



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

“Everyone who works with children should do what is in the best interests of the child.”

Article 3 United Nations Rights of the Child

Opening Statement:

At Trinity School we believe wellbeing should be central to everything we do. 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). At our school we are committed to promoting and supporting positive mental health for everybody within the school - pupils and staff. We do this through whole school approaches and specialised, targeted interventions aimed at vulnerable pupils.

We understand that everyone experiences challenges during their life that can make them feel vulnerable and that anyone might need some emotional support. By encouraging a supportive and caring ethos based on our core values of respect, compassion and friendship we aim to listen to and value the feelings of all.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, and preventative well-being, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, it is possible that three pupils will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant, and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

This document describes our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and should be read in conjunction with our Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to, a medical issue or a child protection issue, and the Inclusion policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

Aims:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils (Appendix D)
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers
- Value well-being from a whole school perspective in line with our core values of respect, friendship and compassion
- Promote well-being for all students and staff

Staff responsibilities

All staff have a responsibility to:

- promote the mental health of pupils
- help children understand their emotions

- provide an environment where pupils and staff can share concerns or worries
- listen
- monitor and look out for signs of mental ill health
- support and take appropriate action when necessary

Lead members of staff with specific and relevant responsibility in this area are:

- Katy McMahon – Headteacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Sally Sleath – Deputy Headteacher, Safeguarding Lead, SENCo, Wellbeing Co-ordinator and Mental Health First Aider
- Claire Flett, Kelly Cutting, Claire Churcher - Phase Leaders and Phase Safeguarding Contacts
- Camilla Vasiliou – PSHE Co-ordinator
- Emma O’Connell – ELSA support Assistant

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others’ physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum. At Trinity we teach PSHE for an hour weekly and follow the Jigsaw scheme of work.

We also acknowledge and teach about mental health through the school wide Zones of Regulation approach. All staff and children are trained in ‘The Zones of Regulation’ and are encouraged to use the strategies and language taught to discuss their emotions and encourage and promote self-regulation.

There is also one member of staff who has been trained in the Decider Skills, which can be used to teach strategies to support mental health.

Wellbeing support

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils this may include:

- Class-based conversations and check ins with the class teacher
- ELSA or wellbeing support (1-1) including work on emotions, the Zones of Regulation, self-esteem, resilience, friendships
- Well-Being Facilitator from the Education Department
- Circle of Friends
- The Decider Skills

As a school we are keen to signpost and suggest other forms of mental health support that might be appropriate for a child and have actively involved professionals working for MIND and NSPCC, facilitating sessions within the school.

Identifying needs and warning signs

All staff complete a class vulnerability profile twice a year and a learning traits profile termly both help identify a range of possible difficulties and any changes and current challenges.

The school also makes use of resources to assess wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- Boxall Profile
- PASS

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn (increased isolation from friends or family)
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or 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
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Vengeful thinking/ behaviour towards certain pupils/ adults
- Perceived negative attention from other pupils/adults
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Avoidance of certain things e.g. PE or lunch

Procedures

These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs, or is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil or staff member in any other way, should communicate their concerns with the designated safeguarding lead and/or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate.

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff. Any disclosures should be dealt with by staff in a calm, supportive and non-judgemental way. Staff should listen, rather than advise, dealing with disclosures as they would other safeguarding matters (think TED - Tell, Explain, Describe). They should also be honest with confidentiality and inform pupils or who it might be necessary to pass information on to.

Any mental health concerns should be recorded on My Concern.

The safeguarding lead might feel that further action is required such as referrals wellbeing support mentioned above or a referral to the Children and Family Hub (which might include CAMHS). Parents will always be informed and communicated with in these cases (unless it is not safe for the child to do so).

If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal safeguarding/child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead/s. If the pupil presents with 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.

It is sometimes necessary to consider our own emotional wellbeing or those of colleagues following disclosures and share with appropriate safeguarding leads (remembering the need for confidentiality).

Provision Maps and Individual Care plans

Mental health and wellbeing concerns and support should also be reported sensitively and factually on the class provision map. Sometimes it might be appropriate to for a pupil to

have an individual care plan or passport, particularly if they receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals.

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 whether the class or certain friends may need additional support and what that might look like.

Working with Parents

In order to support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.
- 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.

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Social Emotional Inclusion Team
- Mental Health Team
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling and mental health services
- Family support workers
- Charities – MIND, NSPCC

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive annual training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep students safe. The MindEd learning portal (<https://www.minded.org.uk/>) provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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

For further information please see

- Safeguarding policies

Policy written - March 2022 (CG) January 23 KM