St Edmundsbury and Ipswich
Diocesan Multi Academy Trust

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Policy for Supporting Mental Health and Resilience

Adopted: 6th February 2024 Review date: Spring 2027

1. Introduction and Context

Our approach to supporting pupils' mental health is informed by and is threaded through the school's Christian vision.

"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another." John 3:34

Unconditional love underpins all we do at St Mary's Church of England Primary School. We value and embrace the individuality of every child as they discover, learn and flourish in a place of security and love.

L*ove – We show love and care for everyone.*

O*pportunity – Our inclusive love ensures that all children have opportunities to live life to the full.*

V*alues – Our Christian values give children the character and strength to live well and make a difference.*

E*xcellence –Through our inclusive, loving care, all children flourish.*

At St Mary's C of E Primary School, our core purpose is to promote the best interests of the child, working in partnership with parents and other professional services. St Mary's is a compassionate, Christian school and we seek to model the school's Christian values through providing appropriate, effective support for individual children and the whole school community. We recognise the significant impact of low self-esteem, low resilience and problems with mental health on children's emotional wellbeing and their ability to learn effectively.

10% children aged 5 – 16 years have a clinically diagnosable mental health problem and 50% of mental health problems are established by 14 years old (data taken from www.mentalhealth.org.uk). Recent documents published by NHS England (Future

in Mind and The Five Year Forward View for Mental Health) and research conducted by the YMCA have highlighted the challenges facing schools in accessing support and have reinforced the need for early intervention.

Increasingly, schools and other agencies are taking account of the effectiveness of support for children's wellbeing. Ofsted inspectors use all the evidence they gather to evaluate what it is like to be a pupil in a school. In the School Inspection Handbook (updated December 2023), the grade descriptors in the section on Personal Development state that a 'good' school:

"…provides high-quality pastoral support. Pupils know how to eat healthily, maintain an active lifestyle and keep physically and mentally healthy. They have an age-appropriate understanding of healthy relationships and of the protected characteristics."

Alongside our own offer of 'early help' and high-quality pastoral support, it is important that pupils gain an age-appropriate understanding of mental health and begin to develop their own strategies to build resilience and strengthen relationships.

This care extends to adults who work in our school community. St Mary's is an open, supportive working environment, in which we aim to ensure that the mental health and wellbeing of our employees is considered alongside that of children.

2. Aims

As part of our commitment to keeping children safe and supporting their emotional wellbeing, this policy aims to:

- Raise the awareness of members of the school community about the causes and risk factors affecting mental health conditions in children and adults;
- Help staff members recognise that pupils' behaviour may reflect their mental health or wellbeing and equip them to identify and support children effectively;
- Enable staff members to identify children who require intervention and to take positive action to provide 'early help';
- Help staff members to develop a 'resilient' learning culture and build the resilience of individual children;
- Enable children to be reflective individuals, who can make informed choices about their own emotional and mental wellbeing;
- Enable children to be understanding of their peers' needs with regard to mental and emotional wellbeing;
- Reflect the school's distinctive Christian vision and values by developing a compassionate, caring environment and taking positive action to support individuals about whom we are concerned;
- Foster a culture of sensitivity, understanding and empathy, in which general supportive practices benefit all children and adults in school;
- Provide systems of support for mental health and wellbeing of children and adults in school.

3. Definitions

Like physical health, we all have 'mental health'. The World Health Organisation, 2014, defined mental health as:
"A state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community."

It is normal for there to be times when life is stressful and pressurised and for people to be affected by unexpected events and trauma. However, a mental health condition may make it more difficult for a person to cope with such stresses or to recover from traumatic experiences.

An essential aspect of good mental health is developing mental and emotional resilience. Resilience can be defined as:
"…the ability to 'bounce back' from adversity. Protective factors increase resilience, whereas risk factors increase vulnerability. Resilient individuals, families and communities are more able to deal with difficulties and adversities than those with less resilience." (UCL Institute of Healthy Equity, 2014)

4. Staff Wellbeing

It is vitally important to recognise that in order to monitor and support children's mental health and emotional wellbeing, staff members and the school community must have due regard for the health and wellbeing of the adults in school. If staff members are not emotionally and mentally healthy, they may not be capable of supporting the children as effectively. School leaders are flexible and supportive when dealing with staff absence and sickness. When appropriate, leaders make Occupational Health referrals and pay close attention to the advice received.

In order to support staff wellbeing, the Governors:

- Routinely discuss wellbeing matters in Governing Body meetings as a standing agenda item;
- Support the staff through buying into the Inspire counselling service;
- Support the staff through the St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust's (MAT) membership of the Employee Assistance Programme (Care First);
- Have a staff member identified as the 'Wellbeing Champion' and a named Governor with responsibility for wellbeing;
- Have agreed to a statement about workload and wellbeing alongside other MAT schools (Appendix 2).

