



Children's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Policy Statement

Christ Church CE VC Infants is a supportive, caring, fun and inclusive school that places the wellbeing and safeguarding of children at the centre of all that we do. CCI Staff, families, Governors and the church work closely together to ensure that all children and staff are supported, celebrated, challenged and encouraged to live life to the full, in an environment which protects their mental health and wellbeing. As a church school we have a values led curriculum with a holistic approach to learning and development for each individual. This is brought to life through our vision:

“A Caring community, Courageously learning, Inspired to live life to the full.”

Taught through the values shared below children are supported and encouraged to live out these values as well as experience them themselves. Each individual contribution is listened to and valued.

• A caring community •



• Inspired to live life to the full •



At CCI we know positive mental health is essential for happy, engaged and resilient children and staff. We take a proactive approach in teaching about mental health and ensure that all members of our community are equipped with the skills they need to identify when they may need support from others.

We have a duty of care and we pride ourselves in being open and recognise the role we play in supporting and developing positive mental health as well as making sure our school is a place where every learner feels safe, valued and is able to learn effectively and every staff member feels safe, valued and empowered to do their job well.

At CCI we:

- Actively teach children to understand their emotions and feelings, label them and learn strategies to manage them.
- Develop positive relationships with children so they feel comfortable to share any concerns or worries.
- Support children to develop social skills so that they can form and maintain relationships.
- Promote self-esteem and value each child and member of staff so they know they are important to us.
- Encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- Help children to develop their emotional resilience and to manage when things go wrong.
- Promote positive mental health as a priority for all staff and pupils and their families.
- Signpost to external agencies as a means of supporting staff, children and their families.



We promote a positive mental health environment through:

- Promote our school values and encourage a deep sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and providing opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievement in equal measure.
- Celebrating those who are demonstrating they are living our school values.
- Providing opportunities for children to develop a sense of self-worth by taking responsibility for themselves and others in school as well as in the wider community.
- Providing opportunities for the children to be still and reflect.
- Providing access to appropriate support that meets their needs.
- Raise the profile of mental health awareness across pupils, staff, parents and Governors.

To do this we provide:

- Whole school approaches
- Support for children going through recent difficulties including bereavement, family separation or illness.
- Providing support and understanding to children and their families where they are suffering poor mental health.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at children with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder.

Staff roles and responsibilities

While all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health for both themselves, their colleagues and the children within their care, there are some staff with named roles and responsibilities. Senior staff within the school have undertaken advanced child protection training but also have other expertise within the areas of SEND, looked after children, children missing in education and distressed behaviours.

- Anna Martin-Head Teacher and Designated Safeguarding Lead and Designated teacher.
- Gareth Jones-Deputy Head and Deputy Safeguarding Lead
- Sooz Dickinson-SENCO, Mental Health Lead and Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA)

Teaching about Mental Health

Due to the sensitive nature of mental health, it should be taught at all times in a sensitive and supportive manner. The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner. As a school we also use Zones of Regulation as an approach to teach children to learn to recognise and label their emotions and begin to manage these with support.

Our relationship and sex education (RSE) curriculum follows the statutory guidance issued in September 2020 and contains teaching around positive mental health, relationships and self-image woven throughout the units of work.



Targeted support

At CCI we offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of children which may include:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities.
- Targeted use of SEAL resources.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes' and 'worry eaters'.
- Managing emotions resources such as 'the incredible 5 point scale' and Zones of Regulation.
- ELSA therapeutic support.

We make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including: o

- The Boxall Profile
- Emotional literacy scales

Identifying needs and Warning Signs

All staff and Governors should be aware of the possible warning signs of a child experiencing negative mental health or wellbeing issues, while also understanding that there can be other causes behind them where they are observed. Any staff who notice warning signs within a child should always discuss what they have witnessed with a senior mental health leader and also record them on CPOMS as warning signs should always be taken seriously. The impact of abuse on mental health should also be recognised. Warning signs may include, but are not limited to:

- Crying or unusual emotional outbursts
- Fear of failure, low self-esteem or loss of hope
- Frequent stomach aches, cramps or headaches with no obvious reason
- Differences in their usual eating or sleeping habits
- Threats of escaping or violence towards others
- Secretive or unpredictable behaviour
- Talking about drugs, alcohol or other age inappropriate activities
- Becoming aggressive or agitated
- Changes in temperament
- Unwillingness to engage with activities
- Changes in appearance or clothing
- Changes in behaviour at home, even where behaviour in school is positive
- Becoming socially withdrawn or isolated
- Refusal to take part in PE or swimming to avoid changing publically
- Deteriorating academic achievement or confidence
- Repeated lateness or school absenteeism
- A return to infantile behaviours
- Talking about self-harm or suicide
- Clingy or crying at the start of school each day

Working with Parents

In order to support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school 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 go about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive 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.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our anti-bullying, e-safety, SEND, GDPR and equalities policies.

Reporting concerns about a child's mental health

Any person who has concerns over the mental health or wellbeing of a child or colleague has a duty of care to report this to the mental health lead to seek advice and begin a team conversation around how we can best support the needs of the child or adult in question. However, if there is ever a concern that a child is at risk of imminent harm then this must be reported in the usual way following the safeguarding policy.

The recent changes in Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE 2020) raises the prominence of positive mental health as being equal to physical health with any concerns being reported to the DSL. Equally if a child is in need of medical attention, the usual procedures apply following the first aid, medication and emergencies protocol as appropriate.

If a child decides to disclose something that is negatively impacting their mental health, then staff should listen in a supportive, caring and non-judgemental way and should not promise to keep anything a secret but should gently remind the child that they will need to share some of the information with a trusted adult such as the mental health leader. During the initial disclosure, the member of staff should primarily focus on listening and reassuring rather than promising intervention or advice immediately. This should then all be recorded on CPOMS.

Specialist support and inter-agency approaches

In the event of a prolonged period of negative mental health that is not responding to the intervention and support offered at a school support level, then referrals can be made to external partners including, but not limited to a GP, the school nurse, CAMHS and therapy services e.g. Impact mentoring, the Bridge Foundation, and the Bourne Family Trust. This can be done through the completion of the South Gloucestershire Early Help referral process - Compass or by our SENCO. It can be appropriate to signpost families to services hosted at Christ Church such as Christians Against Poverty (CAP) and the foodbank.

Supporting SEN children with mental health issues

Where a child is on the school's SEN register either with an educational health care plan (EHCP) or at a SEN support level, they may need to have an individual care plan created with smart, achievable targets and a robust support plan in place. Where applicable this support should be listed within the SEMH area of their EHCP within an annual review. Our highly experienced staff are very skilled at tailoring the support needed to a child's individual needs. We also acknowledge that every child is different and that where our approaches are not fully meeting a child's needs we seek support from external sources, training in new approaches and partnership with parents. Through our work with the SEN cluster, we are now trained to use the Boxall profile to help identify social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs and also seek guidance in how to best help a child.



Staff wellbeing

Staff wellbeing is a fundamental aspect of our mental health provision at CCI as staff cannot possibly support children's needs if they are not well supported and happy themselves. A very high priority is given to wellbeing of staff and it is a standing item on Governors, SLT and Chair of Governors agendas. Staff wellbeing is regularly reflected on and reviewed by The Head teacher and Wellbeing team, staff are also invited to anonymously respond to a wellbeing questionnaire to share their views and any concerns. This is always taken seriously by the Head teacher and actions put in place to support as necessary. Please also see the Well-being policy for further information.