



St Paschal Baylon
Catholic Primary School



Following In The Footsteps Of Christ

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Policy Statement

At St. Paschal Baylon Catholic Primary School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all of our pupils, their families, members of staff and governors. Our open and supportive culture allows children's voices to be heard and through the use of effective policies and procedures, we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected- both directly and indirectly- by mental health issues.

Policy Aims

- To promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all pupils
- To outline the methods and strategies used in school to help pupils understand and manage their own mental health and wellbeing
- To provide information about how we support children who are experiencing mental health difficulties

Key Staff Members

This policy aims to ensure that all staff take responsibility to promote the positive mental health of the children in our school. All staff have received an overview of ROAR Mental Health training in school. However, key members of staff have specific roles to play and have received the full ROAR mental health training:

- Miss L. Kavanagh –Deputy Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCO and Designated Mental Health Champion (ROAR trained)
- Mrs K Maclean – Learning Mentor and Designated Mental Health Champion (ROAR trained)

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child, in the first instance, they should speak to Miss L Kavanagh.

If a parent/carer is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child, they can inform the child's class teacher or ask to speak directly to Miss L Kavanagh.

If there is a concern that the child is at high risk of danger or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures will be followed.

If a child presents a high risk of medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

Teaching about Mental Health

St Paschal Baylon Catholic Primary School is committed to equipping children with the knowledge and skills they need to recognise and understand their feelings and emotions and to supporting them to develop the ability to manage their own mental health.

Our school has signed up to The ROAR Response to Mental Health in Primary Schools which is designed in collaboration with Merseyside Youth Association's RAISE team. The aim of ROAR is to equip primary school staff with the training and knowledge needed to provide early intervention and support to children experiencing mental distress whilst also helping children to learn about mental health and ways in which they can be mentally healthy.

The **ROAR** response stands for:

R – Recognise the signs and symptoms

O – Ask **O**pen questions

A – Access support and self-care

R – Build **R**esilience

Throughout their time in school, children will learn about the importance of recognising our feelings and emotions, understanding that we all have mental health and that sometimes our mental health dips just like our physical health.

Staff use resources such as the Rainbow Scale and the Feelings Thermometer to encourage children to talk about their mental health and recognise how different things can positively and negatively affect their mental health.

Staff also work with children on developing resilience using the ROAR resources of Resilient Ralph and the ResiliANTS alongside the Resilience Framework to help children develop the skills they need to be mentally healthy and to help them cope with difficult times.

Parents can find out more information about the ROAR response by asking to speak to Miss Kavanagh in school or accessing the website: www.roarresponse.com

Parents can also attend parent mental health workshops run in school for further information. (see school website/ newsletter for dates and times)

Recognising Mental Health Difficulties

All staff have received the initial ROAR training and are aware of the signs and symptoms of mental distress in children. Staff know to look out for these warning signs and know that they should always be taken seriously. If a member of staff observes these warning signs, they will inform the school's Designated Mental Health Champions. Parents will be informed of any concerns staff may have about their child's mental health and wellbeing.

Possible signs and symptoms of mental health and/or wellbeing issues include:

- Changes in mood or activity level (angry, withdrawn, lethargic)

- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Sudden lowering in engagement or academic achievement
- Repeated complaints of feeling sick/ headaches with no evident medical/physical cause
- Withdrawing from social interaction
- Engagement in angry or aggressive behaviour
- Low self-esteem, talks of failure or talks very negatively about themselves
- Evidence of physical harm that appears non-accidental
- Increase in lateness for school or absence from school
- Talking about self-harm or not wanting to be here anymore
- High levels of anxiety / distress – tearful / panic attacks

Supporting Mental Health Difficulties

All staff have been trained in the ROAR response to mental health and have the resources to support them with asking open questions and encouraging a child to talk about how they are feeling and identifying what has made them feel this way. Staff also have resources to support children with identifying ways that they can help themselves to feel better.

Sometimes children will need a little more support and time to work through their difficulties. The school offers Nurture Groups (EYFS/KS1 and KS2) which are led by our fully trained Learning Mentor. These groups take place once a week and involve a variety of activities including talking, art and craft and group activities that support children with understanding their feelings and emotions. Parents are always consulted before children attend Nurture Group.

Other children may need 1:1 support from the Learning Mentor to help them explore their feelings and to find a way to work through them. These sessions are provided as and when needed and parents are consulted before these sessions take place.

The school has also signed up to Seedlings which is a therapeutic service delivered in partnership by PSS (Person Shaped Support) and YPAS (Young Person's Advisory Service). School can refer to this service when a child is experiencing some mental health or emotional difficulties or is going through a difficult time and it is felt that they need a bit more support than school alone can provide. The sessions take place on a 1:1 basis in school and are delivered by a qualified therapist. Parental consent is required for these referrals and parents are involved at each stage of the process. For more information about Seedlings, please see Miss Kavanagh in school.

The school recognises that there are some cases where children are suffering significantly from mental health difficulties and require support from outside professionals. In these cases, school can refer to CAMHS to ensure children and families receive the support they need. For more information about CAMHS please see their website: www.liverpoolcamhs.com

Children with Diagnosed Mental Health Conditions

When a pupil has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, an individual care plan will be drawn up. The development of the plan will involve the pupil, parents, key school staff and any relevant professionals involved with the pupils' mental health care.

The plan will include:

- Details of the pupil's situation and/or diagnosis
- Special requirements / strategies/ necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Emergency contact
- Role of key staff

Targeted Support

We recognise that some children are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with school nurses and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of these children. We ensure timely and effective identification of children who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional and behavioural problems
- Working closely with Liverpool City Council Children's Services (and other relevant Local authority children's services), Liverpool CAMHS and other key agencies to follow various protocols including assessment and referral
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with parents/carers
- Providing a range of interventions according to the child's needs
- Ensuring children have access to pastoral care and support as well as specialist services
- Providing children with clear and consistent information about support available to them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns
- Providing children with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it
- Carrying out the identification and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children and Families Act 2014

Managing Disclosures

If a pupil chooses to disclose mental health concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially and include the date, name of staff member to whom the disclosure was made, nature of the disclosure and agreed next steps. The information will be shared with the Designated Mental Health Champion with the permission of the child (unless the child is at significant risk of harm when child protection procedures will be followed)

Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a pupil, this will first be discussed with the pupil.

Parents will always be informed where concerns exist around their child's mental health or wellbeing.

Working with Parents/ Carers

Working together with parents/carers is key to providing children with the support and help they need to be mentally healthy. Parents will always be informed when there are concerns about their child's mental health and/or wellbeing.

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's mental health or wellbeing issues can be upsetting and distressing. Staff are aware that parents may need time to reflect and come to terms with the issues being discussed and may need a follow-up meeting to discuss support and next steps.

The school will work in partnership with parents and any other relevant support agencies/professionals to ensure that the child receives the support needed. School will ensure that parents/carers are signposted to support materials and services and support families through targeted Early Help where it is required.

Supporting Peers

When a child is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in 1:1 or group settings and will be guided by conversations with the child 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 saying / doing
- Warning signs that their friend may need help

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources for further information

- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Training and Review

All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues and how to keep children safe.

Nominated members of staff have received full ROAR mental health training and will continue to review and update this training regularly.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

The school will provide information about children's mental health via parent workshops in school and via the school website.

This policy will be reviewed regularly. Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.