

Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School



An Academy School Part of
The Good Shepherd Catholic Trust



Mental Health & Well-Being Policy

Our Mission Statement:

*We are a Catholic School. We strive to be a sign of Christ's presence in the world.
We follow Jesus.*

Date Approved by Governing Body:	6 th December 2023
Date To be Reviewed by:	Autumn Term 2025
Signed By:	A.McCarthy - Chair of Governors

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 Organisation).

In our school, our Catholic vision shapes all we do.

Mission Statement: *We follow Jesus*

Our aim is to ensure that every child's unique strengths are celebrated and strengthened alongside gaining an excellent academic, social, emotional and physical education.

At Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health and well-being for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers) and recognise how important mental health and emotional well-being 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 well-being and can affect their learning and achievement. All children go through ups and downs during their school career and some face significant life events. In 2017, about 1 in 10 children aged 5 to 16 had a diagnosable mental health need and these can have an enormous impact of quality of life, relationships and academic achievement. Post Covid, mental health is a key concern and this policy, coupled with our RHE curriculum, seeks to support all pupils.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "In order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy." 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 well-being and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

In addition, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils and staff.

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

What our policy aims to do:

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. We help pupils to develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- All children and staff are valued.
- All children and staff have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- We alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and well-being.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.
- Bullying is not tolerated.
- We provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and well-being issues.

Lead Members of Staff

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

Mrs Boon	Head Teacher - Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Miss Crampton	Deputy Head Teacher and Inclusion Leader. Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
Miss Fanning	Inclusion Leader and First Responder
Mrs Roca-Mas	Pastoral Leader and First Responder
Miss Deere	PE Leader

In addition there is a SENDCo and Operational SENDCo in place.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the class teacher and/or phase leader. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection and safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). 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 an external referral is made, the Mental Health Lead will manage this. External referrals can include:

- The North East London NHS Foundation Trust (NELFT).

Guidance about referring to NEFLT is provided on the NELFT website: <https://mindfresh.nelft.nhs.uk/>. Or a referral to the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) may also be relevant. Guidance about referring to CAMHS can be found on the NHS website: <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children->

Teaching about Mental Health and Well-Being

Mental health and well-being 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.
- Understand when and how to seek help.
- Learn and achieve.

Our RHE curriculum is designed to recognise and help pupils to seek help and manage their mental well-being. 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 RHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of our pupils 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 and to learn how to keep safe and reach out if they need support.

We teach mental health and emotional well-being issues in a safe and sensitive manner to support identification and self-help.

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicates an individual is experiencing mental health or emotional well-being issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously (could possibly be linked to a child protection issue) and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead or DSL.

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 pupil or staff member may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend/colleague, staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. If an individual chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend/colleague 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 individual's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'.

All disclosures by a pupil 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. This information should be shared with the mental health lead who will monitor, store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we feel 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.

Parents will always be informed so they can support their child.

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, this helps to safeguard our own emotional well-being 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 well-

being, and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

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 pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting with the SENDCo 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 record.

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 through the school SENDCo.
- 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. The SENDCo will do this and keep the class teacher informed.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings.

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 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).

Training

School has two Mental Health First Aiders.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years.