

St. Luke's C.E (Aided) Primary School



Mental Health Policy

January 2023
Mental Health Lead: Miss L. Tomlinson

School vision- *Let your light shine, live life to the full, respect and care for all, create a happy and safe world for everyone.*

At St. Luke's we believe we have an important role in the fostering of good mental wellbeing among young people so that they can fulfil their potential at school and are well prepared for adult life. Schools with clear expectations on behaviour and with well-planned provision for character and personal development can help promote good mental wellbeing.

We have a duty to:

- increase emotional resilience and reduce vulnerability to mental health problems through the development of personal skills, self-esteem, coping strategies, problem solving skills and self-help, which lead to an increased capacity to cope with life transitions and stress;
- provide better information, awareness and education about mental health and illness;
- increase social inclusion and cohesion by ensuring a warm and safe school climate and can include raising awareness and reducing stigma and discrimination or developing supportive environments;
- provide better and more health and social care services;
- provide better social protection and social support.

At St. Luke's we work hard to be a mentally healthy school by adopting a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing, and by developing a positive ethos and culture where everyone feels that they belong. We believe that mental health and wellbeing is an ongoing process not just a one-off activity. We ensure staff members are fully competent to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one. Staff members understand who to speak to and gain further support to help any children who may need additional or specialist support.

We believe schools can help children and young people living with medical and mental health conditions by listening to what they have to say, creating a positive place where pupils feel valued and supported.

We believe children who experience mental health problems or disorders are children who experience a range of emotional and behavioural problems that are outside the normal range for their age or gender. Children at risk of mental ill-health include:

- children and young people with SEN;
- children who have been or are at risk of being abused, exploited or neglected;
- Children in Need;
- children looked-after, or previously looked-after;
- adopted children;

- children living with socio-economic disadvantage; or
- children who have lived through adverse circumstances.

(Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE))

Staff members at St. Luke's recognise the more common mental health problems amongst children/young people are:

- emotional disorders, for example phobias, anxiety states and depression;
- conduct disorders, for example stealing, defiance, fire-setting, aggression and anti-social behaviour;
- hyperkinetic disorders, for example disturbance of activity and attention;
- developmental disorders, for example delay in acquiring certain skills such as speech, social ability or bladder control, primarily affecting children with autism and those with pervasive developmental disorders;
- attachment disorders, for example children who are markedly distressed or socially impaired as a result of an extremely abnormal pattern of attachment to parents or major care givers;
- trauma disorders, such as post-traumatic stress disorder, as a result of traumatic experiences or persistent periods of abuse and neglect; and
- other mental health problems including eating disorders, habit disorders, somatic disorders; and psychotic disorders such as schizophrenia and manic depressive disorder.

(Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE))

We believe we have a role to play in supporting pupils to be resilient and mentally healthy by having a close working relationship with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and by supporting families by providing information about local health services and national organisations that offer materials, help and advice. In addition to this, teaching staff have a role to play by teaching children about mental health via the guidance produced by the PSHE Association. Further information about PSHE at St. Luke's can be found in the policy following: <https://primarysite-prod-sorted.s3.amazonaws.com/st-lukes-church-of-england-notts/UploadedDocument/43d6708c-fe07-435c-b2f3-7a1ed283d951/pshe-rse-policy-2020-21.pdf>

Recent data from the NSPCC found that a fifth of children referred to mental health services in England have been refused treatment because they didn't meet the clinical threshold for receiving treatment from CAMHS. At St. Luke's we believe that it is imperative that children in our care receive the right help and support as quickly as possible. The school SENCO, Miss L. Tomlinson, can signpost parents, carers and families into the right direction for support.

Children presenting with anxiety may experience physical symptoms such as:

- stomach pain;
- nausea and headaches;

- panic attacks or something that appears similar to a tantrum.

We acknowledge that children may feel anxious due to a range of reasons including coming to school and recognise that the mental health of children has been a major issue since the pandemic as there has been a rise in the numbers of children suffering with school and health anxiety.

We believe that we must support and work with parents of children who are suffering from school-anxiety by:

- acknowledging that school-anxiety is a problem and needs to be addressed;
- not adopting a strict approach to attendance;
- adopting a flexible and child-led approach;
- agreeing with parents a plan for attendance;
- organising a temporary part-time timetable;
- the headteacher using discretion to authorise absence in exceptional circumstances.

