



**ST. AUGUSTINE OF CANTERBURY CATHOLIC
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Mission Statement

"I called you by your name, you are mine." Isaiah 43

The mission of our school is to support and further the teachings of Christ and His Church.

We welcome and embrace individuals of all abilities and cultural backgrounds.

We aim to enhance and celebrate their moral, physical, social and emotional development, so that they may reach their full potential in an atmosphere of stability, care and respect.

We believe that education is for all and in partnership with parents, carers, children and the wider Catholic community: we will strive and succeed in a wholly inclusive setting.

Equality Statement

These policies have been equality impact assessed and we believe that it is in line with the Equality Act 2010 as it is fair, it does not prioritise or disadvantage any pupil and it helps to promote equality at St Augustine of Canterbury Catholic Primary School.

We have carefully considered and analysed the impact of these policies on equality and the possible implications for pupils with protected characteristics, as part of our commitment to meet the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirement to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

Date issued: November 2022

Date to be reviewed: November 2024

Written by: Mrs Angela Liggins (Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead)

Policy Intent Statement

At St Augustine of Canterbury, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our children, their families and members of staff.

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

Scope

This policy outlines St Augustine of Canterbury's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing and it should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies including the SEND, Medical and Safeguarding Policies as well as the guidance from the DfE on Mental Health and Behaviour in schools:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/755135/Mental_health_and_behaviour_in_schools_.pdf

Aims

The aims of this policy are to promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and children and to increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues. We aim to develop resilience amongst children as well as provide the right support to those with mental health issues.

At St Augustine of Canterbury we

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships
- promote self-esteem
- encourage children to be confident, engaged and motivated in their learning
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks

We promote a mentally health environment through:

- having an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for
- promoting our school values and encourage a sense of belonging
- high profile of anti-bullying procedures and policy
- promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision making eg through school council
- celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- providing opportunities to develop sense of self-worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- providing opportunities to reflect
- access to appropriate support to meet their needs
- being surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours, interactions and ways of relating at all times

We pursue our aims through:

- universal whole school approaches
- support for children going through recent difficulties or bereavement
- specialised, targeted approaches aimed at children with more complex or long-term difficulties

We know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone can need additional emotional support.

Legal basis

This policy was written with regard to:

[Equality Act 2010 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

The Data Protection Act 2018:

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2018/12/contents/enacted>

Articles 3 and 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child [UNCRC summary-1 1.pdf \(unicef.org.uk\)](https://www.unicef.org.uk/media/1000000/1461/uncrc-summary-1-1.pdf)

Key staff members

Whilst it is the responsibility of all staff to promote the mental health of all children, we also have key members of staff with more specific roles; Mrs Liggins who is the SENDCo has had training in being able to run Nurture and Emotional support groups and has had 'Draw and Talk' therapy training. Mrs Liggins is also a member of the Safeguarding team, with responsibility as Early Help lead. Mrs Prestidge, our school Headteacher, is the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Mrs Burns, our school's Deputy Headteacher and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, also leads PSHE across the school. All three members of staff are Youth Mental Health First Aiders.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child, in the first instance they should speak to a member of the DSL team. If there is a concern that the child is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's Safeguarding procedures should be followed.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum. We will follow the guidance by the PSHE association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively.

Identifying needs

Children may complete wellbeing trackers aimed at identifying a range of possible difficulties which include their approach to learning, relationships etc.

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional well-being issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated child protection lead.

Possible warning signs may include:

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity/mood including negative behaviour patterns
- 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
- Lowering of academic achievement/approach to learning
- Poor attendance or punctuality

- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement

Supporting Children

Baseline Support for all children

Teaching about Mental Health is part of St Augustine of Canterbury's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils.

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included in our PSHE through Core Theme 1: Health and Wellbeing, as well as within Core Theme 2: Relationships.

We follow guidance set out by the PSHE association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively. As well as our PSHE Programme of Study, our Relationship and Sex Education Programme, Life to the full, covers the modules: 'Me, My Body, My Health' and 'Emotional Wellbeing' across the whole school.

At St Augustine of Canterbury, we proudly take part in Young Minds #Hello Yellow Day and Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Week to fundraise for Mental Health Charities and raise awareness about the importance of Children's Mental Health.

We make classrooms a safe space to discuss and monitor mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as

- Worry boxes
- Circle time
- Therapeutic activities in the classroom, including 5-minute mindfulness and wellbeing activities
- Targeted use of PSHE resources

Targeted support in school

We will offer support through targeted approaches for individual children or groups of children which may include:

- Circle of friends activities
- Managing emotion resources such as the 'incredible 5 point scale'
- Additional Nurture or emotional literacy/wellbeing intervention support
- Therapeutic activities including lego/art/Draw and Talk intervention.
- Specific work around separation/bereavement

We will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate. These may include Boxall Profiles, Emotion scales, Strengths and Difficulties questionnaires.

Working with other agencies

We recognise that some children are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with a parent/carer with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Educational Psychology service
- Early Help
- Outreach services including Behaviour support through Fortis Trust and Autism support through Marlborough
- Referral to GP or Paediatrician
- Child and Young Person's mental health service, previously known as CAMHS
- Counselling and Play therapists
- Mental Health Charities (eg Samaritans, Mind, Young Minds, Kooth)

Working with parents and carers

We recognise that family plays a key role in influencing children's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure that all parents understand who they can approach if they have concerns about their child and that they are aware of the support and services available to them and how they can access these services.

As well as sharing our Mental Health and Wellbeing policy on the school website, we will provide guidance on navigating and accessing relevant sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing through ParentMail to show parents how they can support positive mental health in their children, including through accessing the Young Minds website www.youngminds.org.uk. We will also keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and RSE.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, children and parents/carers are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support including what Medway can offer for adults and young people.

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200231/mental_wellbeing/569/healthy_mind and

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200170/children_and_families/612/young_people_s_emotional_wellbeing

Training

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of regular child protection training to enable them to keep pupils safe.

The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue <https://www.minded.org.uk/#below>. Also Place2Be helps schools to understand the world of mental health. <https://www.place2be.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-schools/>.

We have trained members of staff across SLT, teaching and support staff, who have completed Anxiety Awareness training. This training has also been shared with the wider staff to support our children's Mental Health and Wellbeing.