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## **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

### **Mawnan Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School**

Last Updated **March 2020**

#### **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 and we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. 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 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 and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

The policy aims to:

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

**Jilly Pridmore** - Designated Safeguarding Leaders

**Jilly Pridmore, Polly Blight, Louise Wylie and Wendy Timmins** - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Team

**Polly Blight** – PSHE 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 Leader. 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 is appropriate, this will be led and managed by **Jilly Pridmore**, Mental Health Lead. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is available on the Early Help website

<https://www.supportincornwall.org.uk/kb5/cornwall/directory/service.page?id=RRO5CoFs6cg>

### **Individual Care Plans**

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receives 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 and precautions
- 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 PSHE curriculum. We use the Anna Freud network, Young Minds and the Mental Health Awareness materials to support our teaching.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're 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 will follow the PSHE Association Guidance<sup>1</sup> 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.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and toilets 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 help-seeking 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 **Jilly Pridmore**, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead.

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<sup>1</sup> Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing URL= <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and> (accessed 02.02.2018)

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-judgemental.

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 on My Concern. The mental health lead will then decide on the next stage of action, which may include a referral to CAMHS. All disclosures will be managed in accordance with the school's Safeguarding Policy.

## **Confidentiality**

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we 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 Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead, 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, we will offer to support the pupils with this conversation. 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, parents should not be informed, but the child protection office must be informed immediately.

## **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 – Think you know, MindEd, NSPCC, Young minds, Childline
- 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 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

### **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

## Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular safeguarding training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

The MindEd learning hub provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.<sup>2</sup>

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.

## Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in **March 2023**.

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 **Jilly Pridmore** our mental health lead via

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<sup>2</sup> [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk) [accessed 02/02/18].

phone 01326 250660 or email [head@mawnanschool.com](mailto:head@mawnanschool.com). This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

## Appendix 1 - Further information and sources of support about common mental health issues

- Prevalence of Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Issues -Source: Young Minds
- 1 in 10 children and young people aged 5 - 16 suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder - that is around three children in every class.
- Between 1 in every 12 and 1 in 15 children and young people deliberately self-harm.
- There has been a big increase in the number of young people being admitted to hospital because of self harm. Over the last ten years this figure has increased by 68%.
- More than half of all adults with mental health problems were diagnosed in childhood. Less than half were treated appropriately at the time.
- Nearly 80,000 children and young people suffer from severe depression.
- The number of young people aged 15-16 with depression nearly doubled between the 1980s and the 2000s.
- Over 8,000 children aged under 10 years old suffer from severe depression.
- 3.3% or about 290,000 children and young people have an anxiety disorder.
- 72% of children in care have behavioural or emotional problems - these are some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

Below, we have sign-posted information and guidance about the issues most commonly seen in school-aged children. The links will take you through to the most relevant page of the listed website. Some pages are aimed primarily at parents but they are listed here because we think they are useful for school staff too.

Support on all of these issues can be accessed via

- Young Minds [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- Mind [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
- Anna Freud <https://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/resources-for-schools/talking-mental-health-animation-teacher-toolkit/>



## **SELF-HARM**

Self-harm describes any behaviour where a young person causes harm to themselves in order to cope with thoughts, feelings or experiences they are not able to manage in any other way. It most frequently takes the form of cutting, burning or non-lethal overdoses in adolescents, while younger children and young people with special needs are more likely to pick or scratch at wounds, pull out their hair or bang or bruise themselves.

Online support

- SelfHarm.co.uk: [www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)
- National Self-Harm Network: [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)
- [www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk](http://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk)
- [www.harmless.org.uk](http://www.harmless.org.uk)

## **DEPRESSION**

Ups and downs are a normal part of life for all of us, but for someone who is suffering from depression these ups and downs may be more extreme. Feelings of failure, hopelessness, numbness or sadness may invade their day-to-day life over an extended period of weeks or months, and have a significant impact on their behaviour and ability and motivation to engage in day-to-day activities.

