

St John the Baptist C of E Primary School



Live life in all its fullness

- A fun, healthy and safe place to learn.
- A Christian school, where every child is encouraged on their journey of faith.

Pupils' Health and Wellbeing Policy

November 2023

St John the Baptist C of E Health and Well Being of Pupils Policy

At St John the Baptist C of E Primary School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils, staff and community. 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 everyone has mental health, and we have a role to play in supporting this. We aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing of every member of our school community and recognise how important mental health and wellbeing is to our lives, as is physical health. We recognise that children's mental health and overall wellbeing can affect their learning and achievement.

Aims

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to promote mental wellness and to be a school where:

- all children are valued as unique individuals;
- children have a sense of belonging and feel safe;
- children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems or worries without judgement;
- positive mental health is promoted and valued;
- bullying is not tolerated;
- parents are supported and can access help.

Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- promote positive mental health and wellbeing of all staff and children;
- promote an open culture which increases understanding and awareness of common mental health issues;
- provide support to staff working with children with mental health issues;
- provide support to children suffering from mental health and their peers and parents.

At St John the Baptist C of E Primary School we:

- provide a safe and supportive environment with clear expectations for behaviour;
- help our children to understand and manage their emotions and feelings;
- help our children to feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries;
- help our children to form and maintain relationships;

- foster self-esteem and self-worth to ensure our children know that they are unique and valued by God and others;
- encourage children to be confident and 'live life in all its fullness';
- help our children to develop emotional resilience and aspire to be the best they can be;
- provide a structured approach to education about relationships, sex, health, keeping safe and mental wellbeing;
- ensure spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is interwoven in through all curriculum areas;
- support parents as partners in their child's learning and development.

Definition of Wellbeing

The charity Mind describes mental wellbeing as 'your mental state - how you are feeling and how well you can cope with day-to-day life'.

At St John the Baptist C of E Primary School, we want all children to show their positive mental wellbeing by:

- being effective and successful learners;
- feeling safe in an environment with a sense of shared belonging;
- making and sustaining friendships;
- dealing with and resolving conflict effectively and fairly;
- solving problems with others for themselves;
- knowing how to manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety;
- being able to promote calm, optimistic states that support the achievement of goals;
- recovering from setbacks and persisting in the face of the difficulties;
- working and playing co-operatively;
- competing fairly and winning and losing with dignity and respect for other competitors;
- recognising and standing up for their rights and the rights of others;
- understanding and valuing the differences and commonalities between people, respecting and celebrating the rights of others to have beliefs and values different from their own.

The Importance of Mental Health and Wellbeing:

NHS statistics show in 2022, 18% of children aged 7 to 16 years had a probable mental disorder. In children aged 7 to 16 years, rates rose from 1 in 9 (12.1%) in 2017 to 1 in 6 (16.7%) in 2020. Rates of probable mental disorder then remains stable between 2020, 2021, 2022.

The Mental Health Foundation (2023) advise that children's emotional well-being is just as important as their physical health. Good mental health helps them develop resilience to cope with whatever life throws at them and grow into well-rounded, healthy adults.

The Mental Health Foundation (2023) recognise the importance of the following to keep children mentally well:

- Being in good physical health, eating a balanced diet and getting regular exercise
- Having time and freedom to play, indoors and outdoors
- Being part of a family that gets along well most of the time
- Going to a school that looks after the wellbeing of their pupils
- Taking part in local activities

Other factors are also important, including feeling loved, trusted, understood and safe. Children who are optimistic, and resilient, have some control over their lives and feel like they belong are more likely to have good mental well-being.

This policy describes our 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. It should be read in conjunction with our other whole school policies. In particular, our SEND Policy, Child Protection (Safeguarding Policy), Equalities Policy, Anti-Bullying Policy, People Skills Policy and Behaviour Policy.

Whole School Approach

We take a whole school approach to effective practice and provision is in place to promote the emotional wellbeing and mental health of both staff and pupils. This is achieved by:

- creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience and which everyone understands;
- helping children to develop social relationships to support each other and seek help when they, or their peers, need it;
- helping children to be resilient learners;
- teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health as an aspect of overall health;
- early identification of children who have or may have signs of mental health needs and planning to support their needs, including working with specialist services;
- effectively working in partnership with parents and carers;
- supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience;
- developing an open culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health awareness;
- having special event days to promote wellbeing.

