

St. Joseph's Catholic Infant School

Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy



*I am special in
God's eyes*

We are a **HAPPY** school, we are a **LOVING** school.

We are all
SPECIAL IN GOD'S EYES.

We **LOVE** to **LEARN TOGETHER**
When we make mistakes
WE ALL LEARN.

I am special in God's eyes

We will be a happy, welcoming school with Christ at the centre, where everyone is recognised as special

"Do not be afraid for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by your name,

you are mine.

Because you are precious in my eyes,

because you are honoured and I love you."

Isaiah 43 : 2-5

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1. Aims

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

This policy focuses on pupils' mental health and wellbeing.

It aims to:

- Set out our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across our school
- Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which pupils feel able to talk about and reflect on their experiences of mental health
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Inform pupils and their parents/carers about the support they can expect from our school in respect of pupils' mental health and wellbeing, and provide them with access to resources

This policy should be read alongside:

- SEND policy
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Safeguarding Policy and Child Protection Procedures

2. Legislation and guidance

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](#)

3. Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school and for understanding risk factors.

If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator or Mental Health Lead].

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

- › Headteacher – Mrs Ann Taylor
- › Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Mrs Ann Taylor, Miss H Tobin, Mrs J Stone
- › Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo) – Miss L Verrall
- › Mental Health Lead – Miss B Apps

Our Mental Health Lead:

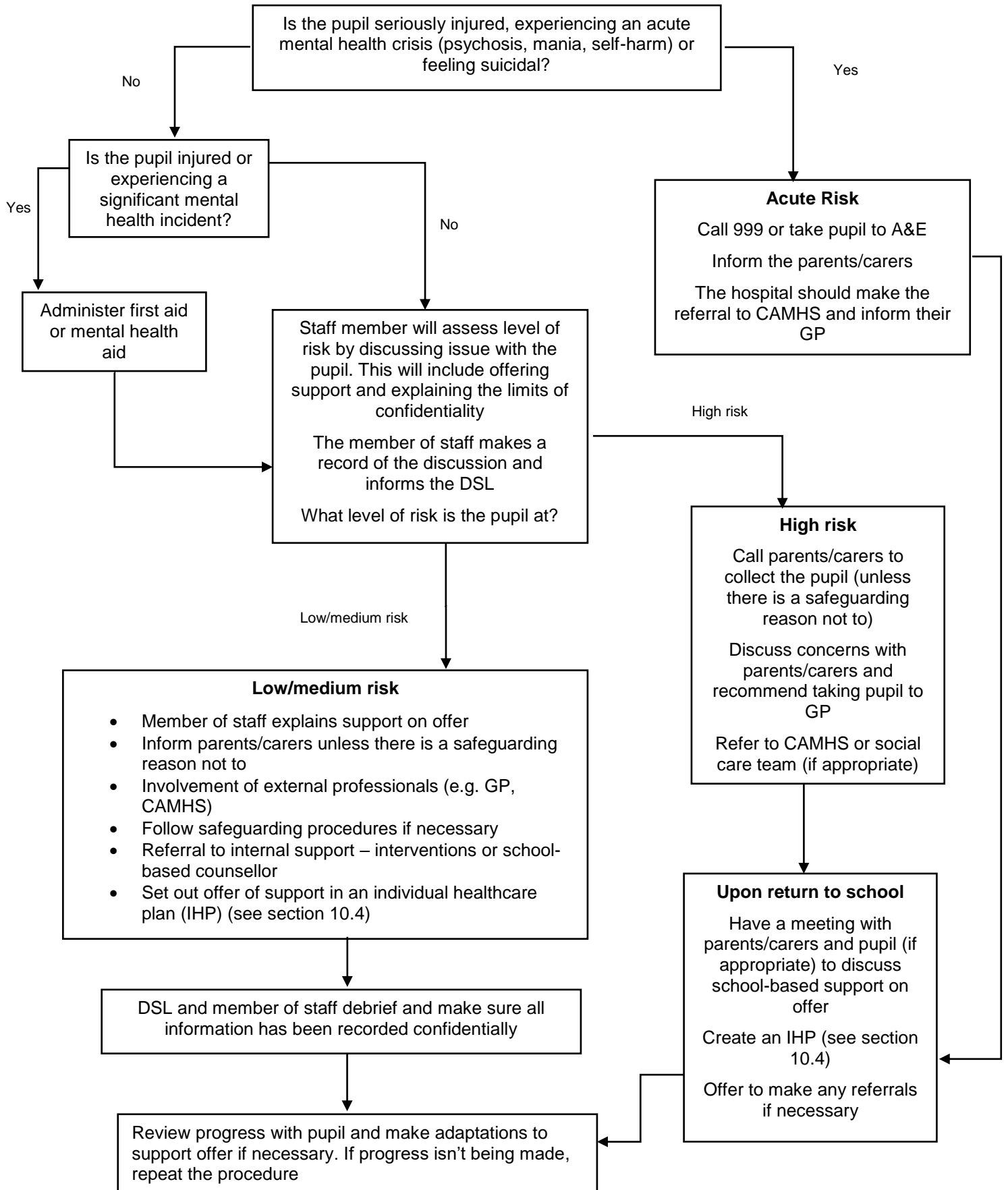
Leads and works with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

As the PSHE leader works to arrange teaching about mental health.

