'You must love one another as I have loved you.' John 13 v 34.

Working together with love we will provide a happy and nurturing environment where all will, ***'learn to love and love to learn'***, making outstanding progress through an enriched and creative curriculum. Through our strong Christian ethos we will celebrate and embrace the richness of our community.

Learn to Love - Love to Learn

'You must love one another as I have loved you.' John 13 v 34

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

St Giles' Church of England School

Policy Statement

> *Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (World Health Organization)*

In our school, our Christian vision shapes all we do, underpinning our policies, practices and decision making.

At St Giles CE Primary School, our Christian vision underpins our commitment to nurture the mental, emotional, spiritual and physical wellbeing of every member of our community. Inspired by the example of Jesus, we recognise the inherent dignity and worth of each individual and strive to create a culture of hope, belonging, compassion and flourishing where every child and adult is valued and supported. We recognise that wellbeing encompasses emotional, mental, physical, social and spiritual health. Opportunities for spiritual development are embedded throughout school life through collective worship, reflection, prayer, outdoor learning, relationships and moments of awe and wonder.

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.

We aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using:

- 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

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.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

Why mental health and wellbeing is important?

At St Giles Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. All children go through ups and downs during their school career and some face significant life events.

According to the Anna Freud NCCF[1], 1 in 5 8-25 year olds have an identifiable mental health condition – that's around three children in every class. While more than half of all mental health problems are established by the age of 14, the factors that can put a child more at risk of developing a mental health problem can often be identified much earlier. If a child who is at risk isn't given early support, they may go on to develop a mental health problem.

[1] https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/about/

Early intervention is key to giving young people the best start in life.

The Department for Education states in their 'Mental Health and behaviour in schools' publication[2], "Schools have a central role to play in enabling their pupils to be resilient and to support good mental health and wellbeing. It is important that schools promote good mental wellbeing for all pupils."

Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

Definition of mental health and wellbeing

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing,[3] " a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community".

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:

- feel confident in themselves.
- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- cope with the stresses of everyday life.
- manage times of stress and be able to deal with change.

[2] https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools__.pdf

[3] https://www.who.int/health-topics/mental-health#tab=tab_1

- learn and achieve.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

Links to other policies

As well as the policies mentioned above, this policy links to our Safeguarding, Anti-Bullying, SEND,SMSC and PSHE polices. Furthermore, links with the School's Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

Lead Members of Staff

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

Mr Les Dow - Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Mrs Daniela Hatfeild – Governor Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead
Mrs Lindsey Leonowicz - Lead Mental Health First Aider
Mrs Harsimrat Kaur Mavi – SENDCO / Deputy Head

Cllr Simran Cheema - Chair of Governors

Lee Highton-Nicholls (Governor + Starfish Mentoring Lead)
Mr M Dakin - CPD Lead / Headteacher
Mrs Treadwell - PSHE Subject Lead

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will

require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health Lead or Mental Health First Aider in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed, with an immediate referral to the Designated Child Protection Office staff or the Head Teacher. If the pupil presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to School Health is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the SENDCO.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to children with mental health needs and their families. Sources of relevant support include:

- Our own Senior Leadership Team
- Our Safeguarding/Child Protection Lead
- Our Mental Health First Aider
- School support staff employed to manage mental health needs of particular children
- Our SENDCO who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including children whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision.
- Kidz Club
- Starfish Mentoring
- School nurse

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals.
This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and 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 there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance[4]to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Targeted support

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

- Circle time approaches
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes'
- Kidz Club
- Therapeutic activities including art, lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Bereavement and loss support, including access to appropriate resources and external agencies where required.
-

We recognise that adverse childhood experiences, trauma and significant life events can impact children's emotional wellbeing, behaviour and ability to

[4] Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing URL= https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and (accessed 23.06.21)

learn. Staff adopt a trauma-informed and relational approach which prioritises safety, trust, belonging, emotional regulation and strong relationships.

We recognise that adverse childhood experiences, trauma and significant life events can impact children's emotional wellbeing, behaviour and ability to learn. Staff adopt a trauma-informed and relational approach which prioritises safety, trust, belonging, emotional regulation and strong relationships.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it.

