



The Diocese of Coventry
Multi Academy Trust

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

St John's C of E Academy

Written: September 2025

Review Date: September 2027

Changes to policy 2023:

P3 – Change of name of Head Teacher, Laura Stevenson

P4 – Change of role from Assistant to Deputy for Sara Henderson

P4/5 – removal of the names Miss Sarah Smalldon and Miss Julie Lowe

P5 – COMPASS added as a referral

P7 – change of name of Headteacher to Laura Stevenson

Changes to policy September 2024:

-Appendix 1 added – Mental Health and Wellbeing Overview flowchart

Changes to policy September 2025:

-Page 8 – updated MASH details

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

St John's Church of England Academy

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 shapes all we do:

VISION

To be an excellent school, embedded in Christian values that develops children into confident, happy citizens and provides a platform to flourish in local, global and Christian communities, both today and in the future

MISSION STATEMENT

We will provide high quality teaching, learning and reflection from the teachings and values of Christianity to serve our community and beyond.

Matthew 5:16

“Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven.”

PUPIL VISION

I will shine!

In addition, we aim to promote positive mental health for every child, member of staff, parents and governors. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

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, staff and families affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

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 medical policy, in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue, the SEND policy, where a pupil has an identified special educational need, the SMSC policy, Behaviour policy and RHE, Drugs and RSE policies. It should sit alongside all safeguarding policies and procedures.

Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. This policy explains the school role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing and can be summarised as:

- **Prevention:** creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos;
- **Identification:** recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible;
- **Early support:** helping pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions; and
- **Access to specialist support:** working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment

St John's aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff, pupils, parents and carers
- 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:

Mrs Laura Stevenson– Head Teacher, Designated Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer (DSL)

Mrs Sara Henderson – Deputy Head, SENDCO, Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead, RSHE Lead, Adult Mental Health First Aider, DDSL, Senior Mental

Health Lead Trained, Designated LAC Lead

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 Safeguarding Lead - the head teacher. 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, MHST, COMPASS or other is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Mrs Sara Henderson, SENDCO.

Individual Care Plans

Individual care plans will be drawn up for pupils for whom concerns have been identified or who has received 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
- 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 Relationships and Health Education (RHE) curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching, but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We follow the [DfE Relationships, Sex Education and Health Education guidance](#) , [DfE Mental Health and Behaviours in School](#) and the [Gov.UK Promoting children and young people's](#)

mental health and wellbeing – a whole school approach to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined in the school SEND offer and Mental Health and Wellbeing section on the school website, <https://www.stjohns.covmat.org/> and the Coventry local offer can be found at: <https://www.coventry.gov.uk/sendlocaloffer>

We display relevant sources of support in communal areas and toilets, for staff, and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil seeking help by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

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 Mrs Sara Henderson our SENDCO or the Headteacher.

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-judgmental.

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 in writing and held on the pupil's confidential file and on CPOMS. This written record should include:

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

This information should be shared with the Head teacher, Mrs Laura Stevenson who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. See Mrs Sara Henderson, SENDCO, for guidance about making a referral to CAMHS or other appropriate agency.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If 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 Headteacher, Mrs Laura Stevenson and the SENDCO, Mrs Sara Henderson, 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, Coventry's Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) should be contacted for advice and next steps – Telephone: 024 7678 8555

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 and wellbeing 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
- Support parents with wellbeing activities to support their own mental health, as part of the St John's family.

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

Supporting Staff

At St John's we take the mental health and wellbeing of all our staff very seriously and it remains high priority in school. A range of processes are in place to support the wellbeing of staff, being mindful of workload.

When a member of staff is suffering from mental health or wellbeing issues, it can be a difficult time for them and their family. Support will be provided by school and or the Multi-Academy Trust on a case-by-case basis. Initial support may include: additional release time for workload, 1:1 supervision, sharing of places to seek support and advice.

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.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional Professional Learning will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school Professional Learning are collected from staff through staff questionnaires and pupil progress meetings and discussions.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in September 2027.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to Mrs Sara Henderson our mental health lead via phone 02476 674092 or email sara.henderson@stjohns.covmat.org

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

Appendix 1



Mental Health and Wellbeing Overview

At St John's C of E Academy, we promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents, and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing 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 wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. All children go through ups and downs during their school career and some face significant life events. This is why our Relationships and Health Education (RHE) curriculum, and our themed curriculums all have mental health and wellbeing threaded through. Taught to the children both explicitly and implicitly through other aspects of their learning, all underpinned by our school values and our motto of 'I will shine!'

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.

Concerns about a child's mental health or wellbeing