Provides advice and support to staff and organises training and updates.

Liaises with mental health services and makes individual referrals to them.

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



5. Warning signs

All staff will be vigilant in identifying on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical Indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstance
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing challenges. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff should communicate any concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the Mental Health Lead as appropriate.

➤ Changes in:

- Mood or energy level
- Eating or sleeping patterns
- Attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- 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

➤ Rapid 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

6. 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 our school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the DSL, and record concerns on CPOMS. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file.

When making a record of a disclosure, 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

7. Confidentiality

Staff will 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 1 appropriate colleague. This will usually be the DSL. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

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/carers will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the Safeguarding policy will be followed.

7.1 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
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who the information will be shared with and why
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure on CPOMS. This alerts all members of the DSL team
6. The DSL 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.

8. Supporting pupils

8.1 Baseline support for all pupils

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

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, tutor time, PSHE and mental health awareness week
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of our school that is negatively impacting their mental health
- Monitoring all pupils' mental health through assessments, e.g. a strengths and difficulties questionnaire
- Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support, e.g. through class teacher or Mental Health Lead
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as:
 - Worry boxes
 - Circle time

8.2 Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the mental health lead will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide, further to the baseline support detailed above in section 8.1.

Our 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

8.3 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:

List here any interventions you run internally to support pupils experiencing poor mental health, e.g.:

- Nurture groups
- Reduced timetable
- Time-out pass
- Talk-time

8.4 Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)

A pupil will be offered an individual healthcare plan (IHP) if normal class adaptations are not working and specific support is required above and beyond normal provision.

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 our school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

8.5 Making external referrals

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

A pupil could be referred to:

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

9. Supporting and collaborating with parents/carers

Parents and carers are valued and welcomed into school. We communicate regularly, consult and engage with parents/carers through newsletters, assemblies, parent meetings etc. We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. We work in partnership with parents/carers to promote pupils emotional health and wellbeing 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/carer forums)

- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies
- Providing an open door policy with access to the Mental Health Lead
- Working hard to develop a close relationship with parents and carers which allow us to offer support

When informing parents/carers 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 our school will ensure that parents/carers 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 CPOMS record.

If appropriate, a support plan will be created in collaboration with parents/carers.

10. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be very 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

11. Signposting

Sources of support are displayed around our school and linked to on our school website, so pupils and parents/carers are aware of how they can get help.

The Mental Health Lead will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

We will also spread awareness of sources of mental health support in school through assemblies, in PHSE lessons, and through inviting speakers for events such as Mental Health Week or to attend Parents Evenings.

12. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

12.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE

At St Joseph's we take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a pro-active way to avoid problems arising. We do this by:

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and wellbeing
- Adhering to a positive, restorative approach to behaviour management
- Helping children socially to form and maintain relationships

- Helping children to feel comfortable about sharing any concerns or worries
- Teaching children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they understand their emotions and feelings better
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the world
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges, and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience
- Developing an open culture where it is normal to talk about mental health.

We follow the [PSHE Association Guidance teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing and Ten:Ten – Life to the Full Plus](#).

Pupils are taught to:

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

For more information, see our Social, Emotional and Mental Health section on the school website.

12.2 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 when their mental health is deteriorating

13. Training

All staff receive annual safeguarding training. Other specific training will be offered as appropriate so that all staff:

- 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

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our appraisal process and additional CPD will be offered throughout the year where appropriate. Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight sessions for staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

14. Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can affect that staff member's own mental health and wellbeing. To help with this we will:

Outline the support offered to staff, e.g.

- Treat mental health concerns seriously

- › Offer staff supervision sessions
- › Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- › Create a pleasant and supportive work environment
- › Offer an employee assistance programme: [STCAT employeeassistance.org.uk](http://STCAT.employeeassistance.org.uk)

15. Monitoring arrangements

Monitoring of the impact and effectiveness of this policy will be carried out by the Metal Health Lead and the Headteacher as part of the monitoring cycle – through pupil and staff questionnaires, observations and feedback and pupil and staff engagement. Governors will visit to review and assess the impact of the policy with staff and pupils.

This policy will be reviewed by the Headteacher and Mental Health Lead every three years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Local Academy Committee for St Thomas Catholic Academy Trust.