Online support

- [www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression](http://www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression)
- [www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)
- [www.mindfull.org](http://www.mindfull.org)
- [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- [www.getconnected.org.uk](http://www.getconnected.org.uk)
- [www.therelationshipcentre.co.uk/talkdontwalk](http://www.therelationshipcentre.co.uk/talkdontwalk)
- [www.depressioninteenagers.co.uk](http://www.depressioninteenagers.co.uk)
- [www.thestudentsagainstdepression.org](http://www.thestudentsagainstdepression.org)
- [www.thecalmzone.net](http://www.thecalmzone.net)

- [www.youthhealthtalk.org](http://www.youthhealthtalk.org)

## **ANXIETY, PANIC ATTACKS AND PHOBIAS**

Anxiety can take many forms in children and young people, and it is something that each of us experiences at low levels as part of normal life. When thoughts of anxiety, fear or panic are repeatedly present over several weeks or months and/or they are beginning to impact on a young person's ability to access or enjoy day-to-day life, intervention is needed.

Online support

- Anxiety UK: [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)
- [www.nopanic.org.uk](http://www.nopanic.org.uk)
- [www.ocdaction.org.uk](http://www.ocdaction.org.uk)
- [www.ocduk.org](http://www.ocduk.org)
- [www.getselfhelp.co.uk](http://www.getselfhelp.co.uk)

## **OBSESSIONS AND COMPULSIONS**

Obsessions describe intrusive thoughts or feelings that enter our minds which are disturbing or upsetting; compulsions are the behaviours we carry out in order to manage those thoughts or feelings. For example, a young person may be constantly worried that their house will burn down if they don't turn off all switches before leaving the house. They may respond to these thoughts by repeatedly checking switches, perhaps returning home several times to do so. Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) can take many forms – it is not just about cleaning and checking.

Online support

- OCD UK: [www.ocduk.org/ocd](http://www.ocduk.org/ocd)

In addition see list under Anxiety heading.

## **SUICIDAL FEELINGS**

Young people may experience complicated thoughts and feelings about wanting to end their own lives. Some young people never act on these feelings though they may openly discuss and explore them, while other young people die suddenly from suicide apparently out of the blue.

### Online support

- Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)
- [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)
- [www.cwmt.org](http://www.cwmt.org)
- [www.stampoutsuicide.org.uk](http://www.stampoutsuicide.org.uk)
- [www.asist.org.uk](http://www.asist.org.uk)
- Cruse Bereavement Care: [www.cruse.org.uk](http://www.cruse.org.uk) or [www.rd4u.org.uk](http://www.rd4u.org.uk)
- Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide: [www.sobs.org.uk](http://www.sobs.org.uk)
- Sane/Saneline: [www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk)
- On the edge: ChildLine spotlight report on suicide:  
[www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/researchand-resources/on-the-edge-childline-spotlight/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/researchand-resources/on-the-edge-childline-spotlight/)

### **EATING PROBLEMS**

Food, weight and shape may be used as a way of coping with, or communicating about, difficult thoughts, feelings and behaviours that a young person experiences day to day. Some young people develop eating disorders such as anorexia (where food intake is restricted), binge eating disorder and bulimia nervosa (a cycle of bingeing and purging). Other young people, particularly those of primary or preschool age, may develop problematic behaviours around food including refusing to eat in certain situations or with certain people. This can be a way of communicating messages the child does not have the words to convey.

### Online support

- Beat: the eating disorders charity: [www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders](http://www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders)
- Eating Difficulties in Younger Children and when to worry:  
[www.inourhands.com/eating-difficultiesin-younger-children](http://www.inourhands.com/eating-difficultiesin-younger-children)
- Anorexia and Bulimia Care (ABC): [www.anorexiaandbulimiacare.org.uk](http://www.anorexiaandbulimiacare.org.uk)
- Boy Anorexia: [www.boyanorexia.com](http://www.boyanorexia.com)
- Student Run Self Help: [www.srsh.co.uk](http://www.srsh.co.uk)
- Men Get Eating Disorders Too: [www.mengetedstoo.co.uk](http://www.mengetedstoo.co.uk)
- <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/anorexia-nervosa/pages/lynsey-and-helen-stories.aspx>

- <http://guidance.nice.org.uk/CG9>

## **OTHER ISSUES**

Rethink Mental Illness: [www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org)

IRIS: [www.iris-initiative.org.uk](http://www.iris-initiative.org.uk)

Hearing Voices Network: [www.hearing-voices.org](http://www.hearing-voices.org) bipolarUK: [www.bipolar.org.uk](http://www.bipolar.org.uk)

Voice Collective: [www.voicecollective.co.uk](http://www.voicecollective.co.uk)

Mental Health Care: [www.mantalhealth.org.uk](http://www.mantalhealth.org.uk)