



Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy 2024

Great Harwood St. John's CE Primary
"Where everyone shines with God's love"
Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

We at St John's CE Primary School are committed to meeting the needs of our pupils and ensuring that they make progress. In line with our mission statement, we aim to:

Build a better place, where:

Everyone is welcome;

No one is ever lonely;

We respect and trust each other;

There is always someone to ask for help;

People help us to be the best we can.

Great Harwood St John's CE Primary School statement of intent

'Where everyone shines with God's love.'

As a Church of England school, our curriculum has Christian values at its heart. It is our intent at Great Harwood St John's that ALL learners leave our school with a lifelong love of learning and they know that they are loved and treasured as individuals. To enable them to do this our curriculum has been carefully designed around our children, celebrating differences and developing the uniqueness of each child. We recognise children's starting points and quickly set about developing their phonics, early reading and maths skills through first hand experiences. Throughout their journey with us at St John's, we shower the children with enrichment opportunities to broaden their horizons and enhance their curiosity about their local community and the world around them. Staff work collaboratively, utilising each other's expertise to ensure a clear, coherent, well-balanced curriculum made bespoke to us. Ultimately, the day to day decisions of the school are to ensure that the whole child's needs are met whether this is academic or social and emotional.

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, 'Where everyone shines with God's love,' where everyone is encouraged to flourish, accomplish and to be 'the best they can be' in a supportive, positive place.

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. 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 pupils 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.

This policy 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 for 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

Lead Members of Staff

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

T Parker, Z Mills, D Newton, S Smith – *Designated Safeguarding Lead*

K Smith - *Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead*

T Parker, D Newton - *Lead First Aiders*

S Smith – *Parent Partnership*

T Parker - *CPD Lead*

K Smith – *PSHE Subject Leader*

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health 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 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 a referral to ELCAS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by K Smith (Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead). Guidance about referring to ELCAS is provided in Appendix i. If this is the case then the EHA process may commence in order for all parties to be coordinated correctly.

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.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort taught 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 Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

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 in *Appendix ii*.

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

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs, which indicate a pupil or staff member 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 K Smith, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead or a member of the SLT. Any concerns need to be treated in a confidential manner.

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 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 pupil 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 pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing on CPOMS. 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, K Smith or the DSL's in school, who will store the record appropriately (using CPOMS) and offer support and advice about next steps. See Appendix i for guidance about making a referral to ELCAS.

Confidentiality

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

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, usually the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead or DSL's, 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 child's 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 child protection office (Lancashire Children's Social Care – 0300 123 6720) must be informed immediately. This should be discussed as a child protection issue with a designated officer, either T Parker, Z Mills, D Newton, S Smith.

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

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 pupils safe.

We will host relevant information on our School Portal and school website 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.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our 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 twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the head teacher (our CPD Coordinator) who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Staff Well-Being

Positive workplaces will benefit all employees. People have a sense of well-being when they feel good about themselves, have a sense of purpose and feel capable of fulfilling their personal goals. We all have a responsibility to look after our own mental health and well-being, develop our confidence and capacity and learn to respond with resilience to life's changes and challenges in work and beyond. The five steps to mental health are:

- connect with people
- be active
- be curious
- learn
- and give.

It is important to remember that everyone's experience of a mental health problem is different and there may be no outward sign – this is why it's important that an environment is created where people can be open. Senior staff are available to talk to if you are experiencing any issues. If you choose to talk to other staff, that is your right, but they may feel it necessary to talk to a senior member of staff and let them know of any concerns. They will always talk to you about who they will talk to first and no confidences will be broken unless it is felt as an immediate risk of harm to self or others.

There are many resources and agencies within Lancashire to help anyone experiencing mental health and well-being issues. The Lancashire Well-Being Programme is a national programme run in partnership with WorkLife support and provides help and support for stress, staying healthy and looking after yourself. Staff should familiarise themselves with the following organisations (including those listed in the Appendices):

mind.org.uk

hse.gov.uk

Staff should also refer to the Capability Procedure, Bullying and Harassment Policy, Equality Act, Absence Management Procedures, Drug and Alcohol Policy, Health and Safety Policy,

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in 2027.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to K Smith our mental health lead via phone (01254 885926) or email (k.smith@st-johns-greatharwood.lancs.sch.uk).