Information about the counselling service and employee assistance programme can be found in Appendix 3. Staff members do not have to share with colleagues or senior leaders that they have accessed these services. When senior leaders are aware of issues related to a staff member's mental health, consideration will be given to making an occupational health referral, seeking guidance from an HR consultant and completing a stress risk assessment.

5. Identifying Risk Factors

Some children may be particularly vulnerable to developing problems relating to mental health or emotional wellbeing. The presence of individual risk factors does not necessarily lead to problems with mental health. However, staff should be aware of them and mindful of the affect that these may have on a child's mental health. The following list of risk factors is not exhaustive. Risk factors affecting mental health may include:

- Being a young carer;
- Abandonment, broken attachments or other historical family circumstances, e.g. parental separation or divorce;
- Parents having problems with mental health or substance misuse;
- Family members being involved in criminal activity;
- Being a victim of abuse or witnessing domestic abuse;
- Being a victim of bullying or discrimination;

- Living in poverty or homelessness;
- Unreasonable expectations, e.g. to perform academically;
- Having Special Educational Needs or Disability;
- Long-term physical illness;
- Being a Child in Care;
- Experiencing trauma, e.g. the death of a close relative.

If staff members are aware that one or more of these risk factors are affecting a child and may have an impact on mental health, then they should be particularly vigilant and mindful of this when managing behaviour, supporting wellbeing and when communicating with the child and parents.

6. Behaviours, Signs and Indicators

The following signs may indicate that a child has low self-esteem or may be developing problems with emotional or mental wellbeing. This list is not exhaustive and these signs are not necessarily indicators of a mental health condition.

- The child's behaviour and relationships have changed;
- The child struggles to accept either praise or constructive criticism;
- The child is isolated from, or does not communicate with, peers (this may be a conscious choice);
- The child is reluctant to communicate with adults, especially in relation to his or her feelings or a problem;
- The child is very self-critical and makes comments that indicate a lack of self-worth or value, blaming him or herself when things go wrong;
- The child presents with multiple minor anxieties or worries;
- The child apologises often, including when it is not necessary;
- The child is indecisive;
- The child exaggerates the truth or tells lies, deliberately misleading others;
- The child creates fabrications or fantasies;
- The child lacks confidence in new or social situations, such as working in a group;
- The child follows others, conforming to expectations or peer pressure.

7. Understanding the Causes of Mental Health Conditions

The causes of poor mental health conditions can be very wide and complex with some being a combination of many of these factors. The impact of **trauma** or problems with **attachment** may be just two of the likely issues that may be affecting a child or young person experiencing poor mental health or wellbeing.

Following trauma, it is possible for children to suffer short term post-traumatic stress; this is true for all of us. Post-traumatic stress disorder may affect someone sometime after the traumatic event. Stress and fear can be triggered at any time by things such as sounds, smells or any other factors associated with the trauma and can trigger emotions and behaviours linked to the "fight or flee" reaction.

Staff members should be aware of the possible impact of **trauma** or issues with **attachment**.

Trauma

Trauma can be an isolated event, such as bereavement, or an ongoing, repeated issue, such as abusive behaviour. Trauma can be reflected in a range of symptoms, such as poor sleeping patterns, a lack of self-care, loss of appetite, crying and a

person struggling to function and cope with the typical pressures of daily life. The effect of trauma on the body can be physical as well as emotional, causing the 'fear, fight or flight' response in an individual. Furthermore, research indicates that trauma can have an impact on cognition, functional IQ and a child's ability to learn effectively. Following trauma, it is normal for people to suffer post-traumatic stress but this does not necessarily last. Post-traumatic stress disorder may continue to affect an individual for many years after an event and can be triggered by different experiences.

Communication is vital for providing effective support following trauma. Children must be given the time and opportunity to communicate about trauma affecting them and explore their feelings. This is done by:

- Developing a culture in which children understand who to turn to for support and know that their voice is important because adults listen and respond;
- Explicitly teaching the children to be compassionate, modelling the school's Christian values in adult behaviour;
- Using worry boxes in classrooms and using agreed methods for children to let the Pastoral Support Worker know that they want time to talk;
- Making internal professional referrals to the Pastoral Support Worker.

Also, communication with parents is important in order to become fully aware of the trauma affecting the child and to share the best and most consistent ways of supporting them. In order to achieve this, the school fosters a welcoming, open relationship with parents, through:

- Open and friendly staff presence outside at the beginning and end of the school day;
- Providing parents with advice and close support through positive relationships, informal meetings and formal processes, such as the Common Assessment Framework;
- Providing opportunities to come into school for positive experiences and to share children's work, such as class assemblies, open classrooms and 'sharing cafés';
- Encouraging members of the school community to volunteer in school and finding opportunities to thank volunteers, such as inviting them to special performances or holding a 'thank you' tea party.

It is also vital that there is effective communication between staff in school, through:

- Successful transitions between year groups, involving the full sharing of relevant information;
- The use and sharing of written risk assessments in relation to behaviour and known triggers;
- The use of briefings to update staff members on family circumstances and events that we become aware of.

