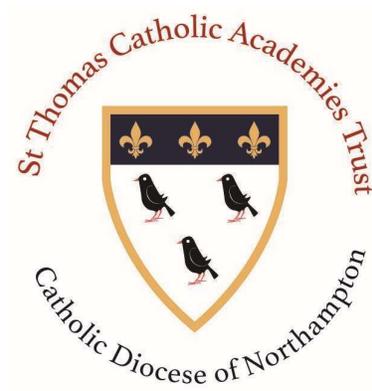
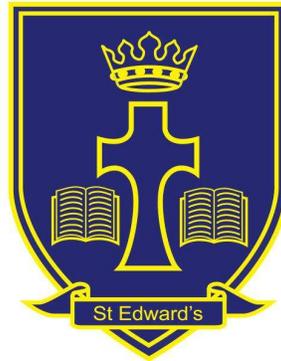


Pupil mental health and wellbeing policy

St Edward's Catholic Junior School



Approved by:	Draft	Date: September 2024
Last reviewed on:		
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Contents

- 1. Policy Statement..... 3
- 2. Legislation and guidance..... 4
- 3. Roles and responsibilities 5
- 4. Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis..... 6
- 5. Warning signs 7
- 6. Managing disclosures 8
- 7. Confidentiality 8
- 8. Supporting pupils 9
- 9. Supporting and collaborating with parents/carers 11
- 10. Supporting peers 11
- 11. Signposting 12
- 12. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness..... 12
- 13. Training 13
- 14. Support for staff 13
- 15. Monitoring arrangements..... 13

1. Policy Statement

“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me”.

Philippians 4:13

Following in the footsteps of our patron St Edward, we try always to remember that everyone is special and should be treated with respect. We recognise the dignity of each individual and encourage each to fulfil their own unique potential, living and learning in Christ.

At St Edward's we are committed to promoting the positive mental health and emotional wellbeing of pupils, families, members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows all voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we aim to provide a safe and supportive environment for all affected.

At St Edward's we define Mental Health and Resilience as:

Good Mental Health

Individuals are mentally healthy when they have the ability to:

- develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually
- initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying personal relationships
- use and enjoy solitude
- are aware of others and empathise with them
- experience happiness and can play and learn
- develop a sense of right and wrong
- resolve (face) problems and setbacks and learn from them.
- develop a sense of self and identity

Resilience is the ability to bounce back from the disappointments and difficulties we all experience. It is the ability to build protective factors in our lives which promote and protect our emotional wellbeing when faced with every knockback and unexpected changes.

This policy focuses on pupils' mental health and wellbeing. It aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for our community.
- Remove the stigma of mental health challenges.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health challenges.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in pupils and each other.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support; both for themselves and pupils; who may have mental health challenges.
- Provide the appropriate support to pupils with mental health challenges.
- Develop resilience amongst pupils and raise awareness of resilience building techniques, creating a safe and nurturing environment for all.
- Raise awareness amongst our community of mental health issues and encourage staff to disclose any mental health challenges in a supportive environment.
- Encourage a mental health friendly environment where everyone is aware of the signs and symptoms of mental ill health and can effectively sign post pupils and families.

It should be read alongside:

- SEND policy
- Behaviour policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy

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 designated safeguarding lead (DSL), Senior Mental Health Lead or Learning Support Mentor

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

- Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) Mrs Joanna Heritage
- Special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) Mrs Alison Weaver
- Mental health lead Mrs Alison Weaver
- Learning Support Mentor Mrs Clare Halewood
- Pupil Wellbeing Governor Mr Dean Kelly
- Staff Wellbeing Governor Mrs Rebecca Bernstein

Our Mental Health Leads:

