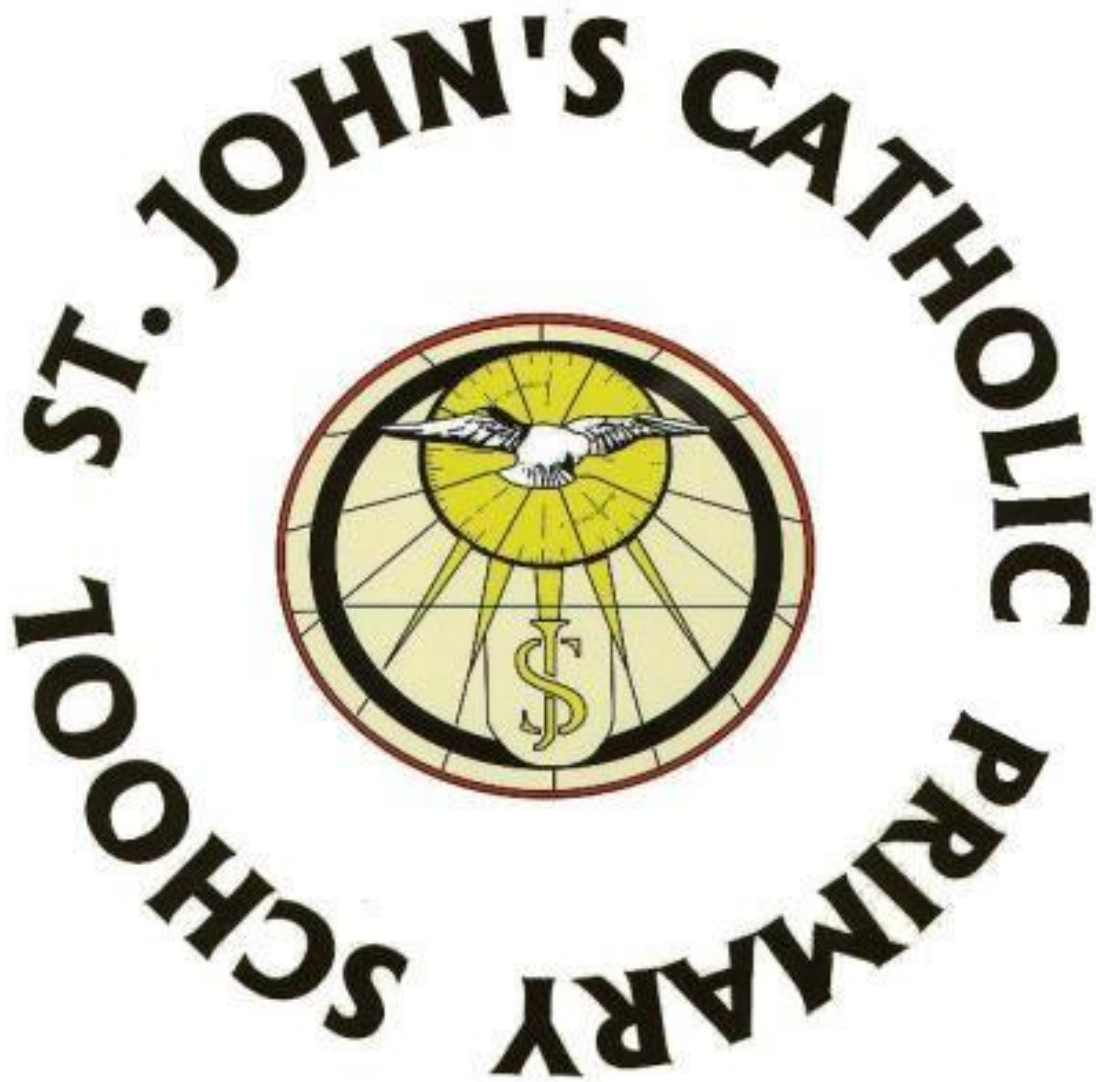




# **Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy**

September 2025

### **Our Mission Statement**

The Mission of St. John's Catholic Primary School is to grow and learn in the footsteps of Jesus by being: responsible, caring, prayerful, creative, independent, thoughtful, curious and respectful. We live our Mission by:

- Ensuring that our attitudes and values are transmitted through a curriculum that is consistent with the Catholic faith
- Delivering a curriculum that is relevant, varied, interesting, stimulating, balanced and appropriate
- Developing policies and schemes of work which recognise that R.E. is an integral part of the curriculum
- Developing sound teaching and effective classroom management
- Generating a positive attitude to learning where realistic expectations of pupils and high standards of work are expected
- Using a variety of teaching approaches that reflect the needs of individual pupils
- Participating in projects which focus on the needs of others including local and international charities.
- St. John's is a Catholic voluntary aided primary school, established by the Church to serve the parishes of St. John the Baptist, Trowbridge and St. Thomas More, Bradford on Avon.

This policy was written in consultation with staff, pupils, parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing.

### **Policy Statement**

At St John's Catholic Primary School, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued. At our school, we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

### **At our school we:**

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- help children socially to form and maintain relationships
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count
- encourage children to be confident and 'life-changers'
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks

### **We promote a mentally healthy environment through:**

- Our school Christian values and Catholic Social Teaching themes which encourage a sense of belonging
- Pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Child leadership roles
- 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
- Chapel Champions – Chaplaincy Team
- 'Mile -a-day' and Mindfulness opportunities

### **We pursue our aims through:**

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder.

### **Scope**

This policy should be read in conjunction with policies for Child Protection or Safe Guarding, SEND, Behaviour, Anti-bullying, PSHE and RSE policies.

### **Lead Members of Staff**

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Kim O'Rourke (Headteacher) - Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Debbie O'Mahony (SENCO/Inclusion leader) – Designated Safeguarding Lead, THRIVE Lead Practitioner
- Vicky Holmes – Senior Mental Health Lead
- Pam Poulter – Mental Health First Aider
- Tracy Bygrave – THRIVE Practitioner

### **Teaching about Mental Health**

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 are 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.

### **Targeted support**

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

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities
- Nurture and wellbeing groups
- THRIVE offer

- Therapeutic activities including art, lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

**The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:**

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- The Boxall Profile
- Emotional literacy scales
- THRIVE assessments

### **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

#### Identifying needs and Warning Signs

Staff may identify in their pupils a range of possible difficulties including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing 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 officer or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate.

**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 wellbeing on our school website
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support e.g. through the Parent Support Advisor
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- 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.

**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 wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- The Mental Health support Team
- Educational psychology services
- Behaviour support

- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists
- Social care

### **Training**

As a minimum, 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.

The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue - <https://www.minded.org.uk/>

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our 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.

This policy has been approved and adopted by the Governing Body on: 4<sup>th</sup>  
December 2025

Headteacher:

Signed



Chair of Governors:

Signed



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|------------------|-------------|
| Review cycle:    | Bi-Annually |
| Next review due: | Dec 2027    |