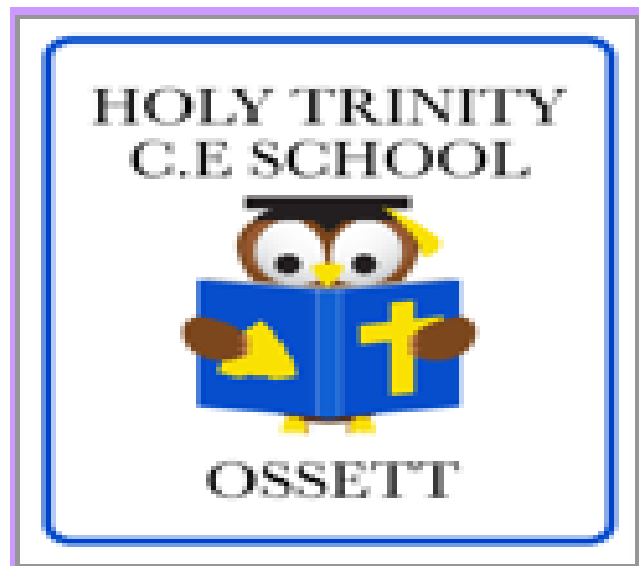


Mental Health Policy



December 2024

1. INTRODUCTION – Why mental health is important

At Holy Trinity Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils. We recognise that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. All staff have a role to play in ensuring that we promote positive mental health and providing support for children when needed.

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

- Children understand their emotions and feelings
- Children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- We support children socially to form and maintain relationships
- We promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they matter
- We encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- We support children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises 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 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 children's wellbeing and can help create a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children 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.

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

- All children are valued.
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma.
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued.

- Bullying is not tolerated

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

2. Definition of mental health and wellbeing

At Holy Trinity we use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing - ***“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.”***

Mental health and wellbeing are not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:

- feel confident in themselves.
- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- cope with the stresses of everyday life.
- manage times of stress and be able to deal with change.
- learn and achieve.

3. Links to Other Policies

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Medical Needs, Anti-Bullying, SEND and Equalities. Links with the School's Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

4. A Whole School Approach to Promoting Positive Mental Health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
2. Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.

3. Helping children to be resilient learners.
4. Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
5. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6. Effectively working with parents and carers.
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

5. Staff Roles and Responsibilities, Including those with Specific Responsibility

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for 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 problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

Our Lead for Social, Emotional & Mental Health Needs:

- Leads and works with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Liaises with RSE and PSHCE lead to teach children about mental health.
- Provides advice and support to staff and organises training and updates.
- Is the first point of contact with mental health services, and makes individual referrals to them.

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

- Jonathan Wood - Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Stacey Wilson - Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Vicky Dickson - Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Rebecca Burdon - Designated Safeguarding Lead

- Lisa Sheridan- Mental Health and Emotional wellbeing lead/ Lisa Coultrup – Learning mentor

6. Supporting Children's' Positive Mental Health

We believe the School has a key role in promoting children positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our School has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

Pupil-led activities

Sports ambassadors – KS2 children support KS1 children at lunchtime breaks to engage in structured play

Playground Buddies – a lunchtime group supporting younger children at lunchtime.

Wellbeing Ambassadors – KS2 children support children to establish friendships and ensure children feel secure during lunch break times

Transition programmes

Transition Programme (Luggage for Life), for all Year 6 children to support a smooth transition to secondary school.

Class activities

Circle time to help children learn personal, social and emotional, communication and problem-solving skills

Forest schools clubs – to promote emotional wellbeing

Whole school

Wellbeing week – whole school focus on doing things which make us feel good

Displays and information around the School about positive mental health and where to go for help and support

Staff mental health - Staff charter

PSHE and RSE curriculum

Small group activities

Nurture group – morning group to ensure children start the day positively

Zones of regulation – to support children in recognising emotions and identifying how to transition from negative emotions to positive emotions

Socially Speaking – to support children to communicate effectively

Through our PSHCE and RSE curriculum we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help children to be more resilient, understand about mental health and be less affected by the stigma of mental health problems.

EYFS & Key Stage 1 children learn:

- To recognise, name and describe feelings including good and not so good feelings.
- Simple strategies for managing feelings.
- How their behaviour affects other people.
 - About empathy and understanding other people's feelings.
- To cooperate and problem solve.
- To motivate themselves and persevere.
 - How to calm down.
- About change and loss and the associated feelings (including moving home, losing toys, pets or friends).
 - Who to go to if they are worried.
 - About different types of teasing and bullying, that these are wrong and unacceptable.
- How to resist teasing or bullying, if they experience or witness it, whom to go to and how to get help.