Staff: Access to our Mental Health First Aider and SAS Wellbeing Package.

Pupils: Referral to in school Emotional and Social Support (Kidz Klub) and referrals to School Nurse. (GP Referrals to CAMHS)

Parents: Signposted to School Nurse and GP.



We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil 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, Mental Health First Aider or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretively
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

- Emotional dysregulation
- Social media related anxiety
- Online harms
- Body image concerns
- Persistent absence linked to anxiety
- Gaming addiction
- School avoidance
- Excessive concern about online interactions
- Persistent anxiety about school attendance
- Significant changes in friendship groups
- Obsessive use of technology
- Low self-worth linked to body image
- Signs of emotional dysregulation

Online Safety and Mental Health

Digital Wellbeing

We recognise the growing impact of digital technology, social media, misinformation, disinformation, online harassment, harmful content and excessive screen use on children's mental health. Through our curriculum, filtering and monitoring systems

and safeguarding procedures, we support pupils in developing healthy and safe online habits.

Attendance and Emotional Wellbeing

We recognise the strong relationship between emotional wellbeing and school attendance. Where anxiety or mental health difficulties affect attendance, the school will work collaboratively with families and external agencies to remove barriers and promote successful engagement in education.

Pupil Voice

We actively seek the views of children through School Council, UNICEF Ambassadors, pupil questionnaires, circle times and pupil leadership opportunities. Pupil voice informs wellbeing provision and helps ensure support meets the needs of our community.

Through our Climate Action Plan and sustainability work, pupils are supported to understand environmental issues in a positive and empowering way. We aim to foster hope, responsibility and action rather than fear or anxiety when exploring climate-related topics.

Mental Health Curriculum

Teaching about mental health forms an integral part of our PSHE and Relationships Education curriculum and is delivered in an age-appropriate manner. Pupils develop knowledge and skills relating to:

- Emotional literacy
- Resilience
- Self-regulation
- Healthy relationships
- Mental health awareness
- Help-seeking behaviour
- Digital wellbeing
- Diversity and inclusion

Equality and Inclusion

Add a section making explicit reference to:

- Equality Act 2010
- SEND
- Young carers
- Bereavement

- Looked After Children
- Children with protected characteristics

We recognise that certain groups of children may face additional barriers to positive mental health and wellbeing. Support will be tailored to meet the needs of vulnerable groups, including pupils with SEND, young carers, looked after children, bereaved pupils and those experiencing disadvantage.

Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing

The wellbeing of staff is essential to creating a positive school culture and ensuring the best outcomes for pupils.

St Giles CE Primary School is committed to:

- Promoting a healthy work-life balance
- Supporting staff wellbeing through regular wellbeing initiatives
- Providing access to Mental Health First Aid support
- Offering access to the SAS Wellbeing Package
- Providing opportunities for supervision and professional support where appropriate
- Fostering a culture where staff can seek help without stigma

Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the pupil's confidential file. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

Staff make it clear to children that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health Lead or the Safeguarding Lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on then we should discuss with the pupil:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a pupil without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent - particularly if a pupil is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Safeguarding Lead / Mental Health First Aider or Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection office Mr Les Dow must be informed immediately.

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.

- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential records.

Working with All Parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- 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

Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided

either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

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
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists
- Black Country NHS Mental Health Support Team (MHST)
- Educational Psychology Service
- Kooth (if available locally)
- Young Minds
- Mind
- Place2Be resources
- NSPCC

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 pupils safe.

We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.[5]

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 developing situations with one or more pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Mr M Dakin our CPD Coordinator who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years as a minimum. It is next due for review by 30 November 28.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to Mrs Hatfield or Mrs Leonowicz via phone 01902 368308 or email:

postbos@st-giles.walsall.sch.uk

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

[5] To be reviewed: 30.11.28


Physiotherapy
Counselling
Weight Management
Nurse Support Service
Menopause Support
Mindfulness Support
GP Phone & Video Consultations
Cancer & Chronic Illness Support
Private Medical Operations
Health Screening Days
Stress Awareness Sessions
SAS
Health & Wellbeing Services