Promoting a mentally healthy environment:

- promoting our core Christian Values and encouraging a sense of belonging through character education, half termly values, our house system etc;
- promoting pupil and staff voice alongside opportunities to participate in decision making through school council, sports reps, pupil voice and audits, leadership opportunities/What my teacher needs to know boxes, (house captains) etc;
- celebrating academic and personal achievements, not only in our pupils but our staff, parents and governors through platinum awards, assemblies, school website etc;
- providing opportunities to develop a sense of self-worth through our climate of participation and ambition;

- providing opportunities to reflect and pray;
- access to appropriate support that meets their needs;
- creating a whole school community that upholds kindness, values difference and challenges exclusion;
- seeing everyone as a learner, everyone as a leader.

Curriculum and Nurture Provision

Positive wellbeing is promoted through the curriculum and all school activities. Through a carefully planned approach to PSHE, supported by our People Skills Curriculum Map, our pupils are helped to acquire the knowledge and develop the skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives, and to become resilient, informed and responsible citizens. Throughout the time at our school the children have the opportunity to take part in the following activities:

- DARE
- The GREAT project
- School bank and financial education projects
- Anti-bullying week
- RSE planned activities
- Healthy eating projects
- A range of sporting events
- Fire Fit
- Character education
- Class sessions with the Mental Health Support team

Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

As a school, we want to ensure that we have clear systems and processes in place for early intervention and identification of mental health problems, and that a referral to experienced and skilled professionals is made. All staff know pupils well and are tuned into signs that children are upset, appear anxious or worried, or are acting 'out of character'. Negative experiences and upsetting life events can affect mental health in a way that brings about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state.

This can include:

- being fearful, withdrawn or display low self-esteem;
- being aggressive, oppositional, or body rocking;
- interpersonal behaviours (indiscriminate contact or affection seeking; overfriendliness or excessive clinginess);
- demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent disapproval;
- failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed;
- coercive controlling behaviour;
- or lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions.

These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff will discuss their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s, SENCo or Mental Health Lead. During weekly staff meetings safeguarding and pupil wellbeing is first on the agenda to ensure all staff are aware of vulnerable pupils.

When pupils require additional support for social, emotional and/or mental health, our trained ELSA provides nurture sessions that are personalised to individual needs.

Where there is a need for more specialised, targeted approaches that support vulnerable children, the Mental Health Lead will make a referral to an outside organisation such as the Mental Health Trailblazer support team, School Nurse or CAMHs.

As a school we offer different levels of support;

Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The school's role in supporting and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

- **Prevention:** Creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping children to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this through our ethos and other school activities.
- **Identification:** Recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.
- **Early support:** Helping children to access evidence based early support and interventions.
- **Access to specialist support:** Working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

Pastoral Organisation for Staff

Pastoral support for all members of the school community is fundamental to the aims and philosophy of St John the Baptist C of E Primary School. We believe that a well-supported, valued staff team with a clear and shared purpose are best placed to provide emotional wellbeing for children in their care. See the Health and Wellbeing of Staff policy.

Our Team of Mental Health Ambassadors strive to support the school's work around mental health and wellbeing:

Miss Rachel Ireland – Headteacher and DSL

Mrs Jenny Bloom – Mental Health & Wellbeing Lead

Mr Lee Mazzotti – SENCO

Miss Fay Jackson – Sports Subject Lead

Mrs Katie Merik – Deputy Headteacher and DSL

Mrs Karen Doel – PP Lead

Mrs Ruth Whitt – ELSA and Family Link Officer

Jan Jackson - Link Governor for Mental Health and Wellbeing.

Working in Partnership with Parents

At St John the Baptist C of E Primary School, we understand and value the need to work closely with parents to ensure the school's health initiatives meet the needs of our pupils. We value the important contribution made by parents and appreciate the need to proactively engage parents and families in the

health and wellbeing of the children. We seek to establish and maintain strong partnerships with families, outside agencies and the wider community to promote consistent support for children's health and wellbeing.

To support parents we:

- highlight sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website;
- ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their child;
- hold regular wellbeing events and information evenings on wellbeing for parents/carers in school
- regular opportunities for parents/carers to meet the Mental Health Support Team
- make our Mental Health and Wellbeing 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 topic their children are learning about in People Skills and share ideas for extending and engaging in this learning at home.
- Support for parents/carers provided by our Family Link Officer

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 Mental Health Support Team
- Family SENCo
- Educational Psychology Services
- Behaviour support
- CAMHs
- Social Care

Training

We are committed to high quality, ongoing professional development on emotional wellbeing and mental health. All staff have access to a wealth of resources and training in regard to recognising and responding to mental health issues. Staff are committed to widening their professional understanding in this area and engage in regular training opportunities, such as distance learning courses and ELSA training. Specific issues will be covered through specialist training where appropriate due to developing situations with a child/ children.

Policy Reviewed September 2023

Review Date September 2025

Review staff J Bloom

Review Governor J.Jackson