Key Stage 2 children learn:

- What positively and negatively affects their mental and emotional health (including the media).
- Positive and healthy coping strategies.
- About good and not so good feelings.
- To describe the range and intensity of their feelings to others.
- To recognise and respond appropriately to a wide range of feelings in others.
- To recognise that they may experience conflicting emotions and when they might need to listen to their emotions or overcome them.
- About resilience.
- How to motivate themselves and bounce back if they fail at something.
- How to empathise and be supportive of others.
- About change, including transitions (between Key Stages and schools), loss, separation, divorce and bereavement.
- About the consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including online bullying, prejudice-based language), as well as how to respond and ask for help if they are victims of this themselves.
- About the importance of talking to someone and how to get help.

7. Identifying, Referring and Supporting Children with Mental Health Needs

Our approach:

- Provide a safe environment to enable children to express themselves and be listened to.
- Ensure the welfare and safety of children are paramount.
- Identify appropriate support for children based on their needs.
- Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.
- Involve children in the care and support they have.
- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated

Early Identification

Our identification system involves a range of processes.

We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

- Analysing behaviour, exclusions, attendance and sanctions.
- Staff report concerns about individual children to the relevant lead persons.
- Pupil Progress Review meetings half termly
- Regular meetings for staff to raise concerns.
- Gathering information from a previous school at transfer.
- Parental meetings in EYFS.
- Enabling children to raise concerns to any member of staff.
- Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff. Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will speak to the Mental Health Lead.

These signs might include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits.
- Falling academic achievement.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Secretive behaviour.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE.
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development. If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the School's child protection procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency then the School's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

Disclosures by children and confidentiality

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to children who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of our children is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff make it clear to children that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health Lead or the Safeguarding Lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil. All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps.

Assessment, Interventions and Support

<u>Need</u> The level of need is based on discussions with key members of staff and involves parents and children	Evidence-based Intervention and Support -the kinds of intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents and children	<u>Monitoring</u>
Highest need	CAMHS-assessment, 1:1 or family support or treatment, consultation with school staff and other agencies Other External agency support Other interventions e.g. Educational mental Health Practitioner. If the school, professionals and/or parents conclude that a statutory education, health and care assessment is required, we refer to the SEND policy and SEN School Information Report.	All children needing targeted individualised support will be placed on a 'Supporting me to Learn Plan' setting out: the needs of the child How the pupil will be supported Actions to provide that support Children and parents/carers will be involved in the plan. The plan and interventions are monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess the impact The 'Supporting me to learn Plan' is overseen by the SENCO
Some Need	Access to in school nurture group, school nurse, educational psychologist, 1:1 intervention, small group intervention, skills for life/wellbeing programmes – Socially Speaking, Zones of Regulation	
Low Need	General support E.g. School Nurse, class teacher/LSA,	

8. Working with specialist Services to get Swift Access to the Right specialist Support and Treatment

In some case a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders. We have access to a range of specialist services and during the support will have regular contact with the service to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the children's Supporting Me to Learn Plan. School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Mental Health Lead or the SENDCO following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the pupil and parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

SEND and mental health

Promoting mental health - We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting children who do have mental health needs. On first entry to the School, our parent's meeting includes a discussion on the importance of positive mental health for learning. We ask parents to inform us of any mental health needs their child has and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child's mental health and wellbeing, based on a list of risk factors pertaining to the child or family. It is very helpful if parents and carers can share information with the School so that we can better support their child from the outset. All information will be treated in confidence.

Supporting parents and carers with children with mental health needs

We are aware that parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health problem and we will be sensitive and supportive. We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available.

When a concern has been raised, the School will:

- Contact parents and carers and meet with them (In almost all cases, parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.)
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- Be available for follow up calls.
- Make a record of the meeting.
- Agree a Supporting me to Learn plan, including clear next steps.

- Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child.
- Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions provided.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger. We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern is the children, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

9. Monitoring and Evaluating

The mental health and wellbeing policy is on the school website and hard copies are available to parents and carers from the school the policy is monitored at an annual review meeting led by the Mental Health Lead and involves staff with a responsibility for mental health, including specialist services supporting the school and governors.

For information about Main Types of Mental Health Needs, Mental Health and Behaviour in School DfE March 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Where to get information and support for support on specific mental health needs:

Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk

OCD UK www.ocduk.org

Depression Alliance www.depressoinalliance.org

Eating Disorders www.b-eat.co.uk and www.inourhands.com

National Self-Harm Network www.nshn.co.uk www.selfharm.co.uk

Suicidal thoughts Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org

For general information and support www.youngminds.org.uk

champions young people's mental health and wellbeing www.mind.org.uk

advice and support on mental health problems www.minded.org.uk (e-learning)

www.time-to-change.org.uk tackles the stigma of mental health www.rethink.org

challenges attitudes towards mental health