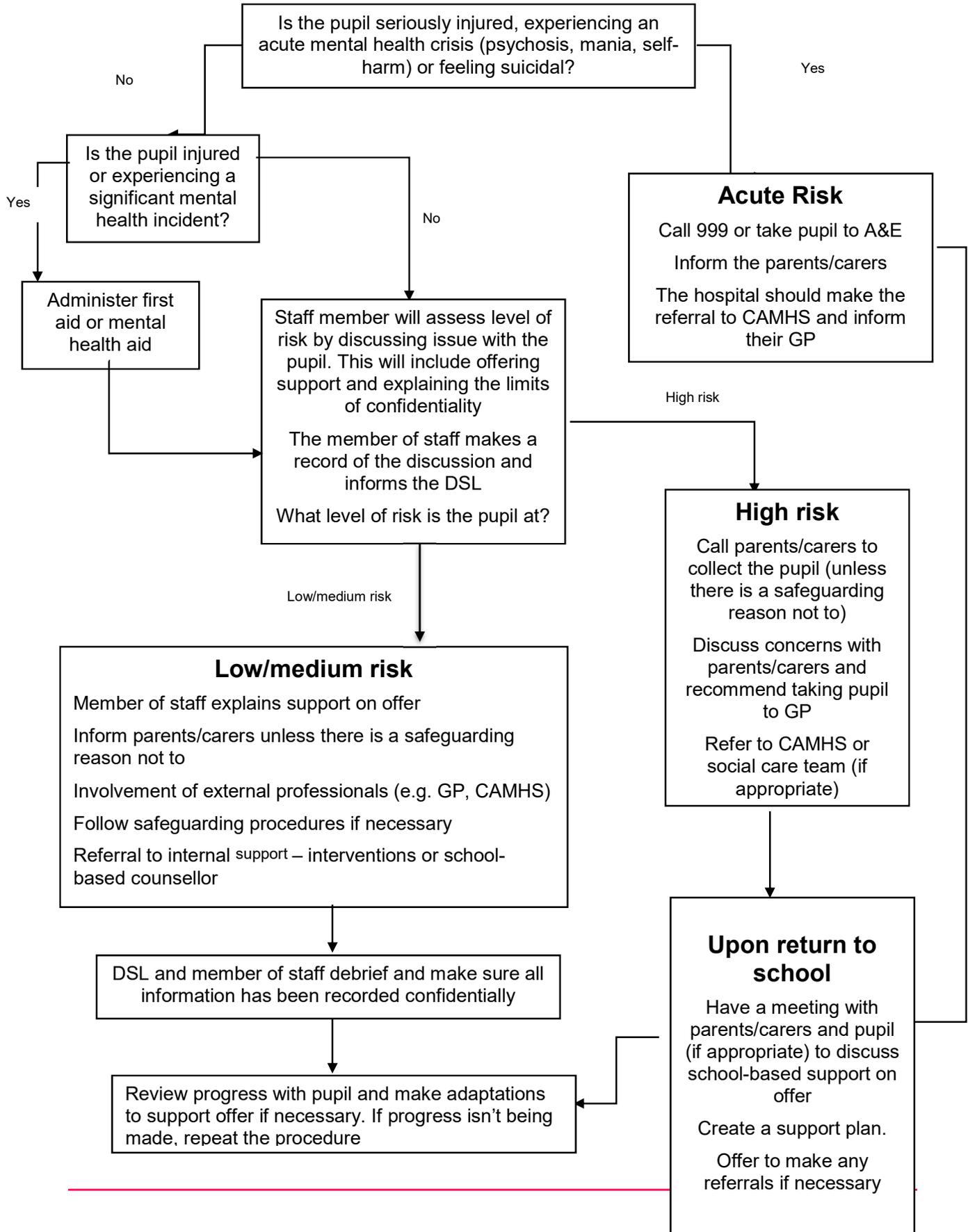
Lead and work with all staff to co-ordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

Work with the PSHE leader re: teaching about mental health.

Provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates.

Liaise with mental health services and make 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 a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health, including:

- 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 observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead, the Mental Health lead or the Learning Support Mentor 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
 - Repeated 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 record all 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, Mental Health lead or Learning Support Mentor. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done by the DSL team and 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, Mental Health Lead or Learning Support Mentor.
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, Mental Health Lead or Learning Support Mentor will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed, by the DSL team, 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, class time, PSHE lessons and mental health awareness week
- Signposting all pupils to sources of online support on our school website
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any aspects of our school that are negatively impacting their mental health
- Monitoring all pupils' mental health through assessments, e.g. PASS Survey, Boxall Profile, 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, Learning Support Mentor
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing.

8.2 Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the Senior Mental Health Leader, in conjunction with DSL and Learning Support Mentor, 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 Targeted Support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with the Mental Health Support Team (MHST) and School Nursing Service in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of our pupils. For example, the MHST run regular groups to support children and parents.

We work closely with other professionals such as:

- Educational Psychologist
- MHST
- Inclusion Support Service
- Young Carers
- Pupil and Wellbeing Officer
- Early Help service

In addition, we offer the following provision in house:

- Forest Schools
- Drawing and Talking Therapy
- Individual Mentoring
- Zones of Regulation
- Nurture Group
- ELSA
- Young Carers Group
- Lunchtime Social Club
- Wellbeing time with the School Dog

When thresholds are met referrals may be made to:

- CAMHS
- Young Carers
- Family Support Team
- Children's Services
- School Nurse

In some cases, a multi professional meeting will be arranged to discuss the case further. Some children will neither meet thresholds nor be able to access individual therapies. As a school we attempt to offer one to one pastoral support for these pupils. This may be delivered by an individual support plan.

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
- MHST

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 and carers to promote 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 concerns, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- 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 sharing 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 Learning Support Mentor
- 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 Learning Support Mentor 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

12. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

12.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE

At St Edward'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 well-being.
- 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's normal to talk about mental health.

We follow the [PSHE Association Guidance teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing](#) taught through the [TenTen Life to the Full Plus curriculum](#)

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 PSHE curriculum 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

Annual training takes place for all staff as part of the safeguarding training. Other specific training will be utilised 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 it becomes appropriate. Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training 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 through [Schools Advisory Service](#)

15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Senior 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.