

St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy

Recognising and celebrating the presence of Christ in one another

- ♦ St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School aims to be a positive force within the Catholic Church inspired by the life of Christ in the Gospel.
- ♦ The school is committed to the widest and fullest education with ambition for all pupils in a partnership between home, school, parish and community.
- ♦ The school aims to create a happy, ordered environment where all members feel secure and valued.



Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy

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| Current date approved: | May 2025 |
| Approved by: | Full Governing Body |
| Date of Next review: | May 2026 |

Policy Statement

At St Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our whole school approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support.

We recognise that positive mental health is everybody's responsibility and that we all have a role to play.

Intent

At our school we:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help and encourage children to form and maintain relationships.
- promote and develop self-esteem and ensure children know that they are valued.
- encourage children to be confident individuals
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to be calm and reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

We pursue our aims through:

- Whole school approaches
- Support for pupils experiencing recent difficulties including bereavement, family breakups.

- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including anxieties.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy and SEND policy in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for behaviour and anti-bullying policies. It should also be consistent with child protection procedures.

Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff with a specific, relevant role include:

- **Mrs N.Hill:** Headteacher Designated child protection and safeguarding lead
- **Mrs E. Smith:** Assistant Head, EYFS Lead, Designated Deputy child protection and safeguarding officer
- **Mrs E. Hayes:** Assistant Head, SENCO, Pastoral Lead, Mental Health Lead, Designated Deputy child protection and safeguarding officer.

Implementation

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our RHSE curriculum.

The school has organised a curriculum that is age-appropriate for pupils within each year group. The Ten Ten resource “Life to the Full” supports this in an interesting and engaging way for pupils. Lessons are delivered across three terms in blocks and during specified inductions weeks

Daily wellbeing time is also timetabled at the start of the day and before or after lunch time (where appropriate) to provide time for pupils to calm down and reflect on their playtime in a nurturing and supportive way.

Targeted support

The school offers support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Circle time approaches or ‘circle of friends’ activities.
- Resilience groups to target children identified with low esteem and resilience.

- 1:1 opportunities to speak with either Pastoral Lead, SENDCo, or designated wellbeing TAs in KS1 and 2 to share worries
- Therapeutic activities including art, lego, boxing and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Draw and talk therapy for identified individuals or groups.
- Play therapy 1-1 sessions for identified KS2 pupils.
- Mental Health and Wellbeing weeks.
- All classes have a Wellbeing display showing all the areas that promote our wellbeing.
- WRAP sheets are used to identify children with specific needs and they are supported to manage their social and emotional difficulties.
- “Safeguarding Me” programme for Year 6 pupils led by a trained counsellor.

The school make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- My Star
- Resilience baseline scores.
- My Three Houses.

Signposting

We ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support. A page on the school website also has information on websites that may support mental health and wellbeing for both children and adults.

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

A list of vulnerable pupils is compiled and updated termly and shared with staff. WRAPs (Wellbeing, Resilience Actions Plans) are completed by class teachers to identify needs of identified pupils who need support and together a plan of strategies are agreed and monitored.

All staff attend weekly staff briefings to discuss any pupils that may be experiencing difficulties including:

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

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs are always taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs, communicate their concerns with the designated child protection and safeguarding officer, SENDCO or Pastoral Lead as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood - behaviour
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Self-appearance
- Frequent injuries

Working with Parents

In order to support parents, we:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website

- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent meetings.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children and comment on pupils' wellbeing in school reports.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in RHSE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurses
- Educational psychology services
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- The Swing and The Rainbow bereavement services.
- Walsall Early Help team
- Counselling services and family support workers
- Therapists
- Prevent
- Beacon Behaviour Support for Schools.

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep students safe.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of the performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

Staff Wellbeing

The wellbeing of all staff is important and the school is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of all employees. Supporting staff wellbeing remains a key priority. In light of this, the school understands the importance of trying to reduce stress and provide practices in line with school policy to manage stress and develop positive attitudes to wellbeing. This includes staff briefing, annual staff questionnaires and open door policy to talk to SLT. (Please see Staff Wellbeing Action Plan)