

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

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Mental Health Policy Statement

At Mount Carmel, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers). We recognise that mental health and emotional wellbeing is as important to our lives as physical health.

At Mount Carmel we endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress. We aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or access help if 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 reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and what they can do if they need help and support.

Links to other policies.

This policy links to our Child Protection Policy, Anti-bullying policy, SEND policy, Attendance Policy, RE policy and Behaviour Policy, PSHCE Policy.

Teaching about mental health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to work in a pro-active way to avoid problems arising. We do this by;

- Creating and applying consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
- Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in God's creation.
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks.
- Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services, parents and carers.
- Support and training for staff to develop their skills and own resilience.
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.
- The regular use of the terms resilience and baseline in everyday school life.
- Working towards the Sandwell Mental Health Charter Mark.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encourage a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating all achievements in school, both academic and non-academic.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect, particularly during collective worship.
- Enabling access to appropriate support.
- Mental health and PSHE for all year groups.
- Supporting parents with mental health issues through the Early Help process.

- As part of the half termly pastoral meetings between SLT and Caritas social worker, families and children who give cause for concern with mental health issues are discussed and plans are made.

Mental Health approaches

- Relax Kids sessions
- Mindfulness during class worship.
- Class teaching led by therapist (KS2)
- Weekly drop in with therapist if a child is anxious or worried about a certain situation/ issue (Y5 & Y6)
- Class messages jar to promote sharing worries/ concerns (Y3&Y4) These will then be discussed with the child/ parent/ Caritas SW / therapist.
- Child and staff questionnaires, exploring possible issues and to gain an overview of the mental health of the school.

Staff roles

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to promote this in and out of their classrooms.

We endeavor to provide a healthy, happy working environment and offer opportunities for staff to receive support when necessary via our Caritas social worker. The drama therapist has also been available for drop in conversations with staff. We promote confidential means of staff reaching beyond the school for support, through the promotion of Qwell and Education Support.

Our faith life also supports staff and prayer is an important part of our daily life.

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and to understand the protective and risk factors for mental health. Staff are encouraged to raise concerns with members of SLT if they have concerns about the mental health and wellbeing of a child or a colleague. Such conversations are handled with great sensitivity.

Some children will require additional help. Referrals into key agencies will be necessary in order that children receive the intervention they need. The Mental Health Lead can refer into CAMHS.

Named mental health lead- Deirdre Watson

Named mental health governor-???

Our mental health lead

- Works with staff to co-ordinate whole school initiatives to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Works with the leads of PSHE, RE, and the Caritas social worker to deliver a strong mental health offer for the children.
- Liaises with the drama therapist to ensure the children with more complex mental health needs are receiving her specialist support.
- Is the first point of contact with mental health services and makes individual referrals to CAMHS/ MThrive.
- Manages referrals into Early Help for parents who are struggling emotionally to gain additional support.

Early identification

We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to try to prevent escalations of need.

Staff are aware to look out for changes in patterns of behaviour which may indicate a child is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. Teaching and support staff are responsible for reporting concerns about individual children to designated adults within school.

Attendance

Punctuality

Relationships

Approach to learning

Physical indicators

Negative behaviour patterns

Family circumstance

Recent bereavement

Health indicators (weight loss/ gain etc)

Possible warning signs include

Changes in sleeping/ eating habits

Becoming socially withdrawn

Changes in activity/ mood

Talking about self-harm/ suicide

Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope

Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Assessment, Interventions and support

All concerns are reported to the designated adults within school and needs are assessed through conversations with parents and staff. If there are concerns, processes are started to gain the support that the child needs. This could be either from within the school's own resources or from an external specialist service.

Working with parents and carers

- We make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.
- Parents are encouraged to speak with school to discuss any concerns about their child's wellbeing.

Working with specialist services

As part of our targeted provision the school works with other agencies to support the children's emotional health and wellbeing. Your child might be referred (with your permission) to one of the following services for additional support.

- CAMHS
- School Health Service
- Therapist
- Educational Psychology Service
- Early Help
- MThrive
- Counselling Service (such as a bereavement service)
- Caritas social worker