

# Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

St Alban's Catholic Voluntary Academy



**Approved by:**

Tim Brogan

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# 1. Policy statement

At St Alban's Catholic Academy we recognise that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility and the mental health is a key component of safeguarding. Our main aim is to safeguard the mental health of the children within our care by providing a whole school approach to positive mental health and wellbeing following the eight principles outlined in 'Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing'(2021) as follows;

- Leadership and Management
- Ethos and Environment
- Curriculum, Teaching and Learning
- Student Voice
- Staff Development
- Identifying Need and Monitoring Interventions
- Working with Families
- Targeted Support

We are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders through the creation of a whole school approach to positive mental health and wellbeing for all.

This policy was written in accordance with the Mental Health Pro Strategy, Success in Schools.

# 2. Scope

This policy is intended to:

Provide guidance to school staff on our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across all communities in the school

Inform pupils and parents about the support that they can expect from the school in respect of supporting mental health and wellbeing

Read this policy in conjunction with our school's:

Behaviour policy

Anti-bullying policy

Safeguarding policy

RSHE/PSHE policy

### 3. Policy aims

This policy sets out our whole school approach to building a positive mental health culture, ethos and environment by;

- Promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school
- Creating and sustaining a culture of wellbeing and inclusion
- Fostering a positive atmosphere in school, where pupils feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly
- Celebrating all of the ways pupils achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom
- Allowing pupils to participate in forming our approach to mental health by promoting pupil voice
- Giving pupils the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Spreading awareness of the varieties of ways mental health issues can manifest
- Supporting staff to identify and respond to pupils who have or are at risk of developing poor mental health
- Providing support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues
- Providing support and access to resources to pupils experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them

### 4. Legal basis

This policy was written with regard to:

[The Equality Act 2010](#)

[The Data Protection Act 2018](#)

Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

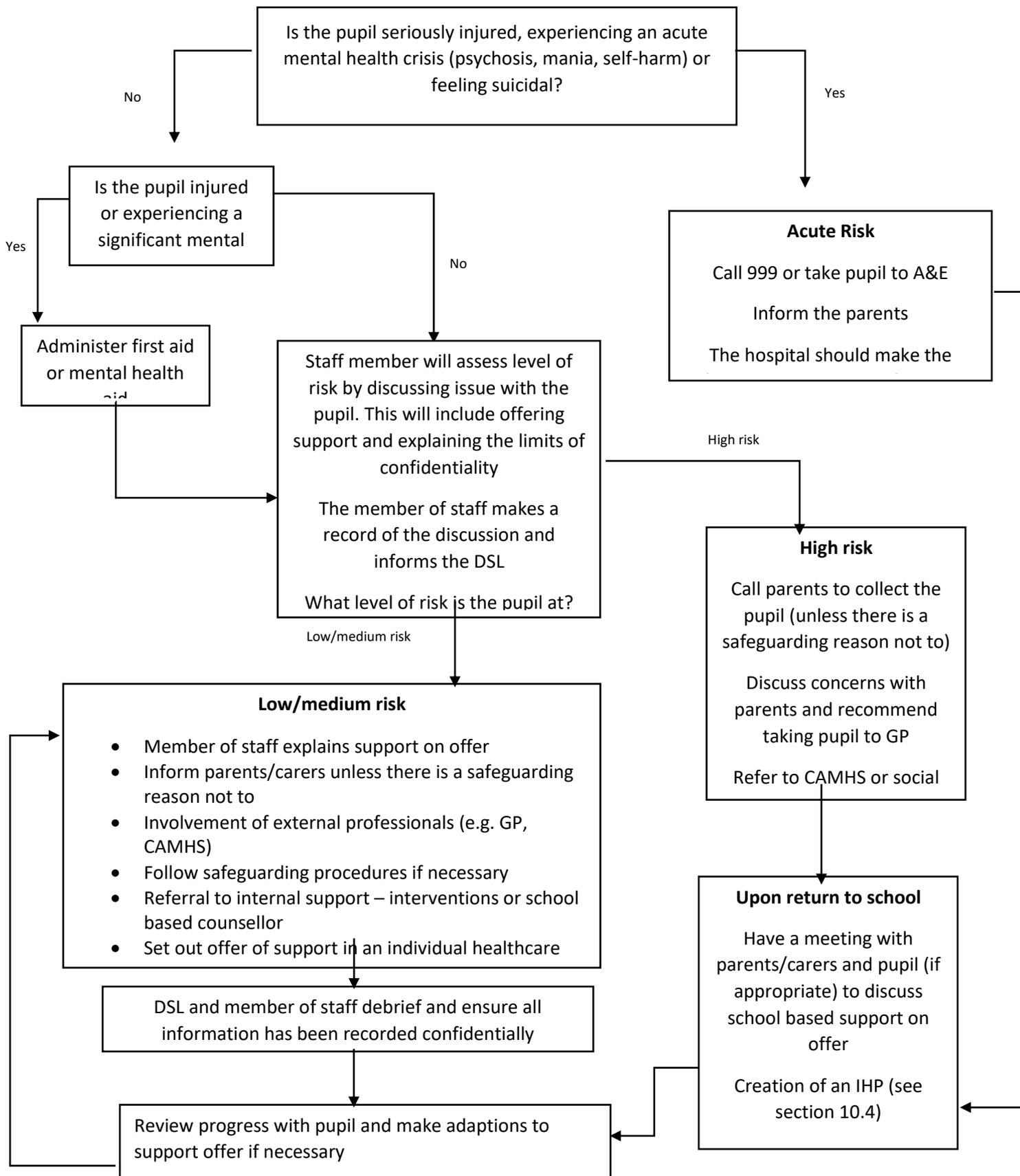
## 5. Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. Pupils identified as having or being at risk of developing poor mental health will initially be identified by our class teacher or support staff through regular check in/observations. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Senior Mental Health Lead (Jayne James) and Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSL's), Kate Johnson, Tim Brogan, Ashley Leatham, Emma Ruston-Donald and Michelle Hodgkinson, by logging their concern through Edukey.

