St Cuthbert's Primary School
Whole School Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Vision:

In our family school, we strive to be the best for today, for tomorrow, for ourselves, for each other, the wider world and for God.
As a Christian family we nurture an understanding that we are all of equal value and infinite worth.
In the safety of our unique family we will flourish and grow towards being Global Citizens and Courageous Advocates.
('You are now citizens together with God's people and members of the family of God'. Ephesians 2:19)

Mission statement:

Learning to love, loving to learn in the family of Christ.
('Encourage one another and build each other up'- 1 Thessalonians 5:11)

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Policy Review Date: January 2027

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1) Intent

At our school, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our students and staff. Our culture is supportive, caring, and respectful. This policy outlines our approach to promoting a positive mental health culture for all members of our community and the systems in place for those who need additional support. It should be read alongside other relevant school policies.

The aim of this policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of everyone in our school community. This policy will be reviewed annually and in accordance with national policy changes.

KEY DEFINIITIONS:

Mental Health - includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others and make choices. Everyone has mental health.

Mental Illness - The term mental illness covers a broad range of mental health problems which can involve changes to our thoughts, emotions, behaviours and relationships with others. Mental illnesses are associated with distress and problems functioning in our day-to-day lives. Mental illness is treatable.

2) Key Staff members

Mental Health Lead (MHL) – Mrs E Coolican

The implementation of this policy and the evaluation of its effectiveness is led by our MHL. This role includes oversight of all mental health provisions and interventions, education and training related to mental health and wellbeing and the development of spaces and resources to support mental health and wellbeing.

The MHL is supported by other members of the mental health team:

- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Mrs E Coolican, Mrs A Ali
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL)- Mrs L Taylor, Mrs C Parker
- SENDCO – Mrs C Parker
- First Aiders for Mental Health (FAMH) – Mrs A Ali
- Children's Mental Health Champion- Chelsea Gibson
- PSHE Lead – Mrs E Coolican
- ELSA Trained Staff – Miss C Gibson, Mrs S Birch, Mrs J Reay, Miss C Wood

In addition to this, there is the expectation that, using the education and support provided by our school, all members of our community will take responsibility for promoting their own mental health and that of others.

In emergency situations relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services.

3) Whole School Approach

Our whole school approach is developed and reviewed by our MHL.

We ensure that staff, parents, carers and pupils have access to knowledge about mental health and wellbeing.

Our approach includes:

- Providing education and training for staff, pupils and parents
- Making it explicit to all that staff and pupil wellbeing is a priority
- Giving wellbeing the same status as academic achievements
- Reducing the stigma surrounding mental health issues through awareness days/events and through displays, assemblies, and the positive interactions that shape the day-to-day culture of the school
- Developing communities of practice supported by other schools/parents
- Highlighting sources of information in the school for staff, pupils and parents
- Ensuring that staff, students and parents know who to talk to if they have concerns around mental health or wellbeing
- Providing physical space for staff and children – inside and out
- Providing a calm, relaxed environment
- Ensuring staff are confident to employ nonclinical social models of intervention and are also confident about how and when to signpost to further support
- Establishing effective links with external organisations and professionals
- Providing the option for staff wellbeing sessions, 1:1 if necessary
- Allowing time for staff to access formal supervision/reflection
- Regularly evaluating the effectiveness of our provision and interventions

4) Systems and Procedures

Anyone in the school community can raise a concern, either about their own or someone else's mental health. The people they need to speak to regarding concerns are clearly publicised for staff, parents and pupils.

All staff are trained to respond to disclosures about mental health in a calm, supportive and non-judgemental way.

All disclosures regarding pupils are recorded confidentially and only shared in line with the Safeguarding Policy or as outlined below.

If there is a concern about the mental health and wellbeing of a pupil:

1. A member of the school mental health support team arranges a 1:1 talk with the pupil, employs nonclinical social models of intervention as necessary and tells them/their parents where to access support or information.

2. Brief details will be logged of: the date, the staff member's name, the main points from the conversation, and agreed next steps.

3. If information needs to be passed on or discussed with other staff members, there will be transparency and openness about:

- who will be told
- what they will be told
- when they will be told
- why they need to be told

4. If the member of staff remains concerned, they inform the Pupil Wellbeing Coordinator who will liaise with other members of the team/parents/external agencies as necessary to arrange further interventions or signpost to professional support.

5. If there is an immediate risk of harm, immediate steps would be taken to protect the pupil's safety and this takes priority over transparency. If necessary, the emergency services will be called.

If there is a concern about the mental health and wellbeing of a member of staff:

1. They can approach a FAMH and arrange a time to meet and discuss issues and concerns, or the FAMH may approach them and ask them if they would like a conversation at a mutually convenient time.

2. After an initial meeting with a member of staff, the FAMH will arrange follow up conversations to offer support as required.

3. Unless there is a risk of harm to self or others, conversations with the FAMH will remain confidential. If there is an immediate risk to life, appropriate steps will be taken to safeguard the individual including calling the emergency services if necessary.

4. The FAMH will be offered supervision to safeguard their own mental health and wellbeing.

5) Support offered at School and Signposting

For Pupils

The support we offer in school for any students or staff who are struggling is listed below:

- ELSA- Group/1:1

- Nurture- Group/1:1
- Lego Therapy
- Play Therapy
- Pyramid Club
- Young Carers
- Kooth sessions

Where necessary, pupils, parents and staff are signposted to support outside of the school:

- Referral to SEMH support
- Referral to MHST

For Staff

At St Cuthbert's CE Primary School, we adhere to BwD HR policies and procedures. These involve supporting staff through our EAP (Employee Assist Programme) which is free to BwD employees. We also monitor attendance and support appropriately in line with our Staff Attendance Policy. In addition we follow BwD HR policies for more specialised support such as Menopause and Perimenopause, Parental Leave, New and Expectant Mothers.

6) Identifying warning signs

All staff receive regular training in child mental health so that they can confidently support good mental health and recognise and respond to mental health issues. This will form part of the regular safeguarding training and is a requirement to keep children safe. Training records will be held in staff files.

All staff will be trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health problems. These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs in pupils will communicate their concerns with the MHL and DSL as appropriate.

Staff will be able to identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including:

• Physical signs of harm

• Changes in eating and sleeping habits

• Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn

• Changes in mood

• Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide

• Drug and alcohol abuse

• Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope

• Secretive behaviour

• Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. a large winter coat in summer

• Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption.

Staff will also be able to identify a range of issues, including:

• Attendance and absenteeism

• Punctuality and lateness

• Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education

• Family and relationship problems

Staff will be well placed to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact a child's mental health and wellbeing, such as bereavement, health difficulties, being neuro-atypical or diagnoses of having a learning difficulty.