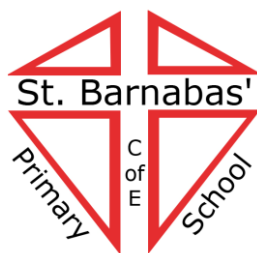


Heaton St. Barnabas' CE (VA) Primary School



Policy For

Mental Health & Well
Being

This policy was approved by Curriculum Committee

On: 23rd November 2021

Position: Chair of Curriculum Committee

HEATON ST BARNABAS C.E. (A) PRIMARY SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

VISION STATEMENT:

'Our School is an exciting fun and friendly place, where everyone is safe, valued and encouraged to be world class learners, developing confidence and a thirst for knowledge, trusting in God and realising our talents to create our future'

AIMS:

As a church school with a strong Christian ethos, we aim to educate, equip and empower all children and adults in school to live a healthy lifestyle spiritually, physically, mentally and emotionally. We will do this through the curriculum we teach, the relationships we foster, the environment we provide and the opportunities we create.

At St Barnabas C.E. (A) Primary School, we work towards positive mental health and wellbeing in the whole of our school community, for adults as well as children. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

Our healthy school ensures that when pupils are unhappy, unsure, anxious, disturbed, depressed or unable to express their feelings, there are open channels for them to seek or be offered support - without stigma but with appropriate confidentiality. We actively seek to promote emotional health and well-being and help pupils to understand and express their feelings through a variety of channels.

"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 his or her community" (World Health Organisation 2014)

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to poor mental health. In an average classroom per school year, national statistics show:

- 10** children will have separated parents;
- 8** children suffer physical violence, sexual abuse or neglect;
- 1** child will mourn the loss of a parent or grandparent;
- 7** children will be physically or mentally bullied.

This leaves only **4** children unaffected by mental trauma.

As these trends are witnessed here at St Barnabas C.E. (A) Primary School, we aim to continually develop and implement practical, relevant and effective mental health procedures whilst promoting a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by poor mental health.

We aim to teach and build resilience in children in the following ways.

1. Encourage development of spirituality by recognising themselves as a caring person and see how their behaviours impact on others.
2. Recognise and focus on their individual strengths and empower them to make decisions.
3. Praise them for individual achievements rather than just in general as part of the class, whilst taking care not to push them beyond what they can realistically cope with.
4. Developing family communication links creates a sense of emotional security & physical safety and helps the child connect with others.
5. Create opportunities for the child to make a sustained positive contribution that constitutes a positive identity.
6. Consistently offer positive coping strategies – (simply telling a child to stop negative behaviour will not be effective)
7. Demonstrate that discipline is not a punishment but a way to learn that actions produce consequences

IDENTIFYING POOR MENTAL HEALTH:

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a child is experiencing poor mental health or well-being issues, these may present as changes in behaviour, attention or presentation. These warning signs should **always** be taken seriously and staff observations should be communicated to the pastoral team via CPOMS immediately. If a child chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental, the staff member should listen rather than advise and ensure the child feels emotionally and physically supported at all times. At the earliest opportunity, the information should be communicated to the pastoral team via CPOMS. Staff may be asked to monitor specific children and report back to the pastoral team on a weekly basis. Any referrals that need to be made to CAMHS or other therapy providers will be done by the DSL in collaboration with the pastoral team, SENCO or the Mental Health First Aider.

Possible warning signs include: (this is not an exhaustive list)

- 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
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Noticeable changes in appearance/behaviour/attitude
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- Seeking opportunities to be alone with an adult
- Patterns of absence - specific days, after school holidays etc.

CURRICULAR AND EXTRA-CURRICULAR SUPPORT:

We support the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils through:

- A strong school ethos which empowers tolerance and respect, including respect for difference and diversity;
- Opportunities for reflection and spiritual development through worship, art, literature, PHSE, RE and the wider experiential curriculum;
- Hand2mouth personal reflective journeys for pupils to find a calm space to engage with
- High profile anti-bullying procedures and policy, promoted through the year in PHSE, assemblies and events, which encouraging positive, caring and constructive relationships;
- Establishing clear rules, routines and expectations about behaviour for learning and social cohesion;

- Always having active listeners available to whom a child may turn. Identified children will have a contact card in their classroom and can request to go and see a member of the pastoral team at any time;
- Enhancing school and classroom layouts, facilities and resources, such as our nurture room which is fully staffed for lunchtime pastoral provision;
- Recognising the background of individual pupils and their physical, social and emotional needs;
- Offering consistent pastoral support to vulnerable children and those with SEND;
- A balanced curriculum with opportunities for intellectual, physical and expressive development;
- Using a range of teaching styles and techniques appropriate to pupils' age, ability and level of maturity;
- Opportunities for pupil leadership through school council, play leaders, peace pals and peer mentors;
- An emphasis of praise and reward;
- Having interventions to deal with anxiety or emotional well-being as well as extra-curricular provision of prayer spaces and comfy club.
- Half-termly focus activities for children and their families to engage in.

STAFF SUPPORT:

Promoting staff health and emotional well-being is an integral part of our school ethos. We operate an open door approach within school and staff are encouraged to speak to a member of senior leadership, the pastoral team or Mental Health First Aider at anytime if they have an issue or concern. Staff surveys are carried out regarding emotional well-being, (with feedback from these being collated and actioned,) and personal appraisals allow time for mutual communication about personal health and emotional well-being. The school's Mental Health First Aider will be able to assist staff with referrals to appropriate resources/therapy providers as required.

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to emotional and mental health issues as part of their child protection training. Training for staff who require additional knowledge to support specific children will be made available as and when the situations arise.

We support the mental health and well-being of staff through:

- Curricular planning time within the school week - PPA
- Whole school training events, including Safeguarding
- Access to appropriate external training
- Involving all staff in decision making and proposed changes using effective and meaningful consultation
- Provision of non-contact time planned into staff meeting time across the year as directed teacher time
- Consultation on training and support needs through regular review
- Work life balance regularly reviewed and acted upon i.e. reduction of unnecessary paperwork, admin tasks and extent of working hours
- Encouragement of social events - well-being breakfasts / visioning sessions / staff massage sessions / weekly kindness cup / staff pantos / meals
- Family well-being, allowing reasonable time for childcare and appointments.

LEAD MEMBERS OF STAFF:

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the health and well-being of everyone within the school as a whole, the following staff may **always** be contacted as part of their specific role:

- Mrs Alison Wild – Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Wasiaq Suleman – Deputy Safeguarding Lead
- Rehana Ibrahim - SENCO / Safeguarding Team
- Jasmin Arif – Mental Health First Aider / Pastoral Team / Family Support Worker
- Diane Smith – Responsible safeguarding leader

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

- The promotion of social, emotional and mental health and well-being is the responsibility of the whole school staff and governors.
- The Head Teacher and Senior Leadership Team demonstrate through their personal leadership the importance of this scheme, ensuring all staff are fully trained and understand their individual role and responsibility in relation to it.
- Children will continually be made aware/reminded of how this Policy relates to them as they participate in half-termly whole school activities relating to health and well-being.
- Parents and carers will be encouraged to participate fully in our activities and therefore be supportive partners of our Policy.

HEALTH POLICIES IN SCHOOL:

This policy should be read in conjunction with the policies listed below as there are cases where a child's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a diagnosed medical condition or a pupil has been identified as having special educational needs.

- Healthy Lifestyle, PHSE, SRE
- Medical & First Aid
- Safeguarding & Child protection,
- Anti-bullying,
- Discipline & Behaviour
- SEND