



DIOCESE OF SOUTHWELL  
& NOTTINGHAM  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST

# Hucknall National C of E Primary Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy February 2024

Living “life in all its fullness”  
by ‘Growing together in Learning,  
Love and Faith’



## 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 ‘Growing together in learning, love and faith’, shapes all we do. Jesus said, “I have come that they may have life in all its fullness.” (John 10 vs 10). As a Christian community we believe everyone should be given the support needed to live that life. We know that looking after the Mental Health of all of our community is essential to this.

### **Extract from the Mental Health and Wellbeing Guidance; Advice for Schools and SIAMS Inspectors 2018**

“The Royal College of Psychiatrists has published some useful guidance on spirituality and mental health where they identify ways in which some aspects of spirituality can offer real benefits for mental health. They identify spirituality as being within and beyond formal religion and recognise that it ‘often becomes more important to people in times of emotional stress and physical and mental illness, loss, bereavement and the approach to death.’”

It is with this in mind that at Hucknall National C of E Primary, our children are given opportunities throughout their time here to experience different spiritual encounters. We plan for these in order that they are able to learn life-long skills, which will enable them to live ‘life in all its fullness’:

- Be Strong - be guided by their beliefs and values and be willing to take a stand to defend them
- Be Self-Aware - be self-aware and empathise with the experience of others in the school and wider community
- Be Courageous -love themselves, care for themselves, believe in their potential to achieve, and find inner strength and resilience when facing challenges
- Be Amazed - exercise imagination and creativity, appreciate beauty in the world and be alive to experiences of awe and wonder
- Be Intrigued - be intrigued by mystery and be open to an awareness of the transcendent in the whole of life
- Be Still - be comfortable with stillness and silence and open to engage in reflection/meditation/prayer



- Be Forgiving - be ready to say sorry when mistakes are made, to forgive themselves and to forgive others
- Be Reflective - be willing to take risks and to reflect, learn and grow following experiences of failure as well as success
- Be Wise - demonstrate curiosity and open mindedness when exploring life's big questions
- Be Thankful - appreciate and be thankful for what is good in life like friends and family, and show generosity towards other

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 like Heart Smart and specialised, targeted approaches like ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistance) which are aimed at vulnerable pupils. The combination of these two approaches enables our community to develop good relationships, improve their self-esteem and become more resilient. Our Y5 and 6 pupils also take part in 'The Great Project' where they learn about healthy relationships and domestic abuse awareness. From September 2024 we will also become part of the Mentally Healthy School Team (MHST) which will mean an expert Mental Health trained practitioner will be working with our school. Our Child and Family Support Worker is our Mental Health Lead.

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. This includes Anxiety Related Non-Attendance (ARNA) support, 'Off to the Stars' Bereavement Support and family supported via direct contact with our Child and Family Support Worker.

### 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 'Supporting Pupils With Medical Conditions' 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

## Lead Members of Staff

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

**Sarah Barratt** - Designated Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer

**Jane Brown** – Senior Mental Health Lead

**Claire Doran** - Lead First Aider

**Jane Brown** - Pastoral Lead

**Abbie Greenhill** - Head of PSHE

**Helen Brown** – Pupil Premium and Attendance Lead

**Elisia McBrown** - SENDCO

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 Child Protection Officer. 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 CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Jane Brown, Mental Health Lead.

## 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 'Heart Smart'.

Heart Smart is founded on the biblical roots of 1 Corinthians 13 'Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails.'

We use the 5 key principles which all work together to help build a resilient mindset in children, to make healthy choices in all types of situations. Heart smart is used in our themes and is reflected upon in collective worship flexibility throughout each half term.

- Don't Forget to Let Love in – Learning how important, valued and loved children are (Love is patient, love is kind).
- Too Much Selfie isn't Healthy – Exploring the importance of others and how to love them well. (Love doesn't dishonour others, it is not self-seeking)
- Don't Hold On to What's Wrong – Understanding how to process negative emotion and choose forgiveness to restore relationships (Love is not easily angered and it keeps not record of wrongs)
- Fake is a Mistake – Unpacking how to bravely communicate truth and be proud of who we are (Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth)
- 'No Way Through' isn't True – Knowing there is a way through every situation, no matter how impossible it may seem (Love never fails, love always hopes, always protects, always trusts)

## Signposting

If families require further support in addition to our school offer, we refer them to the Healthy Families Team, The Newark Children's Bereavement Centre and CAHMS and the Family Service.

## Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs, which indicate a pupil 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 **Jane Brown**, 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 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 on CPOMS so that the Child and Family Support Worker and other members of staff with Safeguarding responsibility are alerted.

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

### Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we believe 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 **Jane Brown**, 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 child protection office **Sarah Barratt** 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

## 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 virtual learning environment 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.<sup>1</sup>

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 to 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.

Approved – February 2024

Review – February 2026

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<sup>1</sup> [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk) [accessed 02/02/18].

