



We are a Christian school that serves a diverse community and works in partnership with parents to develop the whole child.

# **St. Luke's CEVA Primary School**

## **Mental Health & Well-Being Policy**

At St. Luke's CEVA Primary School we aim to create a positive, safe and secure learning environment based upon mutual respect and high expectations, so that all members of the school community can excel and enjoy a full school life. This reflects our belief that every child is unique to God and entitled to be given opportunities to be the best that they can be.

### **Our aim:**

#### **To create positive relationships through mutual respect and care**

Following the example of Jesus we aim to build on our Core Christian Values (CCV) of Compassion, Forgiveness, Respect, Perseverance and Trust because;

#### **We use our values to:**

**Ensure we understand that we all have rights and responsibilities**, believing that everyone in the school is important and has the right to be valued. We expect each individual to respect others, their families, their cultures and beliefs - ensuring fairness/equity of treatment for all:

**Encourage self-discipline** and a reflective mind-set, where pupils are able to recognise and manage their own behaviour and treat each other and staff with courtesy;

**Lead by example.** Adults are key role-models and should at all times set a good example – being assertive, consistent, fair, approachable and willing to listen;

**Work in partnership** to form positive relationships with parents and carers and to develop a shared responsibility in the implementation of the school's policies;

**Demonstrate consistency** of response to both positive and negative behaviour;

**Challenge.** Ensure that all lessons fully engage and meet the needs and interests of all students;

**Enable pupils to be proud of St. Luke's** - to encourage all students to take pride in their academic work and enrichment activities whilst representing the school in competition and in everyday appearance.

## **Policy Statement**

*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)*

We aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both universal (whole school approaches) and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils and staff.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

## **Scope**

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical Policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the Inclusion Policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

## **Lead Members of Staff**

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils. Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Mr M Hipperson - Designated Child Protection / Safeguarding Officer (Head Teacher)

Miss F Norcross - Inclusion Lead (Deputy Head Teacher)

Miss Phillip – Family Support Worker

Mrs H Tarbuck – Curriculum Lead Assistant Head Teacher

Miss S Martin – Emotional Support and Literacy Lead

During training session staff are informed that if they are concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil they should speak to the Inclusion Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Child Protection Officer. If the pupil presents as 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.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Inclusion Lead. The school has an allocated CAMHS practitioner who needs verbal consent from the parents prior to meeting with pupils. Consideration of additional input can then be considered.

### **Individual Care Plans**

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

### **Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum (Jigsaw) as well as our over-arching work on Growth Mindset (Carol Dweck) and Zones of Regulation (Kuypers).

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

The school uses the Jigsaw Programme as a basis for the teaching of PSHE and there are also pertinent links to mental health and wellbeing laced throughout the curriculum.

### **Staff Appraisal and Monitoring**

The school has adopted a coaching approach to support staff through appraisals and monitoring scenarios. This approach has been deliberately employed to relieve undue stress and foster a sense of wellbeing; motivating and empowering staff to think differently about their work, becoming more creative, solving problems and adapting to change.

### **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it. Information is available in the school staffroom and on the website which has a direct link to Newham's local offer. We also display relevant sources of support in communal areas and

on the school's online communication platform.

We regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we increase the chance of pupils help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- **What help is available**
- **Who it is aimed at**
- **How to access it**
- **Why to access it**
- **What is likely to happen next**

### **Warning Signs**

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Inclusion lead or DSL.

### **Possible warning signs include:**

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

### **Managing disclosures**

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. This is achieved by termly training.

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and

physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' All disclosures should be recorded on 'Safeguard Software' and will be dealt with by the DSL or Inclusion Lead. Records kept on Safeguard will include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

### **Confidentiality**

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we feel it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on then we should discuss with the pupil:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a pupil without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and /or a parent, particularly if a pupil is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to discretely share a disclosure with a colleague, usually the DSL, Learning Mentor or Inclusion Lead, this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

External supervision by a trained NHS therapist is paid for by the school for the Learning Mentor and group 'therapy' for the DSL is accessed from the same place.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts the parent. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the DSL must be informed immediately.

### **Working with Parents**

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with

anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them links to appropriate advice to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can be helpful too (parent helplines and forums).

The school should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. We will finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on Safeguard.

### **Working with All Parents**

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website and newsletter
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings and coffee mornings
- 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

### **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 which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

## **Training**

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

The ELSA and one other member of the SEND team have received Drawing and Talking Therapy training, which is a key intervention used to support vulnerable pupils within school, alongside the Zones of Regulation intervention.

A member of SLT has been trained in coaching techniques so she can talk with staff to help them find their own pathways to improvement.

Updates for all staff happen at Insets at beginning of the term and if necessary at weekly briefing meetings on a Friday morning.

Next Review Spring 2025