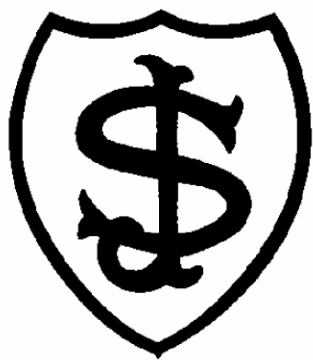


St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



"learning, growing, belonging...happy together in God's family"

Mental Health and Well-Being Policy 2023

**St Joseph's is a school community
where we:**

- promote Christian values of love, care and respect
- equip our children with the tools of learning and help them to achieve their maximum potential
- create an atmosphere of faith in which we share and celebrate our Catholic beliefs
- work in partnership with the children, their families and the parish
- provide a happy and safe environment in which all members of the school community feel valued
- develop the individual needs of our children to give them the confidence to participate as responsible citizens of the future

St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Mental Health and Well-Being Policy

2023

Named Mental Health Lead is Carol Dalziel-Ford

Section 1 – Why Mental Health and Wellbeing is important to us:

At St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we aim to promote positive mental health and well being for our whole school community and recognize how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives. We acknowledge and understand that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall emotional wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement at school. A person's happiness, life satisfaction and positive functioning are influenced by mental health and emotional wellbeing. Good mental health and emotional wellbeing allows individuals to learn, grow and develop as individuals – it is an integral and essential aspect of human life to ensure that our children can make the most of their unique potential, flourish and show resilience when they face challenges.

The Department for Education recognizes 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 create a nurturing and supportive environment in which children can reach their full potential; develop their self-esteem; overcome adversity and build their resilience.

Our role, in school, is to encourage positive mental health and emotional wellbeing and ensure that our children are equipped with the necessary skills to manage their feelings, emotions and any experiences that they may face in life. Furthermore, our aim is to help develop protective factors, and build resilience.

Purpose of the Policy:

The policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing
- How we identify and support young people with mental health and emotional wellbeing needs
- How we train and support staff to understand about positive mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Where parents/carers, staff and children can get further advice and support

Definition of Mental Health and Wellbeing:

The World Health Organisation (WHO) define mental health and emotional wellbeing as:

‘A state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.’

Mental health is fundamental to our collective and individual ability as humans to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living and enjoy life. On this basis, the promotion, protection and restoration of mental health can be regarded as a vital concern of individuals, communities and societies throughout the world.’

Mental health and emotional wellbeing is not just the absence of mental illness but it is a broader indication of social, emotional and physical wellness. We strive for all young people to:

- Prioritise their happiness, life satisfaction and positive functioning
- Respond to any challenges set and build their resilience
- Recognise that mental health and emotional wellbeing can change
- Feel confident in themselves and express a range of emotions appropriately
- Make and maintain positive and healthy relationships with others
- Recognise the strategies that can be used to deal with any changes to mental health or emotional wellbeing
- Make the most of their potential and play an integral part of the school and wider community.

A Whole School Approach to promoting positive Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing:

At St Joseph's, we adopt a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing that aims to help our children become more resilient, happy and successful.

We aim to:

- Have an ethos that supports positive mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Help our children develop positive social relationships; support each other and seek help when they require it
- Help our children develop resilience
- Teach our children about social and emotional skills and raise awareness of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Work effectively with parents and carers
- Support staff and develop their skills and knowledge of mental health and emotional wellbeing

This is delivered to all children through the My Happy Mind mental wellbeing portal on a weekly basis (<https://myhappymind.org/programmes/>)

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health and emotional wellbeing issues. Therefore, we aim to create an open and positive culture which encourages discussion and a greater understanding of stigma surrounding mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities:

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing and also understand about the risk factors and protective factors surrounding mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health and emotional wellbeing problems to ensure that those children receive the early intervention that may be required to support them.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might impact upon the mental health and emotional wellbeing of students e.g. death and loss; family breakdown; having a parent who has a mental health problem; physical long-term illness; loss of friendships and bullying. Any child who is identified as potentially vulnerable to a decline in their mental health or emotional well-being are discussed at regular stay safe meetings and referred for further support where necessary. All staff are also aware of the factors that can protect students from adversity e.g. improving self-esteem; developing communication skills and problem-solving skills; a sense of worth and belongs; emotional literacy and having a trusted adult.

At St Joseph's, we recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, often with additional pastoral support from the class teacher. At times, children will need more targeted and specific support. These children will therefore be referred to our Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) or our School Mental Health Link Officer (SMHLO). Both the ELSA and the SMHLO will work closely with the Mental Health Lead, the class teacher and the parents to provide bespoke support for these children. Other sources of support available include:

- The Local Authority Early Help Team
- ADDvanced Solutions – where mental health support is needed in relation to Neurodevelopmental diversity.
- The Educational Psychologist
- Children and Young Person's Mental Health Support (CYPMHS)
- St Joseph's Centre (Accessed through CYMPHS)

Where a child needed support from an external agency, referrals would be made through the Mental Health Lead or the Senior Leadership Team. Any referral made would always be with the consent of the child; or the parent where this was deemed to be more appropriate.

Supporting Children's Positive Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing:

At St Joseph's, we have a key role in promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing. We have developed a range of strategies and approaches to encourage positive mental health and emotional wellbeing which include:

- The Catholic Ethos within school promotes open discussion about our love and support for each other.
- Prayer and Liturgy provides children and staff with a time to reflect, be in the moment, and to appreciate the positive aspects of our lives.
- Our Special Friends initiative means our youngest children are supported with their transition into the family of St. Joseph's and boosts the self-esteem of our oldest pupils as they are preparing for the transition to high school.
- The My Happy Mind mental health scheme gives all children the opportunity to understand anxiety, character strengths, resilience and to have gratitude for the people and the world around them.
- Our PE and Extra Curricular program gives all children the opportunity to participate in physical activity on a regular basis; targeting children who don't currently access this outside of school.
- Mr Saunderson has an open door policy where children can go to him for support when they feel they need a break from the classroom or playground.
- All staff make opportunities to boost children's self-esteem, particularly through star of the week assemblies and giving children the opportunity to share successes outside of school.

Working with Parents and Carers:

We recognise the important role that parents/carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of their children. We ask parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs that their child may have and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child's mental health and emotional wellbeing.

To support parents and carers:

- We organise a wide range of extra-curricular activities for our children to support their mental health and emotional wellbeing
- We ensure all parents have access to the parent portal on the My Happy Mind portal
- We embed PSHE and RSE into our lessons and curriculum, including our No Outsiders program which educates and celebrates the diversity of our families and children.

Clear communication with parents/carers is vital. We will always inform parents/carers of any concerns we may have about their child's mental health or emotional wellbeing. We aim to support parents/carers in a sensitive and compassionate way and the Mental Health Lead is available through the school office should any parents/carers wish to contact them. All conversations with parents are logged on CPOMs.

Supporting and Training Staff:

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and emotional wellbeing and be able to promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing. It is also important that our staff members can identify any mental health needs in children and know who to report it to and where to get relevant help.

Furthermore, supporting and promoting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of our staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote many opportunities to maintain a healthy work/life balance.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The provision for mental health and emotional wellbeing at St Joseph's is monitored regularly. Children and parents are consulted about the types and variety of extra-curricular activities we offer. The mental Health Lead monitors the provision in school through regular staff meetings and pupil voice. The mental health and emotional wellbeing policy is on the school website and can be accessed by staff, parents and carers. The policy is monitored and reviewed by the Mental Health Lead.