Appendix i

Guidance about making a referral to ELCAS

<https://elht.nhs.uk/services/paediatrics/east-lancashire-child-and-adolescent-services>

A referral is when someone who works with your child, often a general practitioner (GP), teacher or social worker, has requested for your child to have an appointment with ELCAS. They should discuss a referral with you before it is made. Some clinics also accept self-referrals from young people or parents/carers.

ELCAS accept referrals from Doctors (including GP's and Paediatricians), Psychologists (Educational and Clinical), Social Workers and other professionals.

Local ELCAS Team:

01282 804806 or email elcas.referrals@elht

Appendix ii

Useful sources of further support

Locally

Mental Health and Wellbeing Helpline: <https://www.lscft.nhs.uk/services/service-finder-z/wellbeing-helpline-and-texting-service> 0800 915 4640

Lancashire Mind: <http://www.lancashiremind.org.uk/> 08009530110

NHS 111: Lancashire Care NHS Foundation Trust provides a Mental Health Access Line to support people's mental health needs 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you, or someone you care for, is feeling unwell, you can access the line, by calling the NHS non-emergency services on 111.

Your GP: if you need urgent medical attention, ask your GP surgery for an emergency appointment.

999: call 999 when someone is very unwell and cannot keep themselves safe, is being threatened or if a crime has been committed.

Accident and Emergency: if you, or someone you care for, is very unwell; injured or at risk of harm your nearest Accident and Emergency department can provide urgent care.

Social Services: If you feel your needs are urgent call Lancashire County Council Social Services on 0300 123 6720.

Advocacy Focus: Advocacy Focus offer a free, local support service, available across Lancashire and Blackpool 0300 3230965

ICANN: Independent Community Advocacy Network North help provide a voice for anyone who is disadvantaged in some way, or for some reason.

Carers Lancashire: Carers Lancashire is a service that specialises in supporting carers and assessing their needs, call 0345 688 7133.

Nationally

Anxiety UK work to relieve and support those living with anxiety and anxiety-based depression by providing information, support and understanding via an extensive range of services, including 1:1 therapy. They can provide support and help if a person has been diagnosed with, or suspect they may have an anxiety condition and can also help them deal with specific phobias such as fear of spiders, blushing, vomiting, being alone, public speaking, heights – in fact, any fear that stops a person from getting on with their life. www.anxietyuk.org.uk/

Catholic Mental Health Project supports the Catholic community to further develop spiritual and pastoral care for mental health www.catholicmentalhealthproject.org.uk/

Charlie Waller Memorial Trust offers free resources, including guidance and policy templates for use by schools and colleges. www.cwmt.org.uk/

Child Bereavement UK supports families and educates professionals when a baby or child of any age dies or is dying, or when a child is facing bereavement. Every year they train more than 8,000 professionals, helping them to better understand and meet the needs of grieving families. <https://childbereavementuk.org/>

Childline is a free, private and confidential service for children and young people available online, on the phone, anytime facilitated by trained counsellors. The website is easy to navigate and has many interactive resources, advice and sources of support for children and young people. www.childline.org.uk/

Education Support Partnership is the UK's only charity providing mental health and wellbeing support services to all education staff and organisations. www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/

Fixers: young people's stories Fixers are young people using their past to fix the future. They are motivated by personal experience to make positive change for themselves and those around them. Fixers have different backgrounds, interests and life experiences, and come from every corner of the UK. They are motivated by a desire to act on an issue that is important to them or a strong desire to help other people. They also have a voice that they want to be heard, whether that's on eating disorders, drugs, offending, cyberbullying or any other issue that is concerning them. Becoming a Fixer allows that to happen. Fixers are heard, understood and respected by others. Fixers choose the issue they want to fix and, using the skills of a team of creative experts, they work out how to make sure their message is heard by the right people, whether that's through a unique film, a leaflet or poster campaign, a website, an event or workshop. Then they use digital, print and broadcast media to make their voice heard as far and wide as possible. www.fixers.org.uk/home/news.php

