



St Monica's Catholic Primary School
...a small school where big things happen...



Wellbeing & Mental Health Policy

Ratified by the Governing Body:

October 2018



St Monica's Catholic Primary School

...a small school where big things happen...



CONTEXT

At St Monica's Catholic Primary School, we work towards positive Mental Health and Wellbeing in the whole of our school community for adults as well as children.

St Monica's Catholic Primary School is privileged to have members of staff and the wider community who are dedicated and committed to the vision, mission, aims and aspiration of the governing body. The staff continually demonstrate their commitment to our core purpose of preparing and inspiring confident learners who will grow to be outstanding citizens of the world.

As [John Tomsett](#) (a head teacher in York) succinctly states, "the best thing for students is a happy, motivated staff. By putting the staff equal first with the students, you are doing the best you can do for the students. Any head teacher who claims she or he always puts students first probably hasn't thought through in detail exactly what that means."

As an inclusive Catholic community, we promote a set of values that are enduring and seek not only to achieve excellence intellectually, but also spiritually. As we strive to nurture and develop our students in order that they may become caring, compassionate human beings, it is imperative that we also recognise and cater for the needs of the staff who are expected to deliver these expectations. Thus, in addition to supporting pupils and parents in maintaining positive states of wellbeing through our daily provision, we endeavour to ensure that staff maintain healthy states of wellbeing and mental health.

Further, having gained Healthy School status, St Monica's adheres to the national criteria which states: "a healthy school ensures that when pupils are unhappy, anxious, disturbed or depressed there are open channels for them to seek or be offered support, without stigma and with appropriate confidentiality. A healthy school actively seeks to promote emotional health and wellbeing and helps pupils to understand their feelings".

RATIONALE

Mental health and wellbeing promotes school success and improvement by:

- contributing positively to priorities such as enhancing teaching and learning, raising standards, promoting social inclusion and improving behaviour and attendance;
- involving pupils more fully in the operation of the school;
- helping pupils and staff feel happier, more confident and more motivated;
- helping to meet legal, ethical and curricular obligations.

Mental health and wellbeing is central to the Hackney Wellbeing Framework which serves as the key guidance document for our support of the wellbeing of children and adults within our school community.



St Monica's Catholic Primary School

...a small school where big things happen...



AIMS

General

- Happier and more motivated pupils and staff who get more out of life and can cope with normal stresses of life

Teaching and Learning

- Pupils who are more engaged in the learning process;
- Pupils who can concentrate and learn better
- Improved standards in all subjects, including literacy and numeracy;
- Improved attainment;
- More effective teaching;
- Parents and carers more involved in school life and learning;
- Pupils who have a growth mindset that allows for greater resilience when faced with challenges and setbacks,
- Pupils, parents and staff valuing persistence and effort in addition to achievement.

Behaviour and Attendance

- Pupils with high self-esteem and confidence;
- Pupils who have a say in what happens at school;
- Fewer disaffected pupils, disengaged from learning;
- Improved behaviour and attendance;
- Less bullying;
- Lower rates of absenteeism

Staff Confidence and Development

- Improved morale;
- Lower absenteeism;
- Better recruitment level;
- Positive and effective relationships with pupils, their families and the wider community

VEHICLES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF PUPILS AND PARENTS

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

- Hygienic toilets which ensure privacy and safety;
- Optional breakfast (provided by Magic Breakfast) and healthy lunches based on national dietary guidelines for children;
- Water is available all day, as well as a healthy snack being provided for children in EYFS to KS1;
- Specialist PE teaching in all year groups at least once per week in addition to teacher-led Daily Mile participation;
- School council, Eco- council and Peace & Justice Society members to act as mentors;



St Monica's Catholic Primary School

...a small school where big things happen...



- A pastoral base staffed with a non-teaching SENCo/Inclusion Manager, PSHE coordinator and pastoral assistants which includes at least one qualified first aider;
- Co-ordinated support from a range of external organisations including ASpace for support offered weekly and participation in the Hackney WAMHS project with direct CAMHS support to enhance the school's provision for mental health & wellbeing;
- Welcome days and transition events;
- The school monitors children's emotional, social and mental health needs and identifies when extra support may be useful and makes appropriate onward referrals.

