Churchfield C.E. Primary Academy

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Signed by:

| G. Lloyd | Head of School | Date: | February 2022 |

| K. Taylor | Chair of LAC |

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Our Vision

Walking together in the light of the Lord, we aim to create a supportive and safe environment where we encourage each other to be the best we can be. At Churchfield we learn to take pride in our successes and aspire to make a positive difference for ourselves, the local community, and the wider world.

Our Aims

At Churchfield CE Primary Academy, we aim to promote positive mental health and well-being for our whole school community; pupils, staff, parents and carers and recognise how important mental health and emotional well-being is to our lives in just the same way as physical health.

We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall well-being and can affect their learning and achievement. Persistent mental health problems may lead to

pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning that the majority of those of the same age.

The [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Code of Practice](#) identifies Social, Emotional and Mental Health as one of the four areas of Special Educational Need:

All children go through ups and downs through their school career and some face significant life events. About 1 in 10 Primary aged children (5-10 years old) have identifiable mental health needs and these can have an enormous impact on their quality of life, relationships and academic achievement.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: '*in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy.*'

Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting pupils' well-being and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

The role of staff in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, be resilient, are supported to reach their potential and access help when they need it. Staff also have a role to ensure that pupils learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and where they can go if they need help and support.

Behaviour is an especially important consideration, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, as it may be related to an unmet mental health need. We consider **behaviour to be a message and a way of communicating**.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and be a school where:

- all pupils are valued;
- there is an ethos, and there are policies and behaviours which support mental health and resilience that everyone understands;
- all children and adults are provided with a calm, safe, purposeful, happy and supportive nurturing environment, ensuring all feel valued;
- pupils feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma;
- positive mental health is promoted and valued;
- caring attitudes towards everyone are fostered, and achievements at all levels are celebrated and valued;
- children develop responsibility for their own behaviour as individuals and in groups, both on site and when they are taking part in educational activities offsite by providing opportunities for them to develop their independence, self-discipline and sense of responsibility towards both themselves and others;
- classroom management approaches promote positive behaviour for learning;
- there are positive relationships between children, staff, parents and carers;

- we recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health and behaviour issues and aim to create an open and positive culture, which encourages discussion and understanding of these issues. We aim to be a talking school with an 'open door policy' for both children and parents to raise any concerns;
- all pupils are supported to:
    1. Develop positive self-esteem
    2. Learn how to keep good physical and mental health
    3. Develop excellent social skills.

We acknowledge that positive pupil well-being includes good mental health.

'……*a state of wellbeing 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 Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing.

A child needs the opportunity to:

- *Develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually*
- *Initiate, develop and sustain mutually positive personal relationships*
- *Use and enjoy solitude*
- *Become aware of others and empathise with them*
- *Play and learn*
- *Develop a sense of right and wrong*
- *Resolve(face) problems and setbacks to learn from them*

Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools DFE Departmental Advice for School Staff ~ June 2014

Our Commitment

To value and respect the rights and responsibilities of every pupil.

To model and encourage positive implicit and explicit behaviours for learning.

To ensure that social, moral, spiritual and cultural education is embedded in our school culture

To ensure personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education is an integral part of the curriculum.

To offer opportunities for reflection and for pupils to share successes and concerns.

To teach pupils strategies to resolve conflict.

To ensure pupils have the opportunity to share ongoing concerns with an adult and be 'listened to.'

To involve parents and carers in discussions about individual pupils as appropriate.

To provide support for individuals and groups identified.

At Churchfield, we aim to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of students, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Senior Mental Health Leads – *Mrs M Partington and Mr Lloyd*
- Student and Family Support Worker /HOPE Mentor (Mental Health Lead) – *Mrs M Partington*
- Designated Safeguarding Lead – *Mr Lloyd*
- SENCO – *Mr Lloyd*

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of student, in the first instance they should speak to our Mrs Partington or Mr Lloyd to establish a course of action and how best to respond to the concerns raised.

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's safeguarding procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

If a member of staff is experiencing well-being concerns themselves, we encourage them to speak to the SLT, who can support them in their role at school and direct them to additional external support if required, including Occupational Health.

HOPE ~ Helping Our Pupils Emotions

The HOPE Project is an early intervention project aimed at supporting the emotional needs of pupils in schools to ensure they are flourishing. This is done through 1:1 listening sessions, signposting, self-help, self-management, drop-ins or group activities provided by a trained and supported school staff member. HOPE helps children within Churchfield CE Primary Academy by providing support when and where the mental health need arises.

When a pupil has been identified as having cause for concern, either by self- referral, parent referral or staff referral, the HOPE Leader will use a diagnostic outcome measures tool to ascertain a personal twelve-week programme, if necessary. This programme will be tailored to individual needs and delivered by the HOPE Leader with the aim to prevent the need for higher level specialist mental health intervention such as CAHMS.

Cannock Mental Health Support Team

Through the Cannock Mental Health Support Team we have access to Education Mental Health Practitioners (EMHP). They have a clear remit to support low level (low intensity) mental health needs such as low mood, anxiety & phobias, through short term pieces of work. The school will consider which pupils have this sort of need and refer for support.

This support will be through assessments, evidence based (proven to work) individual & group pupil work, shared decision making with pupils, family parenting groups, onward signposting to more specialist teams and whole school projects

Teaching about Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing

Through PSHE we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help pupils to be more resilient, understand about mental health and help reduce the stigma of mental health problems.

