taken to protect the pupil's safety and this takes priority over transparency. If necessary, the emergency services will be called.

If there is a concern about the mental health and/or wellbeing of a member of staff:

1. They can approach the SMHL, or another trusted colleague, and arrange a time to meet and discuss issues and concerns, or the SMHL may approach them and ask them if they would like a conversation at a mutually convenient time.
2. After an initial meeting with the member of staff, the SMHL, or trusted colleague, will arrange follow up conversations to offer support, as required.
3. Unless there is a risk of harm to self or others, conversations with the SMHL, or trusted colleague, will remain confidential. If there is an immediate risk to life, appropriate steps will be taken to safeguard the individual, including calling the emergency services, if necessary.
4. The SMHL, or trusted colleague, will be offered supervision to safeguard their own mental health and wellbeing.

## **SUPPORT OFFERED AT SCHOOL AND SIGNPOSTING**

The key way that we promote positive mental health and wellbeing is through our school vision and values, which run through the heart of all that we do. This is also supported through:

- A strong Christian ethos, which reflects love and acceptance, including respect for difference and diversity
- Collective worship – both whole school and class
- Our whole school Relationships Policy

- Recognising the background of individual pupils and their physical, social and emotional needs
- Making time in classrooms to build relationships that lead to trust and an open dialogue between adults and pupils, but also with peers
- Opportunities for pupil leadership through Sports Leaders, School Council, Worship Group and other leadership responsibilities
- An emphasis on positive praise and celebration of personal success, at whatever level this might be – not just from adults but also peers
- A culture of acceptance and inclusion – all are welcome at our school
- Sports clubs and lunchtime activities, alongside regular PE lessons, that provide opportunities to be physically active
- Extra-curricular activities and off-timetable days, promoting the importance of spending time doing things we enjoy

The additional support we offer for pupils includes:

- ELSA
- Doodle Time
- Nurture
- Foresters
- Watch Me Rise
- Brighter Futures Mentoring
- Bereavement Support
- Morning 'meet and greet' to support children entering school
- Access to a wide range of story books to help them explore different situations they may be facing

(See also 'Pupil Wellbeing at Farnsfield St Michael's' document for further details about our Social, Emotional and Mental Health – SEMH – provision)

The additional support we offer for families includes:

- Welcoming them into school from the beginning, to start to build positive relationships as soon as possible
- Building positive relationships with parents and families and approaching all conversations with our vision of love
- Sharing information to support mental health and wellbeing via emails, the school website and social media
- Mental health and wellbeing focussed workshops
- Offering alternatives when things are challenging, such as parents evening conversations over the phone or altering morning/end of the day routines to support access to school
- Support with referrals to:
  - The Primary Mental Health Team
  - The Healthy Families Team

- Early Help Unit
- Educational Psychologists

The additional support we offer for staff includes:

- Mentoring – either in a professional or personal capacity, depending on the individual circumstance
- Return to work conversations, placing the needs of the individual at the centre of any discussions taking place
- Induction programme for new staff members

Where necessary, pupils, parents and staff are signposted to support outside of the school, such as:

- GP and other NHS services
- Children and young people's mental health services (CYPMHS – formerly CAMHS)
- Young Minds
- Samaritans
- Childline
- NSPCC

## **IDENTIFYING WARNING SIGNS**

All staff receive regular training in child mental health so that they can confidently support good mental health and recognise, and respond to, mental health and wellbeing issues. This will form part of the regular safeguarding training and is a requirement to keep children safe. Training records will be kept in staff files.

All staff will be trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems. These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs in pupils will communicate their concerns with the SMHL and DSLs, as appropriate.

All 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 social 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 the summer
- Negative behaviour patterns e.g. disruption

All 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

All staff will be well placed to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact a child's mental health and wellbeing, such as bereavement, health difficulties, being neuro-atypical or diagnoses of having a learning difficulty.

## A FINAL WORD

Above all that is written here, our key vision of **love** underpins all that we do at St Michael's, following the example of Jesus by showing **love** and **compassion** to all people, in all situations.

*"My commandment is this: love each other as I have loved you."*

– John 15 v 12

We want our school community to know that it can take **courage** to talk about mental ill health and that this honesty will be greeted with **support** and **not negativity**.

Loss, bereavement and mental ill health – our own or of someone we love – can bring out many emotions and impact the core of our lives. We endeavour to create a community of **love** and **trust**, that supports every member of it. The most important part of school life is the people: we work hard to create a place where the people are at the heart of all we do.

*"In the drama of ongoing life, how we learn to approach the future is crucial. Good schools open up horizons of **hope** and **aspiration**, and guide pupils into ways of fulfilling them. They also cope **wisely** with things, and people, going wrong. Bad experiences and behaviour, wrongdoing and evil, need not to have the last word."*

– Church of England Vision for Education (2016)

Reviewed: February 2023

Agreed by governing body: March 2023

Next review: February 2024