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include those on the Priority Pupil Team and Mental Health and Wellbeing Team:

- Tim Brogan – Headteacher
- Kate Johnson – Deputy Headteacher//Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Emma Ruston-Donald - Assistant Headteacher // Deputy DSL
- Jayne James – Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL)// Mental Health First Aider//Deputy DSL//Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) Lead
- Andrea Allsopp – Mental Health First Aider
- Ashley Leatham – Special Educational Needs Co-coordinator (SEND) and Deputy DSL
- Michelle Hodgkinson – Pupil Premium (PP) Lead and Deputy DSL

## 6. Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



## 7. Warning signs

All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. This could be either as part of the class teacher check in or an observation made at any other time.

Some warning signs include, but are not exclusive to:

- Constant/frequent/regular crying or getting upset more than others or more than can be reasonable for their age (usually younger pupils)
- Looking or feeling anxious about certain situations
- Inability to accept change in routine/timetable
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Self harm including pulling own hair, pinching self, head banging
- Changes in mood or energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

One or more of these may be present, although this list is not exhaustive and a professional gut instinct should also be used.

The above should always be reported to the Pupil Priority Team via Edukey, following safeguarding procedures.

## 8. Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the Pupil Priority and Mental Health Teams via Edukey. All disclosures are recorded and stored electronically in Edukey.

When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

- ✓ The full name of the member of staff who is making the record
- ✓ The full name of the pupil(s) involved
- ✓ The date, time and location of the disclosure
- ✓ The context in which the disclosure was made
- ✓ Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff

## 9. Confidentiality

Staff should not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret, instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- Staff should always share disclosures with appropriate colleagues from the Priority Pupil and Mental Health Team via Edukey. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.
- Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question
- Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing
- The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

- Who they will share the information with
- What information they will share
- Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the child protection /safeguarding policy will be followed.

### 9.1 Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff offers support
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with DSL / SMHL
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who you will share the information with and explain why you need to do this
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure and share the information with appropriate staff team
6. The DSL /SMHL will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

## 10. Supporting pupils

### 10.1 Baseline support for all pupils

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, the school offers support to all pupils by:

- Having a whole school approach to positive mental health and wellbeing
- Raising awareness of mental health during regular Acts of Worship/assemblies, class time, RSHE/PSHE, Children's Mental Health Week and World Mental Health Day
- Signposting pupils and parents to sources of online support on the school website
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons, as part of our RSHE/PSHE curriculum and Personal Development
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of the school that is negatively impacting their mental health through the deployment of Anti-bullying Ambassadors and School Parliament members.
- Monitoring of all pupils' mental health through the class teacher check in time every 2-3 weeks
- Appointing a Senior Mental Health Lead (SMHL) with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support through the MHPro Strategy – St Alban's 5 Step Plan
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through:
  - Carefully mapped out and planned RSHE/PSHE sessions
  - Regular Zones of Regulation sessions
  - Regular Acts of Worship
  - Worry boxes

### 10.2 Assessing what further support is needed

Pupils who are identified as having or at risk of developing a mental health need will be identified and discussed by the Priority Pupil Team, which will include the SMHL and other

members form the Mental Health Team, at the weekly Priority Pupil meeting. The team will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to making an assessment and providing tailored support, further to the provision of the baseline support as detailed in section 10.1.

The school will offer support by placing the child on the Mental Health (MH)Pro Strategy 5 Step Plan (See Appendix). The steps will include;

1. Observation – Class teacher check in at least every 4-5 weeks
2. Investigation – Narrative building using a formulation on the 5p's
3. Assistance – The creation of appropriate support for the individual
4. Support – interventions, groups and/or support systems including outside agencies/charities/support groups
5. Referral – NHS CYPMHS (if appropriate)

### **10.3 Internal mental health interventions**

As stated in the MHPro Strategy 5 Step Plan, pupils will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the approach detailed above. Internal support offered at our school includes:

