



**St Monica's Catholic Primary School, Hoxton
London N1 6QN**



Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy Addendum (COVID-19)

June 2020

This addendum applies during the period of school closure due to COVID-19, and reflects updated advice from the government and local authority (LA), Hackney.

It sets out changes to our normal child protection policy in light of the Department for Education's guidance [Coronavirus: safeguarding in schools, colleges and other providers](#), [COVID-19: guidance on supporting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#) and [COVID-19 Guidance for the Public on the Mental Health and Wellbeing Aspects of Coronavirus](#), and should be read in conjunction with that guidance.

VEHICLES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF PUPILS AND PARENTS

The school promotes and provides a range of services to pupils and parents:

Where possible, we will continue to offer our current support for pupil mental health for all pupils and parents. For example, pupils can access protected time with a trusted adult over the phone. In addition to external CAMHS services, CAMHS professional support for families via the WAMHS project and Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST) is accessible over the phone.

We will also signpost all pupils, parents and staff to other resources to support good mental health at this time. In addition to posts on the school's Class Dojo virtual learning platform, the school has added relevant resources and links to a dedicated section of the school website to ensure parents, staff and pupils have easy access to information about support services and DfE guidance: <https://www.stmonicasprimaryhackney.co.uk/topic/covid-19>.

Related to the promotion of local and national support services, the school engages in raising awareness of mental health and wellbeing needs by recognizing initiatives such as Children's Mental Health Week and Empathy Day. The SENCo/Mental Health Lead supports staff by disseminating relevant resources for home learning and complementing their posts on Class Dojo with links to age-appropriate stories, etc for families to access together.

Whilst the majority of children are educated off-site, the school will also ensure that:

- Regular contact is made with pupils and parents over the phone and via messages on Class Dojo to support and monitor the wellbeing of families;
- Vulnerable pupils, including those who usually take part in regular wellbeing interventions in are contacted more frequently by a member of classroom staff and/or Pastoral Team staff
- via class dojo and phone calls;
- Following this contact, Teachers highlighted families in need to SMT and families are signposted to wellbeing support services for adults and children offered by CAMHS, the school's Mental Health in Schools Team, the EPS, Young Hackney & the diocese;
- Parents and children are kept informed about available support services such as Kooth & Childline;

- Parents of all children are offered optional Magic Breakfast parcels (which will be offered through the summer holiday);
- Parents of eligible children not being educated on-site receive Free School Meal (FSM) vouchers via the government FSM scheme (which will continue through the summer holiday);
- Referrals to charitable bodies such as the Diocese of Westminster Crisis fund, neighboring parish food voucher schemes and food banks are offered to parents to ensure that they have access to sources of food and financial support;
- When setting expectations for pupils learning remotely and not attending school, teachers will bear in mind the potential impact of the current situation on both children's and adults' mental health.
- The PE teacher is active on CD to support families in being mindful of the importance of physical activity in overall health & wellbeing;
- The EYFS & RE Lead regularly posts collective worship opportunities, prayers & meditations for families to support their spiritual wellbeing;
- The parish priest is invited to share a messages of unity, reflection & hope to the community on CD;
- the SENCo liaises with external support services to facilitate referrals & engage in regular reviews with social workers;
- the HT & AHT liaise virtually with parents to address concerns and supporting teachers in providing holistic support for families through their class posts & phone calls;
- Children onsite have access to hygienic toilets which ensure privacy and safety, as well as additional hand sanitising stations both in the building and on the playgrounds;
- At least one member of staff in each on-site teaching 'bubble' is a trained first aider;
- Outdoor learning, physical activity and emotional wellbeing are at the heart of onsite teaching and learning with a recovery curriculum being implemented from September 2020 to support pupil's resilience as they re-engage with school-based education;
- Plans for reintegrating all pupils into school are underpinned by SMT and middle leaders adapting existing policies with the current distancing measures and designing a timetable based upon PSHE and physical wellbeing, as well as utilising the outside spaces in school as frequently as possible;
- Staff undertaking a range of online CPD courses including modules on supporting pupil's mental health with further training planned for the autumn with the support of the MHST and CWIS.

Whilst providing remote learning the school promotes an anti-bullying culture through:

- Virtual and on-site PSHE, RE and literacy lessons and activities that promote cooperation, understanding, respect and empathy;
- Promoting online safety and pathways for reporting concerns via CD and the school website (<https://www.stmonicasprimaryhackney.co.uk/online-safety-1/>);
- Monitoring pupil posts on CD and addressing inappropriate language swiftly, deleting posts and having conversations with pupils and parents jointly about school behaviour expectations;

The school enhances pupil motivation and learning both on-site and off through:

- Positive praise from class teachers verbally during phone calls and through online feedback for efforts with schoolwork;
- Planning based on pupils' interests and needs, as well as topical issues that capture their imagination;
- Awarding certificates for pupil and parent efforts with home learning & virtual assemblies were initiated to have weekly messages from children, teachers & school leaders shared whilst acknowledging pupil achievements;

VEHICLES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF STAFF

The school promotes and provides a range of support and services to staff working both on-site and remotely such as:

- Senior Management Team members phoning single members of staff who live alone to: discuss their wellbeing; offer a listening ear; signpost them to the school's SAS wellbeing provision & offer opportunities to have increased involvement in the limited school opening through additional shifts on the onsite staff rota and taking the lead on making calls to vulnerable pupils;
- Staff who are ill, self-isolating or shielding are contacted regularly to ensure they were well & have access to support services with reminders of both the emotional & physical health services within the school's SAS package;
- CWIS-facilitated group consultations to bring forward wellbeing concerns in a safe, confidential virtual session.