The school promotes an anti-bullying culture through:

- A strong school ethos which empowers tolerance and respect, including respect for difference and diversity;
- High profile of anti-bullying procedures and policy through corporate posters, assemblies and events such as national anti-bullying week and using SEAL materials;
- Active listeners, including assistants and adults other than school staff to whom the victim may turn;

The school promotes and strengthens the pupil voice through:

- A democratic process for the election of school council representatives;
- Timetabled meeting time for members of the school council;
- Involving pupils in lesson observation;
- Consulting pupils about change and policy development;
- Pupils leading tours for prospective families and staff, as well as other visitors;
- Pupil led assemblies

The school promotes the involvement of parents and carers in the life and learning of the school through:

- Parent questionnaires;
- Regular consultation about change and development through questionnaires and special meetings;
- Head teacher open mornings;
- Subject Focus evenings, Sports and Theme Weeks and Concerts/Music Events;
- Involvement in school trips and extracurricular activities;
- Regular communication and involvement over pupil progress, behaviour and pastoral issues;
- Parent workshops/coffee mornings on a range of topics

The school facilitates a context for learning through:

- Enhancing school and classroom layout; facilities and resources
- Recognising the background of individual pupils and their physical, social and emotional needs;
- Considering the different contexts surrounding individual pupils and the influence these can have on their physical, social and emotional needs;
- Establishing clear rules, routines and expectations about behaviour for learning and social cohesion;
- Encouraging positive, caring and constructive relationships;



St Monica's Catholic Primary School

...a small school where big things happen...



The school enhances pupil motivation and learning through:

- Consistent support for vulnerable children and those with SEND from trained teams of pastoral, learning support, teaching assistants and other agencies where appropriate.
- A range of challenging opportunities for gifted and talented pupils;
- An exciting and varied range of extra-curricular events and trips;
- A balanced curriculum with opportunities for intellectual, physical and expressive development;
- Recognising a range of learning styles;
- Encouraging independence in learning;
- Using a range of teaching styles such as Circle Time appropriate to pupils' age, ability and level of maturity;
- Using the SEAL materials to raise self-esteem and confidence levels;
- Exploring barriers to learning and access to the curriculum through liaising with professionals, reflection time with pupils and meetings with families

The school enhances pupil self-esteem and personal development through:

- The PSHE Curriculum which includes Citizenship and SEAL;
- Information, advice and guidance on sex and relationships and drugs;
- Exposure to a range of potential careers and higher education opportunities;
- Opportunities for pupil leadership through school council, prefects and midday meal assistants;
- An emphasis on praise and reward;
- Opportunities for reflection and spiritual development through art, literature, collective worship and the RE curriculum

VEHICLES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF PUPILS AND PARENTS

The school enhances staff motivation, learning and professional development through:

- Optional breakfast (through Fareshare) and Lunch: for interested members of staff to have breakfast with pupils and each other. This forges greater working relationships;
- Water, tea and coffee is provided;
- Lunch and break times are taken away from classrooms and staff desks;
- Managers use reflective practice in supervision;
- There is a buddying scheme for new or inexperienced staff so they are supported by more experienced colleagues;
- Cake break days when staff take it in turns to bring in snacks which are shared together;
- Celebration of birthdays and special occasions: staff regularly contribute to buy flowers/gifts for colleagues for special birthdays, pregnancy/new baby etc. This is borne entirely by staff contributions;
- Exercise sessions – pilates, aerobics etc. led by members of staff;
- Team-building days out once each term: one day per year is paid for by the school.
- Curricular planning time within the school week;
- Whole school training events, including Safeguarding, wellbeing and mental health;



St Monica's Catholic Primary School

...a small school where big things happen...



- Access to appropriate external training;
- Involving all staff in decision making and proposed change e.g. timing of the school day, frequency of reporting to parents and so on;
- Provision of non-contact time for members of the pastoral team to allow for planning, delivery and evaluation of wellbeing activities and the PSHE curriculum;
- Consultation on training and support needs through regular review;
- Ongoing encouragement to maintain a healthy work/life balance through policies and procedures designed to limit staff workload;
- Providing all staff with access to Schools Advisory Service wellbeing support services which includes:
 - Stress counselling Service;
 - Relationship counselling service;
 - E-counselling;
 - Physiotherapy service;
 - Cancer support service – including serious illness;
 - Online GP service with video consultation;
 - 24 hour GP helpline;
 - Medical Health Assessment service (once per policy year);
 - Lifestyle Health Screening by a trained Nurse (once per policy year);
 - Stress Risk Management – available on request once per policy year;
- Private Medical Cover – available for specific operations only

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- The promotion of mental health and social wellbeing and raising the achievement of all pupils is the responsibility of the whole school staff and governors. The SENCo/Inclusion Manager, however, serves as the Designated Mental Health Lead for the school.
- The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team – Will demonstrate through their personal leadership the importance of this policy, ensure all staff are aware of it and understand their role and responsibility in relation to wellbeing within the school community;
- Governors – The Governing body has adopted this policy and will assess and monitor its impact annually;
- Staff – Staff will be expected to know what their responsibilities are in ensuring the policy is implemented; They will be aware of the implications of it for their planning, teaching and learning strategies, management of activities, as well as behavioural issues;
- Pupils and parents– Pupils and parents will be made aware of how the Mental Health and Wellbeing policy applies to them as part of the school aims, values and in the curriculum;
- Parents/Carers – Parents and carers will be encouraged to participate fully in implementing it in partnership with the school.

MONITORING/REVIEW

The Governors are committed to reviewing the impact of the Emotional Health and Wellbeing policy as part of the rolling programme of annual policy reviews and regular discussions with the Senior Leadership Team.



St Monica's Catholic Primary School

...a small school where big things happen...



APPENDIX 1: OPEN DOOR POLICY

Welcome to St Monica's Catholic Primary School where we operate an 'Open Door' Policy to parents. The purpose of our Open Door Policy is to encourage open communication, feedback and discussion. We value the input parents make to the school. If you have any worries or concerns about your child's education, then we believe that it is far better that you come into school and discuss them – in the first case with the class teacher, then with a member of the Senior Leadership Team and then the Head Teacher. Following this process allows issues to be resolved and explained.

Staff will listen to your concerns and work with you to resolve any issues that you might have. Staff and parents are expected to be reasonable and fair to all parties. It is in the best interests of all our children to work together.

We are able to maintain our 'Open Door Policy' by requesting your co-operation with the following rules:

- All visitors to the school must report to the school office upon arrival.
- Class teachers will usually be available for an Open Door meeting at the end of the school day, during handover. In some cases, the teacher may not be available for genuine reasons and a different meeting time should be arranged.
- If you feel that the matter needs more than 10 minutes to discuss, then parents should phone the school office to make an appointment to see the member of staff at a mutually convenient time. Please make sure to state the purpose of the meeting request.
- Staff may also be available to take phone calls, when they are not available please leave a contact number so that the member of staff may call you back at a different time.
- Our Pastoral Care Lead is available at different times of the week during the end of the day handover. She can be located on the playground and will be happy to make a note of your concerns and ideas then act accordingly to resolve them.
- At the beginning of the school day and during working hours, the main school is only accessible to parents, the site is, otherwise, locked for the security of our pupils.
- At no time should parents raise their voices at staff, particularly in front of children.
- Aggressive or threatening behaviour is also unacceptable. Anyone who misuses the Open Door Policy may be asked to leave the school premises and future meetings will only be held after a prior appointment is made.
- In the spirit of our Open Door Policy, a Headteacher's Open Morning forum is held termly to discuss new initiatives, issues/policies and events.

Signed: *Mrs A Ruthven*

Head Teacher



APPENDIX 1: CAMHS IN HACKNEY REFERRAL PATHWAYS

First Steps

- Tier 2
- **Mild to moderate needs/ early intervention**
- **No Social Care involvement or ASD/ADHD Assessments**
- 6 sessions framework
- Clinical Psychologists, Assistant Psychologists, CAMHS Practitioners
- Based at Hackney Ark. Families seen at GP surgeries and Children Centres.

Specialist CAMHS - ELFT

- Tier 3
- **Increased complexity and risk**
- **Mental health problems of moderate to severe need**
- **Children with high functioning autism/ADHD**
- Psychiatrists, Child Psychotherapists, Systemic Family Therapists, Clinical Psychologists, Mental Health Nurses
- Based at Homerton Row

CAMHS Disability Team

- Tier 3
- **Complex needs**
- Learning disability and/or physical disability of moderate to severe need
- Clinical Psychologists, Play Specialist, Psychiatrist, Child Psychotherapist, Systemic Family Therapist
- Based at **Hackney Ark**

CAMHS in Social Care

- work with children when they are open to a team in Hackney Children and Families Service (e.g. Social Care, Young Hackney, Family Support)
- work directly with families where there are concerns about a child's emotional wellbeing, behaviour, development or mental health, relationships and attachments difficulties, parenting difficulties
- specialist assessments and interventions
- Systemic psychotherapists, Clinical, Forensic and Counselling Psychologists
- Based at Hackney Service Centre

**Same
referral
form**

**CAMHS
Disability
Referral
Form**

**Referral via allocated
Social Worker or
allocated worker
from Hackney
Children and Families
Service**