- Meet and greet - Extra time taken to talk to the child/parent/career to greet them in the mornings. Time to discuss issues that may affect the day.
- Zones of Regulation - Recognition of personal feelings and emotions, with the skills to be able to regulate and deal with these feelings and/or emotions.
- Mindfulness - Calming activities to regulate emotion and create a calm state of mind. This may include belly breathing, candle blowing, painting the rainbow or bubble popping.
- Time to talk - Space and time to talk to an appropriate adult or peers.
- Buddying up (peer to peer) - Fostering positive friendships to encourage opportunities to look out for each other.
- Trim trail/time out/sensory room - Physical activity to help refocus attention.
- Sensory circuits - Calming physical activity to help regulate and refocus.
- Lego therapy/Six bricks - Focused small group sessions to encourage turn taking, focus and teamwork.
- Tailored positive praise

### **10.4 Making external referrals**

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal interventions, the school will make, or encourage parents to make, a referral for external support, mainly using the Derby and Derbyshire Mental Health Pathway which includes a referral to one or more of the following;

- GP or pediatrician
  - CYPMHS (CAMHS)
  - School Nursing Service
  - Chat Health
  - Build Sound Minds
  - Parent Talk
  - The DECC (Derby and Derbyshire CIC Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service)
  - Compass Changing Lives
  - Eating Difficulties & Disorder Services
  - Kooth
  - The Elm Foundation – Freedom from Domestic Abuse
  - Sexual abuse SV2 – Supporting Victims of Sexual Violence
  - Childline – Support for Children Experiencing Racism
  - Change, Grow, Live – Drug and Alcohol abuse
  - Space 4 U
  - Safe and Sound
  - Catch 22
  - Derby and Derbyshire Emotional Health and Wellbeing Website

Derby and Derbyshire Mental Health Pathway also includes charities/agencies to support issues relating to;

- Self-Harm
- Eating Difficulties/Disorders
- Worry/Anxiety
- Low Mood
- Bereavement
- OCD
- Psychosis

## **11. Supporting and collaborating with parents and carers**

We will work with parents and carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy, websites and services available to individuals and families

- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about as part of our RSHE curriculum, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home as appropriate
- When informing parents about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face to face.
- These meetings can be difficult, so the school will ensure that parents are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.
- A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's mental health and wellbeing passport.

## 12. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be extremely challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

All the above will be fully supported by our mental health resilience teaching through our RSHE curriculum and whole school approach.

## 13. Signposting

Sources of support will be displayed on the school website, so pupils and parents are aware of how they can get help.

The Pupil Priority and Mental Health and Wellbeing Teams will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

## 14. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

### 14.1 Mental health and wellbeing is taught through RSHE/PSHE

We use a variety of teaching materials and resources to effectively teach positive mental health and wellbeing resilience throughout the school. This is embedded in our RSHE/PSHE curriculum which includes the Ten Ten RSHE program, World Mental Health Day, Children's Mental Health Week, Zones of Regulation and Mindfulness sessions.

Our RSHE/PSHE curriculum ensures that pupils will be taught to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Keep themselves safe

For more information, see our RSHE/PSHE curriculum and policy.

### 14.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around positive mental health and wellbeing by:

- Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging pupils to disclose when they think their mental health is deteriorating
- Supporting pupils through the Mental Health Pro 5 Step Plan

## 15. Training

All staff are offered regular training so they:

- Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know how to make a referral to the Priority Pupil team
- Understand the 5 Step Plan Mental Health Pro
- Know how to undertake aspects of the 5 Step Plan when appropriate e.g. the formulation process

## 16. Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can be distressing for staff. To combat this we will:

- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment
- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Offer an open door policy, where members of staff can talk to senior leaders or members of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team
- Offer staff supervision sessions
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves

## 17. Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing

The purpose of this section is to outline the commitment to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of all staff members. We recognise that promoting staff wellbeing is essential to achieving our educational objectives and creating a positive work environment.

We are committed to providing a supportive environment that promotes the mental health and wellbeing of all staff. This commitment includes proactive measures to prevent work-related stress and responsive support for staff experiencing mental health challenges.

We seek to;

- Increase awareness and understanding of mental health and wellbeing through training and communication.
- Foster a culture that supports openness and dialogue about mental health issues.
- Offer access to resources and support systems to help staff manage their mental health effectively.
- Support staff with their wellbeing by identifying and addressing concerns brought to our attention, promptly and with dignity.

We do this by;

- Providing regular training and updates for all staff on recognising signs of mental health issues and accessing support.
- Encourage participation in mental health first aid training for designated staff members.
- Ensuring all staff are aware of the support available, including access to counselling services and employee assistance programs.
- Establishing a confidential point of contact within the school for staff to discuss mental health concerns.
- Regularly reviewing staff workloads and adjusting to prevent excessive pressure and stress.
- Encouraging flexible working arrangements where possible to support work-life balance.
- Offering an open door policy for all staff.

Senior Leaders and those with additional responsibilities will aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

- **Senior Leadership Team (SLT):** Lead by example in promoting wellbeing and mental health awareness.
- **Line Managers:** Conduct regular check-ins with staff and provide support as needed.
- **All Staff Members:** Participate in wellbeing initiatives and communicate any concerns to their line manager.

## **18. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Mental Health and Wellbeing and Priority Pupil Teams. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher.