**St John the Baptist Primary School**

**Portadown**

**Bunscoil Eoin Baiste**



**Pupil Well-Being Policy**

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**Mission Statement**

It is our mission at St John the Baptist P.S. to serve our community and enhance its social, educational well-being through the provision of a warm, caring, secure and effective Catholic school. We believe this will enable our children to maximise their individual potential for academic, spiritual, personal and social development and help prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life.

**Introduction**

At St John the Baptist P.S. we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional well-being to all students, their families, members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows students’ values to be heard and through the use of effective policies and procedures, we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected – both directly and indirectly – by mental health issues.

**Policy Aims**

* Promote positive mental health and emotional well-being in all students and staff
* Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
* Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
* Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with pupils with mental health issues.
* Provide the right support to pupils with mental health issues and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
* Develop resilience amongst pupils and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.

**Key Staff Members**

This policy aims to ensure that all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, however key members of staff have specific roles to play :

* Pastoral staff
* Designated safe-guarding lead
* PDMU co-ordinator
* Well-being lead
* SENCo
* Mental Health First Aiders

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or well-being of a pupil, in the first instance they should speak to the designated safeguarding lead.

If there is a concern that the pupil is at elevated risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school’s child protection procedures should be followed.

If a child presents as a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

**Definition of Mental Health and Well-Being**

The World Health Organisation’s definition of mental health and well-being:

...*a* *state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses or life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.*

Mental health and well-being is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children in our care to:

* Feel confident in themselves
* Be able to express a range of emotions appropriately
* Be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others
* Cope with the stresses of everyday life
* Manage times of stress and be able to deal with change
* Learn and achieve

**A Whole School Approach**

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils become more resilient, be happy and successful and prevent problems before they arrive.

This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands.
2. Helping pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to.
3. Helping pupils to be resilient learners.
4. Teaching pupils social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
5. Early identification of pupils who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6. Effectively working with parents and carers
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health issues. We aim to be a ‘talking school’ with an ‘open door policy’.

**Supporting Pupils’ Positive Mental Health**

We believe that we have a key role in promoting pupils’ positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

*Pupil Led Activities*

* Pupil Well-being Team
* Assemblies to raise awareness of mental health

*Transition Support*

* Support for vulnerable children, for example, Reach Mentoring Services
* Transition meetings with parents/carers, pupils and relevant staff

*Class Activities*

* Kindness boards
* Compliments Boxes
* Mindfulness and breathing / meditation in class
* Classroom scripts and signposting
* Relax Kids Programme

*Whole School*

* Well-being focus, established in 2022
* Assembly themes
* Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support both within the school and outside the school.

*Small Group Activities*

* Sensory room for those children who are finding the classroom overwhelming (timetabled provision)

*Teaching about Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being*

* Through PDMU, we teach knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help pupils to be more resilient, understand about mental health and help reduce the stigma of mental health problems.
* All key stages learn to explore feelings through PDMU topics – It's good to be me, New Beginnings, Say No to Bullying, Changes, Going for Goals, Relationships

Our approach is to provide a safe environment to enable pupils to express themselves and be listened to. We will ensure the welfare and safety of pupils as paramount, identifying appropriate support for pupils based on their needs. We will involve parents and carers when their child needs support and involve pupils in the care and support they have. Additionally, we will monitor, review and evaluate the support with pupils and keep parents and carers updated.

**Early Identification**

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things getting worse. We do this in different ways including:

* Identify individuals that might need support.
* Analysing behaviour, exclusions, visits to the sensory room and attendance
* Pupil surveys at the beginning of the school year
* Staff report concerns about individual pupils to the designated safeguarding lead
* Parental meetings
* Enabling parents and carers to raise concerns through the class teacher or the any member of staff – we have an ‘open door policy’

Signs of concern may include:

* Non verbal behaviour
* Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
* Changes in activity, mood or sleeping/eating habits
* Lowering academic achievement
* Talking or joking about self-harm/suicide
* Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
* An increase in lateness or absenteeism
* Drug or alcohol misuse
* Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
* Wearing long sleeves in hot weather
* Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Staff are aware that mental health needs such as anxiety might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development.

If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the school’s child protection procedures are followed. A risk assessment and plan will be made.

**Verbal Disclosures by Pupils**

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgmental to pupils who verbally disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of pupils is paramount and staff listen rather than advise, Staff are clear to pupils that the concern will be shared with the designated safeguarding team and recorded in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

**Non-Verbal Disclosures by Pupils**

Staff also recognise persistent and unusual non-verbal disclosures in line with the NICE (National Institute for Health and Care Excellence) recommendation that behaviour may be an unmet need or message.

**Confidentiality**

All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil’s confidential file including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of disclosure and next steps.

**Assessment, Interventions and Support**

All concerns are reported to the designated safeguarding team and recorded. We then implement our assessment system based on levels of need to ensure that pupils get support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

We recognise that just like physical health, mental health and emotional well-being can vary at any given time and is fluid and changes, there are no absolutes.

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| **Need**  *The level of need is based on discussions at safeguarding meeting* | **Evidence-based Intervention and Support**  *The kinds of intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents and pupils.*  *For example* | **Monitoring** |
| Highest need | CAMHS-assessment, 1:1 or family support with treatment, consultation with school staff and other agencies  Reach Mentoring – 1:1 support  Educational Psychologist involvement  External agency support that provides 1:1 support or group work  If the school, professionals and/or parents conclude that a statutory education, health and care assessment is required, we refer to the SEN policy | All pupils needing targeted individualised support will have an Individual Care Plan drawn up setting out -   * The needs of the pupil * How the pupil will be supported * Actions to provide that support * Any special requirements   Pupils and parents/carers will be involved in the plan. The plan and interventions are monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess the impact.  Multi-agency meetings and regular reviews and feedback with parents/carers  Early help referral and Children’s Services if appropriate |
| Some need | Access to an in-school sensory room  1:1 intervention, small group intervention, skills for life/well-being programmes | An electronic log is kept and there are regular safeguarding team meetings |
| Low need | General support  e.g. class teacher/teaching assistant ‘check in’ | |

**Working with Specialist Services**

In some cases a pupil’s mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, school refusal and other complex needs.

We make links with a range of specialist services and have regular contact with the services to review the support and consider next step, as part of monitoring the pupils’ provision.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the SENCo following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers. Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the parents/carers and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil’s needs.

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| **Specialist Service** | **Referral Process** |
| Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS( | Accessed through the school / GP or self referral |
| Reach Mentoring | Accessed through VP / SENCo |
| Educational Psychologist | Accessed through SENCo |
| Early Help Referral | Accessed through SENCo / Designated safeguarding team |

**Involving Parents and Carers**

*Promoting Mental Health*

We recognise the important role that parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and well-being of their children, and in particula, supporting their children with mental health needs.

**To support parents and carers:**

* We will organise a range of mental health workshops accessing expertise from voluntary services on topics such as anxiety, stress management and sleep.
* We provide information and signposting to organisations on our website on mental health issues and local well-being and parenting programmes
* We have an ‘open door policy’
* Supporting parents and carers with children with mental health needs through sensitive and supportive regular meetings and signposting.

**When a concern has been raised, the school will:**

* Contact parents and carers and meet with them
* In most cases, parents and carers will be involved in their children’s interventions, although there will be some circumstances when this may not happen, such as child protection issues
* Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
* Be available for follow up calls
* Make a record of the meeting
* Agree an Action Plan
* Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child
* Keep parents and carers up to date and full informed of decisions about the support and interventions.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Pupils are our primary concern, and in the rare event that parents and carers are nor accessing services, we will seek further advice. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

**Involving Pupils**

We seek pupils’ views and feedback about our approach and whole school mental health activities through pupil voice via the pupil well-being team, surveys, class questions and suggestion boxes. We have a selected panel of Playground Friends who support and look out for vulnerable children in the playground.

**Supporting and Training Staff**

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and well-being and to be able to promote positive mental health and well-being, identify mental health needs early in pupils and know what to do and where to get help. Thos staff with specific responsibility will have access to more specialised training and where possible, access to supervision from mental health professionals.

Staff training to raise awareness of mental health and emotional well-being topics have been accessed through Joanne Callan – Try the Alternative and Katrina McBride – Destined for Greatness. The well-being lead will aim to attain more training for all staff.

Supporting and promoting the mental health and well-being of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and well-being (see Staff Well-being Policy for further details).

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

This policy was made with each and every child in our care at its forefront. Its effectiveness will be monitored by the well-being lead and the senior leadership team. It will be reviewed every three years or sooner if deemed necessary.

**Protective and Risk Factors**

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|  | **Risk Factors** | **Protective Factors** |
| In the child | * Genetic influences * Specific development delay * Communication difficulties * Academic failure * Low self esteem * SEND | * Being female (in younger children) * Secure attachment experience * Outgoing temperament as an infant * Good communication skills/sociability * Being a planner and having a belief in control * Humour * Problem solving skills and a positive attitude * Experiences of success and achievement * Faith or spirituality * Capacity to reflect |
| In the family | * Overt parental conflict including domestic violence * Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) * Inconsistent or unclear discipline * Hostile and rejecting relationships * Failure to adapt to a child’s changing needs * Physical, sexual or emotional abuse or neglect * Parental psychiatric illness * Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder * Death and loss – including loss of friendship | * At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) * Affection * Clear, consistent discipline * Support for education * Supportive long term relationship or the absence of severe discord |
| In the community | * Socio-economic disadvantage * Homelessness * Disaster, accidents,war or other overwhelming events * Discrimination * Other significant life events | * Wider supportive network * Good housing * High standard of living * High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitude and anti-bullying * Opportunities for valued social roles * Range of sport/leisure activities |

**Where to get information and support**

*For support on specific mental health needs*

Anxiety UK [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)

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

Depression Alliance [www.depressionalliance.org](http://www.depressionalliance.org)

Eating Disorders [www.b-eat.co.uk](http://www.b-eat.co.uk) and [www.inourhands.com](http://www.inourhands.com)

National Self.-Harm Network [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)

Self Harm [www.selfharm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.co.uk)

Suicidal Thoughts – Prevention of Young Suicide UK PAPYRUS [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

*For general information and support*

[www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) champions young people’s mental health and well-being

[www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk) advice and support on mental health problems

[www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk) (e-learning)

[www.time-to-change.org.uk](http://www.time-to-change.org.uk) tackles the stigma of mental health

[www.rethink.org](http://www.rethink.org) challenges attitudes towards mental health

**Individual Care Plans**

When a pupil has been identified as having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, it is recommended that an ‘Individual Care Plan’ should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents/carers and relevant professionals.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

* Details of the pupil’s situation/condition/diagnosis
* Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions.
* Medication and any side effects.
* Who to contact in an emergency.
* The role of the school and specific staff.