At Churchfield, we follow JIGSAW in both Key Stage 1 and 2 exploring thoughts, feelings and behaviour through:

- Being Me in the World
- Celebrating differences
- Dreams and Goals
- Healthy Me
- Relationships
- Changing Me

Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote pupils' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of pupils' own emotions, as well as those of other people.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing students who do develop difficulties, with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting students to support any of their friends who are facing challenges.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services. Within the school and through our communication channels (Family Letter, website and ClassDojo), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure students understand:
- what help is available;
- who it is aimed at;
- how to access it;
- why should they access it;
- what is likely to happen next

Sources or support at school and in the local community

Support in School

School Based Support is through the HOPE Project, individual and small group nurture, through positive play and other individualised interventions and approaches. This is led by Mrs Partington in her role of Student and Family Support Worker, HOPE mentor and Senior Mental Health Lead and Mr Lloyd in his role as SENCO, Designated Safeguarding Lead and Senior Mental Health Lead.

Local Support

In Staffordshire, there are a range of organisations and groups offering support, and specialising in children and young people's mental health wellbeing. These partners deliver accessible support to children, young people and their families, whilst working with professionals to reduce the range of mental health issues through prevention, intervention, training and participation. Examples include:

- Cannock Mental Health Support Team
- Action 4 Children
- CAMHS
- The Burden Basket
- The Sandbox

Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs will alert Mrs Partington or Mr Lloyd.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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 secretively;
- lateness to, or absence from school;
- repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause;
- an increase in lateness or absenteeism.

Appendix 1 shows the risk and protective factors that are believed to be associated with mental health outcomes (taken from *Mental health and behaviour in schools November 2018*)

Targeted support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with safeguarding professionals and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children. They are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of pupils who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- working closely with Staffordshire Children's Services, CAMHS, Local Support Team, Action For Children, Cannock Mental Health Support Team and other agencies services following various protocols including assessment and referral;
- identifying and assessing children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;
- discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers;
- providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs;
- ensuring young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- providing young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality;
- providing young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and
- identifying, assessing, and supporting of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

Managing disclosures

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. All disclosures will be recorded confidentially using CPOMS (the school's online safeguarding logging system). This information will be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead ~ Mr Lloyd.

Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a pupil to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will normally be first discussed with the pupil. We will tell them:

- who we are going to tell;
- what we are going to tell them;
- why we need to tell them;
- when we're going to tell them.

Ideally, consent should be gained from the pupil first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as students who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the pupil. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

Whole school approach

Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place? Some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.
- Who should be present? pupil, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Supporting parents

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- ensuring all parents are aware of and have strategies for promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems;
- highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, Family Letter etc.);
- offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by appropriately trained health or education practitioners; and
- ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided 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 needs 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 to enable them to keep students safe. A nominated member of staff will receive professional Mental Health HOPE training and on-going supervision.

Related School Policies

Churchfield CE Primary Academy is committed to creating an environment in which children can feel safe, happy and secure, enabling everyone in our community to learn. Everyone is expected to take responsibility for their actions and to show care and concern for people, the school and its contents. Churchfield recognises that every member of the school community has a responsibility for promoting consistent good behaviour in school. Staff are committed to working closely with parents, pupils and the Local Academy Committee to promote positive behaviour and to create a culture of mutual trust and respect. We will always take a consistent, considered and sensitive approach in order that we can support all of our pupils.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy is one of the essential Safeguarding Policies. It should be read in conjunction with:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Health and Safety Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- SRE Policy
- Special Educational Needs Information Report
- Equal Opportunities Policy

The child's welfare is of paramount importance; we are a child-centred school.

We maintain a professional attitude of 'it could happen here' where safeguarding is concerned. When concerns about the welfare of a child, staff members will always act in the best interests of the child.

Our school will continue to maintain an ethos where pupils feel secure, are encouraged to talk, are listened to and feel safe. Children at our school are encouraged to talk freely with any staff member at our school if they are worried or concerned about something.

Review

The Local Academy Committee reviews this policy every year. The LAC may, however, review the policy earlier than this, if the government introduces new regulations, or if the LAC receives recommendations on how the policy might be improved.

Appendix 1

Risk and protective factors that are believed to be associated with mental health outcomes (taken from *Mental health and behaviour in schools November 2018*)

	Risk factors	Protective Factors
In the child	- Genetic influences - Low IQ and learning disabilities Specific development delay or neuro-diversity - Communication difficulties - Difficult temperament - Physical illness - Academic failure - Low self-esteem	- Secure attachment experience - Outgoing temperament as an infant - Good communication skills, sociability - Being a planner and having a belief in control - Humour - A positive attitude - Experiences of success and achievement - Faith or spirituality - Capacity to reflect
In the Family	- Overt parental conflict including domestic violence - Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) - Inconsistent or unclear discipline - Hostile and rejecting relationships - Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs - Physical, sexual, emotional abuse, or neglect - Parental psychiatric illness - Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder - Death and loss – including loss of friendship	- At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) - Affection - Clear, consistent discipline - Support for education - Supportive long term relationship or the absence of severe discord
In the School	- Bullying including online (cyber) - Discrimination - Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships - Deviant peer influences - Peer pressure - Peer on peer abuse - Poor pupil to teacher/school staff relationships	- Clear policies on behaviour and bullying - Staff behaviour policy (also known as code of conduct) 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems - A whole-school approach to promoting good mental health - Good pupil to teacher/school staff relationships - Positive classroom management - A sense of belonging - Positive peer influences - Positive friendships - Effective safeguarding and Child Protection policies. - An effective early help process

		• Understand their role in and be part of effective multi-agency working • Appropriate procedures to ensure staff are confident to can raise concerns about policies and processes, and know they will be dealt with fairly and effectively
In the Community	• Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Exploitation, including by criminal gangs and organised crime groups, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation • Other significant life events	• Wider supportive network • Good housing • High standard of living • High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying • Opportunities for valued social roles • Range of sport/leisure activities