Staff members are given regular training and have access to a range of training on mental health.

We want all children to have good mental health and to have the ability to develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually and spiritually. Therefore, we need to ensure that 'young people need to learn about wellbeing and resilience from a young age, so when they leave school they are equipped to deal with problems and have the confidence to seek help'.

We support 'Children's Mental Health Week' by holding awareness of mental health in children and half-termly take part in wellbeing days. Staff members regularly address mental health in collective worship and PSHE lessons.

Our aims are:

- To ensure that mental health problems are quickly recognised at an early age and treated.
- To support pupils who may have developed significant mental health or wellbeing difficulties due to the coronavirus outbreak.
- To ensure compliance with all relevant legislation connected to this policy.
- To share good practice within the school, with other schools and with the local authority in order to improve this policy.

Responsibilities of staff members:

The Governing body are responsible for the following:

- appointed a member of staff to be the Coordinator for Special Educational Needs;
- ensure that staff members have appropriate training for mental health
- delegated powers and responsibilities to the Headteacher to ensure all school personnel and visitors to the school are aware of and comply with this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring that the school complies with all equalities legislation;
- nominated a designated Equalities governor to ensure that appropriate action will be taken to deal with all prejudice related incidents or incidents which are a breach of this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring funding is in place to support this policy;
- responsibility for ensuring all policies are made available to parents;
- nominated a link governor to:
 - visit the school regularly;
 - work closely with the Headteacher and the coordinator;
 - ensure this policy and other linked policies are up to date;
 - ensure that everyone connected with the school is aware of this policy;
 - attend training related to this policy;
 - report to the Governing Body every term;
 - annually report to the Governing Body on the success and development of this policy.
- responsibility for the effective implementation, monitoring and evaluation of this policy

The headteacher, Mrs J Dunn, is responsible for:

- establishing a mentally healthy school by adopting a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing;
- looking at all aspects of school life in order to address the issue of mental health;
- working hard to create and maintain a sensitive, supportive and compassionate school environment by tackling prejudice, promoting diversity and removing the stigma around mental health;
- developing inclusive behaviour systems so that pupils feel safe and secure;
- listening to the views and concerns of pupils;
- ensuring pupils understand that mental health is just as important as physical health;
- ensuring the PSHE curriculum promotes self-esteem, independence and personal responsibility;
- ensuring that mental health and wellbeing is an agenda item for all full governing body meetings

The role of the Mental Health Lead/ SENCO, Miss L Tomlinson, is the following:

- to lead the development of this policy throughout the school; actively promote the emotional wellbeing of children
- to use the following questions when assessing support for a child who is displaying mental health problems:
 - What kind of problem is the child displaying?
 - What is the impact of the child's problem on them and those around them?
 - What factors have caused this problem?
 - What strengths are there to work with?
 - What other viewpoints should we consider in order to understand the cause and what support to give?
- to coordinate support within school and liaise with outside agencies in order to meet the mental health needs of children/ young people;
- to work closely with the headteacher and the nominated governor;
- to provide guidance and support to all staff;
- to provide training for all staff on induction;
- to use the follow strategies when responding to someone in mental distress by using the '**ALGEE**' action plan:
 - A:** Approach, assess, assist with any crisis
 - L:** Listen and communicate non-judgementally
 - G:** Give support and information
 - E:** Encourage the distressed to get appropriate professional help
 - E:** Encourage other supports

Staff at St. Luke's recognise the importance of working with parents/ carers to support children who may be experiencing mental health difficulties. Parents and carers should provide school with any information that they feel will be beneficial and support their child in any interventions that may occur.

Safeguarding:

At St. Luke's we are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all children as the safety and protection of children is of paramount importance to everyone in this school. We work hard to create a culture of vigilance and at all times we will ensure what is best in the interests of all children.

We believe that all children have the right to be safe in our society. We recognise that we have a duty to ensure arrangements are in place for safeguarding and promoting the

welfare of children by creating a positive school atmosphere through our teaching and learning, pastoral support and care for both pupils and school personnel, training for school personnel and with working with parents. We teach all our children about safeguarding through P.S.H.E lessons.

All staff members work hard to ensure that everyone keeps careful watch throughout the school and in everything we do for possible dangers or difficulties. We want all children to feel safe at all times and pupil voice is essential in understanding how we can develop our practice and make necessary improvements.