ST PAUL'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Agreed by Governing Body on:	**22 May 2024**
Policy review date:	**May 2025**

Policy Statement

At St Paul's CE 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 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 take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

At our school we:

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count.
- encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- 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 reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder

Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical policy and our 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, and PSHE and SMSC policies. It should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

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

- Michelle Lord-Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Kim Fryer-Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Rebecca Ferriday-SENDCO and Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing lead
- Katia Lambert- Learning mentor and Emotional Literacy Support assistant (ELSA)

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 developmental PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

Targeted support

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

o Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.

o Targeted use of SEAL resources.

o Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes', 'feelings art book', Bear Cards, Talkabout resources and 'thought books'

o Managing emotions resources e.g. Just Right whole school approach; sensory class bags, outdoor gym equipment

o Mental health and wellbeing groups

o Learning Mentor / ELSA support groups.

o Therapeutic activities including art, lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques

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

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- The Boxall Profile
- Emotional literacy scales

It is important to recognise that emotions and feelings are two sides of the same coin but that emotions come first, then feelings come after as the emotion chemicals go to work in our bodies. Then moods develop from a combination of feelings. Emotions are chemicals released in response to our interpretation of a specific trigger. It takes our brains about 1/4 second to identify the trigger, and about another 1/4 second to produce the chemicals. Feelings happen as we begin to integrate

the emotion, to think about it, to "let it soak in." In English, we use "feel" for both physical and emotional sensation — we can say we physically feel cold, but we can also emotionally feel cold. This is a clue to the meaning of "feeling," it's something we sense. Feelings are more "cognitively saturated" as the emotion chemicals are processed in our brains & bodies. Feelings are often fueled by a mix of emotions, and last for longer than emotions.
https://www.6seconds.org/2017/05/15/emotion-feeling-mood/

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

As a whole school we use Just Right strategy to support and develop self-regulation and understanding of emotions.

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

Possible warning signs include:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- 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

Working with Parents

In order to support parents we will:

- 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 forums.

- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE 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 nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Behaviour support through Oakfield pupil referral unit
- Paediatricians

CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)

- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists

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 our 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.

Signed:……(Chair of Governors). Date:……..

Signed:……(Headteacher). Date:……..