



Emotional Health and Well-Being Policy

Policy statement

At St Mark's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers). We recognise that mental health and emotional wellbeing is just as important to our lives as physical health is.

At St Mark's Catholic Primary School, 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 when 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 help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

Teaching about mental health

At St Mark's Catholic Primary School, 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. Our Citizenship, Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculums enable us to support our children by:

- 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 the World.
- 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.



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- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
 - Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
 - Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
 - Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
 - Providing opportunities to reflect.
 - Enabling access to appropriate support where needed.
 - Citizenship and RSE sessions for all year groups following and using the Ten:Ten resources
- Wellbeing week, 'Life to the Full' days and access to information around the school i.e. Anti-bullying week, Black History Month, Human Rights Day and other curriculum topic days.

Small group activities

We recognise that some children may need additional mental health and/or wellbeing support. We pride ourselves on working with our parents so that children achieve the very best care. Staff in school receive training on issues to be able to best support children and we involve other agencies when needed. Some strategies we use to support children in school include:

- Nurture groups to focus on mental health, resilience and wellbeing where needed.
- Children to be aware that they can drop in and see any adult in school if they are anxious or worried about a certain situation/issue.
- Worry box/open discussion ideas in class
- Citizenship/Life to the full activities

Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote this in and out of their classrooms. Some children will require additional help; all staff should have the skills to identify warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support



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they need. Staff receive training on recognising the signs of poor wellbeing and mental health in children.

Supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school. At St Mark's Catholic Primary School we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance. Staff are supported pastorally and have access to enriched opportunities. Staff also have access to external support systems. At St Mark's, we access mental health and wellbeing support for our team through 'Help' Employee Assistance and 'Staff Care' provided by Birmingham City Council.

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health and to understand the protective and risk factors for mental health. Mrs. Linley (lead DSL) is our Mental Health First Aider in school.

Assessment, interventions and support.

All concerns are reported to the designated adults within school and needs are assessed through a triage approach with SLT, class teachers and SENDCo to ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible.



Malachi - Our in school Family Support Service

At St. Mark's we recognise that the majority of families will go through some difficult times at some point or another in their family life.

Often, this is out of the family's control, for example; a sudden bereavement of a close family member, a relationship break up or a family illness are just some of the issues our children may experience in their school life at St. Mark's.

We hope these things never happen but sadly they do and often, children struggle to cope and manage their feelings because events like these can be traumatic for children.

It is not just our children who sometimes require our help and support, often parents do too.



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We pride ourselves on being a family school where staff support children with their emotions whenever they need it. Sometimes children may come in to school feeling a little sad and our staff will always try and help children to feel good about themselves but sometimes our children require extra support with their wellbeing so that is why we have Malachi in school. In order for children to thrive and achieve their potential, they must feel happy and safe in school.

Our Malachi school and family support worker is Natalie Bowen.

Natalie can provide practical support and one-to-one therapy for our children and families. Support is tailored to meet the needs of each individual family, and it provides a safe, non-judgemental space for parents to explore and understand their situation and make the right choices for the well-being of their family.

What our children say about Natalie:

- "She is kind and she listens."
- "Malachi is always ready to help and everyone that works there is always ready to listen and they help with worries. Natalie is really kind and considerate."

What our parents say about Malachi:

- "Support from Malachi has been very useful to us as a family, we have really enjoyed the sessions too, so thank you."

Working with parents and carers.

Parents or carers can approach their child/children's class teacher if they have mental health concerns.

To support parents and carers we:

- Provide information online via www.stmarkrc.sch.uk on mental health support services.
- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.



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- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in RSE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home giving them access to the Ten:Ten online resources we have in school.

When a concern has been raised, this will be logged by staff on MyConcern. Depending on the nature of the concern, a DSL (Designated Safeguarding Lead) will take further action if required. Staff and DSL's may:

- Contact parents to discuss the concern and look at ways of offering further support in school and to the family.
- Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away.
- Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting support groups.
- Discuss possibility of making a relevant referral to an external agency.

Working with specialist services.

As part of our targeted provision, the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Your child may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- CAMHS
- School Nursing Service
- Children's Services.
- Therapists
- Family support workers.
- Educational psychology services.
- Counselling services.
- Malachi

Monitoring and evaluation

The Emotional Health and Well-Being policy is on the school website and hard copies are available on request. This policy will be reviewed annually and regular monitoring will take place.

Policy Adopted: January 2021

Policy to be reviewed: July 2022