

Stoke Row CE School



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Document Approval Record

Committee	Ethos Committee
Chair of Committee	Kerrie Blaker
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'Shine like stars and become light in our world'

At Stoke Row School we aim for our children to have the brightest futures, each one nurtured individually to be a guiding light with a unique sparkle.
We teach on another to live with kindness and respect.

We help our children to understand that with courage and perseverance they can excel.

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These policies are all created in line with the Christian foundation of this school which is expressed through our five core values and our view that every child is unique and valued.

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In line with [Mental Health and behaviour in schools](#)- departmental advice for school staff and based on a model policy from The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust

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1 Introduction

In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health condition. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote positive mental health and wellbeing and provide a safe and stable environment for the many children affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health. The school has an important role to play, acting as a source of support and information for both children and parents. However, many school and college staff feel out of their depth when faced with issues related to mental health. The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust has developed guidance to help schools develop policies and procedures which will empower staff to spot and support children in need of help and to follow appropriate referral pathways and procedures. A well-developed and implemented policy can prevent children from falling through the gaps.

"A boy in year 10 was suffering badly from anorexia and ended up in A&E – when staff were debriefed several of us realised that although we were very concerned about him, we had all assumed someone else was dealing with it – but nobody was. We now have a policy with a named member of staff who all these concerns are passed to."

Stoke Row School has chosen to adopt the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust model template as its Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy. The Policy also provides appendices with additional information which staff may find helpful as well as a

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digest of websites and books providing further information about mental health issues likely to be found within a student body.

Guidance and advice documents, including advice from the Department for Education and Public Health are included in Appendix B.

2 Acknowledgements

This guidance was written by Dr Pooky Knightsmith who is the Director - Children, Young People and Schools Programme with the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust. The Trust fully funded the research and writing of the guidance. The guidance was developed in consultation with a range of school staff and other professionals and experts. We are grateful to all of them. Special thanks go to Penny Tyndale-Hardy, Farlingaye High School; Rahel Monohan, Latymer Upper School and Sarah Davies, Notting Hill and Ealing High School. This policy forms part of the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust's ongoing work to improve recognition of and support for mental health issues. The Trust provides funded training to schools on a variety of topics related to mental health including twilight, half day and full day INSET sessions. For further information email admin@cwmt.org or call 01635 869754.

3 Policy Statement

Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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) At Stoke Row CE Primary School we believe that we all belong to God's family. We aim to develop confident learners who take ownership of their learning and are proud of their achievements. We believe that every child is entitled to enjoy their childhood. We seek to do this through learning together in a secure, welcoming, happy and healthy environment, where we have high expectations of each other and embrace exciting challenges that inspire and motivate us to achieve in all areas of our lives. Our school community is encouraged to develop a passion for lifelong learning, to contribute to our global society, and to be generous and inclusive in our friendships. Our Christian ethos and our sense of belonging to one community encourage kind, thoughtful and respectful behaviour where everyone's contribution is valued, and where diversity and what makes us all individuals are celebrated.

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole-school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable children.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for children affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

4 Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and to providing a safe and stable environment for the many children affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors. It should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a child's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue, and the SEND policy where a child has an identified special educational need.

The Policy Aims to:

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

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Charlotte Whittle- designated child protection/safeguarding officer
- Gillian Fraser - deputy designated child protection/safeguarding officer
- Emma Beeton - mental health lead
- Emma Hughes - SEND Co-ordinator

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm, the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated child protection officer. If the child presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Emma Hughes, SEND co-ordinator. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided in Appendix E.

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

5 Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children 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 children to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. We will follow the [PHSE Association Guidance](#) to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

6 How do we promote positive mental health?

Below is a list of all the opportunities and experiences that are provided for the children to ensure positive mental health. This list is not exhaustive.

- PSHE lessons
- Sporting activities
- Extra-curricular activities (sports clubs, gardening club, Lego club etc)
- Positive feedback during lessons and in books
- Star and Learner of the week certificates
- Head teacher awards
- Prayer Space
- Social skills groups
- Giving children jobs/responsibilities
- Forest school
- Group work
- School environment
- Buddying system (especially in Reception)
- Knowing the children as individuals
- Celebrating their out-of-school achievements
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)
- Transition work
- Plays/performances
- Stay and Play sessions in EYFS
- Class assembly
- Class prayers
- Show and Tell
- Philosophy for Children
- Use of relaxation techniques

Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing are also supported by the Pupil Behaviour and Anti Bullying Policies and the Staff and Parent Codes of Conduct.

7 How do we monitor mental health?

After each lunch time, the staff complete a 'feelings check-in'. Each class will have their own mechanism for the children to indicate their mood and feelings. This will be actively encouraged and referenced by the class staff members to encourage pupils to engage. Any negative responses will be addressed as soon as possible and discussed with parents when necessary.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, children and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. The school has a number of resources and literature which they loan to parents as and when appropriate.

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a child 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 Charlotte Whittle or Emma Beeton, our mental health and emotional wellbeing lead.

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 secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Managing disclosures

A child 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 child 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 child's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' For more information about how to handle mental health disclosures sensitively see appendix D.

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

- Date

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- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed Next Steps

This information should be shared with the mental health lead, Charlotte Whittle or Emma Beeton who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. See appendix E for guidance about making a referral to CAMHS.

Confidentiality

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

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

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the mental health lead, Emma Beeton or Charlotte Whittle. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing, and since we are no longer solely responsible for the child it ensures continuity of care in our absence and provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the child and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with. Parents must always be informed if there are concerns about a child's mental health.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents may not be informed, but the designated safeguarding lead, Charlotte Whittle, must be informed immediately.

8 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?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the child, 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 steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

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:

- 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
- Make our 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

9 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 children safe.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD (Continuing Professional Development) will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more children.

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.

The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust provides funded training to schools on a variety of topics related to mental health including twilight, half day and full day INSET sessions. For further information email admin@cwmt.org or call 01635 869754.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every three years as a minimum. It is next due for review in June 2023. Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis.

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

Please click the link for [Appendices](#)