HeadMeds: about mental health medicines HeadMeds is a website for young people about mental health medication, launched in March 2014 and is owned and managed by the national charity YoungMinds.

tellmi a free App that lets users post anonymously and receive support and advice about their worries from other teens. www.tellmi.help

Mental Health Access Pack is a compact, free resource which aims to: equip you with knowledge and advice, from medical, psychological and theological perspectives; help you support those in your community who are struggling with mental health issues; help you to discuss issues and share ideas surrounding mental health and the church. www.mentalhealthaccesspack.org/

Mental Health Matters contains information and resources for parishes, dioceses, chaplaincies and church community groups - and anyone else who's interested - to help improve our work with people experiencing mental illness. The Church is well placed to make a significant difference in the area of mental health. We can be a force to end stigma, and we can also be a place of inclusion, welcome and ministry. Mental Health Matters is working to make mental wellbeing a priority in our churches today. www.mentalhealthmatters-cofe.org/

Mentally Healthy Schools brings together quality-assured information, advice and resources to help primary schools understand and promote children's mental health and wellbeing. Our aim is to increase staff awareness, knowledge and confidence to help you support your pupils. www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/

Mind provides trusted advice and support to empower anyone experiencing a mental health problem. They campaign to improve services, raise awareness and promote understanding. www.mind.org.uk/

MindEd MindEd is a free educational resource on children and young people's mental health for all adults. www.minded.org.uk/

NHS Live Well Youth Mental Health offers resources and signposting for support from external links <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/children-and-young-adults/>

PAPYRUS is the national charity for the prevention of young suicide. The website draws from the experience of many who have been touched personally by young suicide across the UK and speak on their behalf in PAPYRUS campaigns and in their endeavour to save young lives. PAPYRUS believe that with appropriate support and education, many young suicides can be prevented. They deliver awareness and prevention training, provide confidential support and suicide

intervention through the HOPELineUK, campaign and influence national policy, and empower young people to lead suicide prevention activities in their own communities. www.papyrus-uk.org/

Reading Well for young people Reading Well promotes the benefits of reading for health and wellbeing. The programme has two strands: Books on Prescription and Mood-boosting Books. <http://reading-well.org.uk/books>

Rethink: living with mental illness provides expert, accredited advice and information to everyone affected by mental health problems. 'When mental illness first hits you or your family, it can be hard to know who or what to trust.' They give people clear, relevant information on everything from treatment and care to benefits and employment rights. We were the first mental health charity to gain the Information Standard for our trusted and relevant information. www.rethink.org/living-with-mental-illness/young-people/

Samaritans work to ensure that fewer people die by suicide by working to alleviate emotional distress and reduce the incidence of suicide feelings and suicidal behaviour. They offer 24 hours a day emotional support for people who are struggling to cope, including those who have had thoughts of suicide, as well as reaching out to high risk groups and communities to reduce the risk of suicide and working in partnership with other organisations, agencies and experts, influencing public policy and raising awareness of the challenges of reducing suicide. www.samaritans.org/

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. www.cwmt.org.uk/

The Children's Society is a national charity that works with the country's most vulnerable children and young people. We listen. We support. We act. Because no child should feel alone. They work directly with children, develop resources and publications and lobby on behalf of children annually, surveying them as part of their Good Childhood reports. www.childrensociety.org.uk/

The Mind and Soul Foundation aims to educate – sharing the best of Christian theology and scientific advances; equip – helping people meet with God and recover from emotional distress; encourage – engaging with the local church and mental health services. Of more use to staff and parents, they have a good selection of resources and articles, including the mental health access pack which was developed for churches, offering information on common mental health conditions and pastoral tips for working with those with mental health conditions. www.mindandsoulfoundation.org/

Winston's Wish provide specialist child bereavement support services across the UK, including in-depth therapeutic help in individual, group and residential settings. www.winstonswish.org/

Young Minds is the UK's leading charity championing the wellbeing and mental health of young people. They offer resources and bespoke training for schools and support for parents and young people. In addition they have a dedicated section on caring for the wellbeing of teachers and school staff. <https://youngminds.org.uk/>