



The
Holy Spirit
Catholic Multi Academy

'With grace and humility, glorify the Lord by your life.'

Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

This policy applies to St Thomas More Catholic Academy & Sixth Form College part of The Holy Spirit Catholic MAC

This Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy has been approved and adopted by The Holy Spirit MAC on 12th July 2021

Policy Ratified on: 12th July 2021

Signed by the Chair of the
Education Standards
Committee

Signed by the Principal

Next Review: July 2022





The Holy Spirit Catholic Multi Academy Company

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

'With grace and humility, glorify the Lord by your life.'

This Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy has been approved and adopted by the Education Standards Committee in July 2021 and will be reviewed in July 2022.

Signed by the Chair of the Education Standards Committee:

Signed by the Principal:

Contents

1. Policy Statement	2
2. Policy Scope	2
3. Policy Aims	2
4. Key Staff Members	3
5. Teaching about Mental Health	3
6. Targeted Support at School	3
7. Signposting	3
8. Identifying Needs and Warning Signs	3
9. Managing Disclosures	4
10. Confidentiality	4
11. Whole School Approach	5
12. Working with Parents/Carers	5
13. Working with other Agencies and Partners	5
14. Supporting Peers	5
15. Training	6

1. Policy Statement

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

At our school, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. Our culture is supportive, caring, and respectful. We encourage pupils to be open and we want each pupil to have their voice heard.

At our school, we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that each of us may need help to cope with them sometimes. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support. At our school, positive mental health is everybody's responsibility. We all have a role to play.

2. Policy Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff, including teachers and non-teaching staff. It outlines our approach to promoting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils. It should be read and understood alongside our other relevant school policies.

3. Policy Aims

The aim of our policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health of our staff and pupils. At our school, we will always:

- Help pupils to understand their emotions and experiences better.
- Ensure our pupils feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries.
- Help pupils to form and maintain relationships.
- Encourage pupils to be confident and help to promote their self-esteem.
- Help pupils to develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks.

We will always promote healthy environment by:

- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all pupils and staff.
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements.
- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect.
- Promoting our pupils' voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making.
- Celebrating each pupil for who they are and making every pupil feel valued and respected.
- Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and providing support to any pupil that needs it.
- Raising awareness amongst staff and pupils about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms.
- Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of mental-ill health in pupils.
- Supporting staff who are struggling with their mental health.

4. Key Staff Members

All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students and each other. However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process.

These are:

- **Our Designated Safeguarding Lead: Dean Sherratt**
- **Pastoral Staff: staff name(s)** Elizabeth McSweeney, all Head of Year and Learning Mentors for Year 7 to 13
- **SENCO/Inclusion Manager: staff name(s)** Imelda Gaffney

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a student, then in the first instance they should speak to: **Elizabeth McSweeney.**

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 a designated safeguarding lead.

If a child presents a medical emergency then relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services.

5. Teaching about Mental Health

Our PHSE curriculum is developed to give students the skills, knowledge, and understanding they need to keep themselves mentally healthy. This includes resilience techniques and training.

We will regularly review our PHSE curriculum and lesson content to ensure that they're meeting the aims outlined in this policy. We'll also implement this into our curriculum at all stages to provide students with strategies to help keep them mentally well.

6. Targeted Support at School

We have a range of support available in school for any pupils who are struggling, as listed below:

Referral to CAHMS

Working with outside agencies, eg MIND

Early Help Referral

Referral to school counselor

Use of Learning Mentors

Referral to Pastoral Lead

Protective Behavior Workshop

Bereavement Therapy and Counselling

Mindfulness workshops

Cognitive behavior therapy

Neurolinguistics Support

7. Signposting

We will ensure that all staff, pupils, and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them and how they can access these services. Within the school and through our communication channels (e.g. newsletters, website) we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

8. Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

All of our staff will be trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems.

This means that they will be able to offer help and support to pupils who need it, when they need it.

These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs will communicate their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Officer as appropriate. Staff will be able to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including:

- Physical signs of harm.
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits.
- Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in mood.
- Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide.
- Drug and alcohol abuse.
- Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. a large winter coat in summer.
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption.

Staff will also be able to identify a range of issues, including:

- Attendance and absenteeism.
- Punctuality and lateness.
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education.
- Family and relationship problems.

Finally, staff will be well placed to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact a pupil's mental health and wellbeing, such as bereavement and health difficulties.

9. Managing Disclosures

If a pupil discloses concerns about themselves or a friend, to any member of staff, then all staff will respond in a calm, supportive, and non-judgemental manner.

All disclosures will be recorded confidentially and only shared with the appropriate authorities if it's necessary to keep the child safe, in line with our Safeguarding Policy.

The disclosure record will contain:

- The date of the disclosure.
- The name of the staff member to whom the disclosure was made.
- The nature of the disclosure and the main points from the conversation.
- Agreed next steps.

10. Confidentiality

If a member of staff thinks it is necessary to pass on concerns about a pupil, either to somebody inside the school or somebody outside it, then this will first be discussed with the pupil. They will be told:

- Who the staff member is going to tell.
- What the staff member is going to disclose.
- Why it's necessary for somebody else to be told.
- When the contact will be.

However, it may not be possible to gain the pupil's consent first, such as in the case of pupils who are at immediate risk. Protecting a pupil's safety is our main priority so we would share disclosures if we judged a child to be at risk.

It is important to also safeguard staff's emotional wellbeing. Safeguarding Supervision between the named persons relieves the burden of concerns and also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur. It also provides opportunities for ideas and support.

11. Whole School Approach

We take a whole school approach towards the mental health of our pupils. This means working with parents and carers and with other agencies and partners, where necessary.

12. Working with Parents/Carers

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. We aim to work in partnership with parents and carers and support them as much as possible. This means keeping them informed about their child and offering our support at all times. We will do this by:

- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school through our communication channels (e.g. website, newsletter)
- Sharing and allowing parents to access further support.
- Ensuring that parents are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child.
- Giving parents guidance about how they can support their child's/children's positive mental health.
- Ensuring this policy is easily accessible to parents.
- Keeping parents informed about the mental health training our school staff receive and how mental health is covered in our school curriculum.

Records of meetings with parents and the points discussed/agreed will be kept on CPOMs and an individual care plan created if appropriate.

13. Working with Other Agencies and Partners

As part of our whole school approach, we will also work with other agencies to support our students' emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with for example:

- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- School Nurse
- Education Psychology Services

- Counselling services
- Therapists
- Family support workers
- Behavioural support workers

14. Supporting Peers

We understand that, when a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their peers. In response to this, we will consider, on a case by case basis, any peers that may need additional support.

We will provide support in a one-on-one or group setting. These sessions will be guided by the student, but they will discuss how peers can help, how peers can access support themselves, and healthy ways of coping with any emotions they might be feeling.

15. Training

All staff will receive regular training in child mental health so that they can recognise and respond to mental health issues. This will form part of their regular safeguarding training and is a requirement to keep children safe. Training records will be held in staff files.

We will post all relevant information, and additional information, on our school website so staff can learn more about child mental health. We will consider additional training opportunities for staff and we will support additional CPD throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with pupils.