

**ST GREGORY’S PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING POLICY**

St Gregory’s Primary School offers a happy, safe and caring environment. It is our vision that all children are entitled to develop to their fullest potential academically, socially, emotionally and into healthy well beings, enabling each child to grow in confidence and be able to fully participate in everything that goes on in the wider community with confidence. As a church school, we develop a knowledge and understanding of Christianity and foster a respect for other people and their beliefs. The department of Education recognises that, in order to help their pupils succeed, schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally happy.

***‘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 Organisation 2014)

This policy describes St Gregory’s school approach to promoting positive mental health and well-being and is intended as guidance for all staff both teaching and non-teaching and governors. It should be read in conjunction with our SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need and the safeguarding policy in relation to prompt action and wider concerns of vulnerability.

***‘Emotional health and wellbeing is the emotional resilience that enables us to enjoy life and to survive pain, suffering and disappointment. It is a positive sense of wellbeing and an underlying belief in our own worth and of others. Emotional health and wellbeing is embedded in social relations built upon social skills that are developed from birth’*** (Elizabeth Hartley-Brewer, 2011)

**Ethos**

St Gregory’s aims to support and teach skills to pupils to increase their awareness of emotional health and well-being. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each contribution is valued.

At St Gregory’s we know that everyone experiences life changes that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody’s business and that we all have a role to play.

What is ‘good emotional health and well-being in our school:

* The ability to recognise, acknowledge and manage their feelings
* The ability to develop caring and concern for others
* The ability to develop meaningful, positive and long lasting relationships
* The ability to take responsibility for themselves and make practical decisions

For all in our school we want our children to:

* Be effective and successful learners
* Make and sustain friendships
* Deal with and resolve conflict effectively and fairly
* Solve problems with others for themselves
* Manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety
* Be able to promote calm, optimistic targets that support the achievement of goals
* Recover from setbacks and persist in the face of difficulties
* Work and play cooperatively
* Compete fairly and win and lose with dignity and respect for other competitors
* Recognise and stand up for their rights and the rights of others
* Understand and value the differences and commonalities between people, respecting the rights of others to have beliefs and values different

We promote a mentally healthy environment for all our children 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
* Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

We pursue our aims through:

* Universal, whole school approaches
* Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement
* Specialised target approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties
* Promoting emotional health and wellbeing through are Christian values which are courage, thankfulness, respect, forgiveness, honesty and friendship
* Children are grouped in a variety of ways to promote the achievement of their best. In the classroom there are opportunities for children to work in both friendship and ability groups. Regular review of seating arrangements helps to ensure that children gain maximum benefit

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

* Circle time approaches or ‘circle of friends ‘ activities
* Targeted use of SEAL resources – Social and Emotional aspects of learning – whole school approach to promoting the social and emotional skills that underpin effective learning, positive behaviour, regular attendance and emotional health and well being of all who learn within our school.
* ELSA support groups – Emotional Literacy Support Assistant who has received training from Local Authority Educational Psychologists to support the emotional development of pupils in our school.
* Therapeutic activities including art, lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques
* Rewarding positive behaviour and achievement through our housepoint system
* Setting appropriately challenging tasks
* Class codes of conduct

All school staff are aware to look out for 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 and safeguarding lead.

Possible warning signs include:

* Changes in eating/sleeping habits
* Becoming socially withdrawn
* Changes in activity and mood
* 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
* An increase in lateness or absenteeism

**Working with Parents**

In order to support parents we will:

* Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wee-being on our website
* Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through parent forums
* Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get the support they need, if they have concerns for their child
* Make our mental health and emotional wellbeing policy easily accessible to parents
* Share ideas about how parents can support mental health in their children
* 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

**Working with other agencies and partners**

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children’s emotional health and well-being including:

* The school nurse – Member of school nursing team covering Sturminster Newton, Gillingham and Shaftesbury, based at Sturminster Newton Medical Centre.Tel: 01258 474500.
* Educational psychology services
* Paediatricians
* Counselling services e.g Mosaic
* Family support workers
* Therapists

**Training**

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 students safe.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of their performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

**Scope**

This policy describes St Gregory’s school approach to promoting positive mental health and well-being and is intended as guidance for all staff both teaching and non-teaching and governors. It should be read in conjunction with our SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need and the safeguarding policy in relation to prompt action and wider concerns of vulnerability. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying, and PSHE policies and also sit alongside child protection procedures.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

Provision across the school is monitored by the Headteacher and the School Improvement Group

The Headteacher together with members of the School Improvement Group will provide support and advice to members of our school community about the provision and implementation of pastoral care in school. Regular staff meetings and termly full governor meetings provide regular opportunities for the quality of care to be evaluated and developed.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or in light of new legislation regarding child welfare.

**Reviewed by FGB – 21/10/2020 Next review date – October 2022**