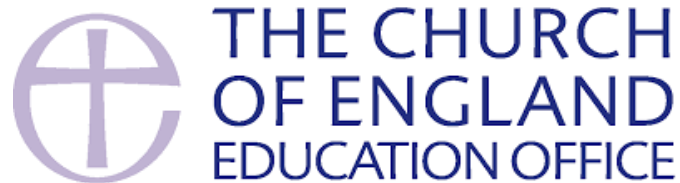




St Luke's Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy



Policy reviewed and updated: December 2022

Policy adopted by FGP: 21st March 2023

Policy Review: 31st December 2024 or sooner if required

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 Organization)*

In our school, our Christian vision shapes all we do. Through our Christian values we will **aspire** to be more like Jesus; **believe** all as having equal worth and dignity in God's eyes and help all our children to **achieve** their God-given potential knowing that, '**we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us**' Philippians 4:13. Our Core Values are **Love** and **Compassion; Friendship** and **Forgiveness; Endurance** and **Hope**.

We aim to promote positive mental health for all of our children and every member of our staff in our school community. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils and members of staff.

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

Scope

This document describes the 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 and it should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

The policy aims to:

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

Lead Members of Staff

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

- Alison Grennan: Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Alison Smith / Rita Samuels: Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)
- Rita Samuels & Jade Woodstock-Townsend: Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Leads
- Alison Grennan: Staff Well-Being Committee Lead
- Rita Samuels: Home-School-Community Liaison Officer (HSCLO)
- Geraldine Ferguson: Lead First Aider
- Jade Woodstock-Townsend: Pastoral Lead
- Alison Smith: PSHE Lead
- Alison Smith: Headstart School Coordinator
- Carol Bannister: SENCO
- Vicky Bryan: Assistant SENCO

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil, themselves or a member of staff should speak to either the Mental Health Lead or Pastoral Lead, in the first instance. 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 the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the head teacher. If there are serious concerns regarding a member of staff, the Headteacher or their Line Manager, must be informed immediately. If the pupil or member of staff 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 a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Pastoral Lead or Mental Health Lead. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided on the SEND onenote.

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receives 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

Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

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 PSHE curriculum and will also form a specific part of our annual 'Health & Sports Week'. In addition, Talk Topics will be used to incorporate and raise issues around Mental Health & Wellbeing, providing opportunities for discussion and questions.

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 pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance¹ to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

In addition to the Universal offer, we have invested heavily in being able to provide support for identified children, this is through our Leading Pastoral Worker and our Home School Officer. Both members of staff are trained in this area and provide targeted interventions such as Lego therapy, Wishes & Feelings, Social skills, Managing anxiety and many more.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined below:

- Rita Samuels (HSCLO)
- Jade Woodstock-Townsend (Pastoral Lead)
- BEAM
- ALGEE (Mental Health First Aid England)
- CAMHS (The Gem Centre, Wolverhampton)

SOME USEFUL NUMBERS

- NSPCC helpline 0808 800 5000
- YoungMinds helpline for anyone with concerns about a child's behaviour, wellbeing, mental health 0300 123 3393
- BEAT (eating disorders) youth helpline 0808 801 0711, adults 0808 801 0677
- Hearing voices network helpline 0114 271 8210
- Cruse bereavement care 0808 808 1677

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

¹ Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing URL= <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and> (accessed 02.02.2018)

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil or member of staff 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 Rita Samuels, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead or Jade Woodstock-Townsend, our Pastoral 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 pupil or member of staff 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. In the case of a disclosure 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 pupil's or staff member's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' Concerning handling mental health disclosures sensitively, the following procedure from Mental Health First Aid England is suggested: **ALGEE** is a way of helping staff to administer positive mental health first aid.

A- Approach, Assess for crisis Assist with Crisis.

- **STAY CALM!** Ensure you keep the conversation open, be mindful of your reaction (don't appear to panic/ shocked), be mindful of the time and place and be respectful of privacy- follow safeguarding procedures and only share where there is a risk to the safety of the child/ another person, i.e. see DSL OR DDSL and inform the child before sharing information.
- Consider the immediate risk or crisis, for example are they planning suicide? Having a panic attack? In a psychotic state or experiencing a medical emergency?

- Assist the crisis as best as you can in the moment- Keep yourself safe, don't leave them alone, send for help if needed, encourage them to talk but don't offer advice or deny their feelings, i.e. "don't be silly, you know you don't really feel like that"; give reassurance that help is available and can be found. Physical first aid where needed.

L- Listen and communicate non-judgementally

- This time is about the child and NOT YOUR OWN EXPERIENCES AND FEELINGS. Avoid interrupting but do ask clarifying questions if you are unsure what they mean.
- Be silent if in doubt, allow them space to say what they need to...this might be incredibly difficult!!!
- Acknowledge how they feel ("I can see this must be very painful for you to talk about. It must have been so hard to be feeling this way") without agreeing with concerning, action or pretending delusions/ hallucinations are real).

G- Give support and information

- Be supportive, respectful.
- Treat them with dignity, without blame ("I've coped with worse than this before; when this happened to me I just got on with it").
- Be realistic, it may take time to get long-term support in place and recovery may take a while, they may still have bad days.
- GIVE HOPE that despite this recovery is possible. You are not there to solve the problem!!!

E- Encourage professional help

- GPs, CAMHS, Psychology Team, NHS IAPT- Call 999 if there is a severe crisis. Be mindful that this could be scary!
- Go with them to appointments where possible or ensure someone they trust can do so.
- Respect that they may not want help and make sure your door is open if they change their mind! Don't threaten them with forced treatment.

E- Encourage other supports

- We can inform (with consent) families and other supportive adults like HSCLO (Rita Samuels), Pastoral Lead (Jade Woodstock-Townsend) so that the child gets good wrap around care.
- Let them know about support groups.
- Suggest strategies to try or build relaxation and mindfulness activities into lessons so that they can benefit without the spotlights!
- Create small intervention groups for support in school.
- Make a time to check in with them regularly so that they feel supported etc.

All disclosures/concerns should be recorded using the school's 'Concern & Disclosure' form that will then be held on the pupil's confidential file on the Safeguarding Onenote.

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 verbally with the mental health lead, **Rita Samuels** who will ensure that the record is filed appropriately and support and advice about next steps is offered.

Confidentiality

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

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

We should never share information about a child/adult 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 an individual is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead **Rita Samuels**, this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing 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 wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the DSL, Alison Grennan or DDSL, Alison Smith or Rita Samuels, must be informed immediately.

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? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, 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 step 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:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- 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
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

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 for 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)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Support for staff

St Luke's has a staff well-being committee which is made up of staff from across the school. The committee meets every month to discuss staff well-being; to look at what is working well and areas for improvement; explore ways of promoting staff well-being. Notes of the meeting can be found on Teams.

In addition, staff members have the opportunity to access confidential sessions with Pastoral Lead (Jade Woodstock-Townsend) or the Home School Community Lead (Rita Samuels). Both members of staff have qualifications which enable them to provide support and advice for staff.

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/Safeguarding training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

We will host relevant information on our learning platform and via the Headteacher's Weekly Bulletin for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.²

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be ongoing as part of their performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in December 2024.

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

² www.minded.org.uk [accessed 02/02/18].