Attachment

Everyone has an attachment 'style'. Mary Ainsworth theorised that there are four styles of attachment: a secure attachment; an insecure ambivalent attachment; an insecure avoidant attachment; and an insecure disorganised attachment. This is a specialist area and not for school staff members to diagnose. However, it is useful for staff members to have a basic understanding of attachment because this will influence how we respond to and address different behaviours in the classroom. If an approach is not working with a child, then staff members should consider what they know about attachment and employ a different strategy.

Secure attachment
A secure attachment comes as a result of establishing a 'secure base'. While a 'secure base' is usually provided by the family, it is important to note that a school can provide a 'secure base' for a child from an insecure background. When a secure attachment is formed, the 'attunement' between the child and the adults providing the 'secure base' has a literal impact on brain development. The frontal cortex of the brain has plasticity and can grow and change. Therefore, it is important to address attachment issues and to provide a secure base if necessary. A child with a secure attachment knows that it is acceptable to make mistakes and is more comfortable taking risks. He or she will be able to experiment and explore, knowing that they have the support of the adults around him or her. A child may have problems with attachment if they have not established a 'secure base'.

Insecure Ambivalent Attachment
This child may be fearful or anxious and may display separation anxiety. He or she may seek attention but then reject it and may find it difficult to settle to a task without prompting. In the classroom, this child is likely to seek attention from adults and may be desperate to form relationships but may be disinterested in the task. A useful strategy is to pre-teach individually or in a small group prior to a lesson, which will focus the child on what you want him or her to achieve while giving the attention he or she desires. It can be helpful to give attention before poor behaviour starts to cause a problem. This child benefits from being reassured that you will return after a short time has elapsed (give deadlines to complete tasks) or from being given positive signals from elsewhere in the classroom.

Insecure Avoidant Attachment
This child may be withdrawn and struggle to communicate. He or she may show little emotion and may not react as adults expect in social situations. In order to avoid the risk of being hurt, he or she may avoid relationships and supress desires. It should be noted that in the classroom situation the 'avoidance' links to relationships rather than to tasks. Therefore, teachers can engage these children by focusing on, and talking about, the task. The child will engage more actively and successfully if the task relates to his or her interests.

Insecure Disorganised Attachment
This child will seek attention but this may be in inappropriate ways. He or she may be chaotic and easily distracted. His or her history and family background may be disordered and disorganised. There may be a range of triggers that cause misbehaviour although these could be difficult to identify and plan for. In the classroom, this child may struggle to concentrate on either the task or the adults. He or she would benefit from lots of nurturing activities before misbehaviour starts. Also, it is important to give clear boundaries and to be reliable and consistent. This child may be difficult to reason with or discipline when emotions are heightened in the middle of a challenging situation; he or she is more likely to respond appropriately if allowed some time to calm down first. A 'Behaviour Safe' risk assessment may be appropriate. Teachers receive 'Behaviour Safe' training to enable them to do this.

8. Whole-Class / Whole-School Approaches

For the overwhelming majority of children, some whole-school or whole-class strategies and a caring, open school culture are sufficient to build their resilience and meet their mental and emotional needs most of the time. We use a range of strategies to build resilience and support children's wellbeing, including the following.

- Teachers may use a range of resources, materials and programmes that support the children in developing their aspirations and help them to take

responsibility for their own learning, achievements and behaviour. For example, children are taught about learning behaviour explicitly in lessons. Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) includes work on safety, friendship, bullying and social behaviour. This may be complemented by elements of good practice from programmes that develop resilience, leadership skills and personal responsibility, such as the concept of 'comfort zones', identifying your own strengths and setting personal goals. This learning promotes resilience in children. We promote good learning behaviour and resilience in further ways, including weekly certificates for demonstrating good learning behaviour and displays in every classroom. This may also include labels about children's learning behaviour on displays of exemplar work; and the use of a learning behaviour focus for the week. Teaching children explicitly about the characteristics of good learning, including that it is okay to make mistakes and take risks, will help to build resilience and equip children for life beyond the classroom.

- At St Mary's, we understand that a common and consistent use of language around behaviour is essential in creating clear boundaries to learn how to behave. The use of common language enables pupils to recognise and take responsibility for their own behaviour and their learning. Staff members and pupils are encouraged to refer to the language of:
    - Any agreed classroom rules
    - The School Rules devised by the School Council
    - 'Big Ideas for Learning Behaviour' – **FOCUS**, **PERSEVERE** and **REFLECT**

  Teaching and talking about the idea of perseverance explicitly is particularly important for developing resilience.
- Teachers' long-term plans for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) are informed by guidance from PSHE Association and published on the website. Teachers have designed the PSHE curriculum collectively to ensure that it is progress and cohesive. The PSHE curriculum covers aspects of personal development, such as developing resilience and managing change. The school uses a published scheme to teach Relationships & Sex Education consistently and coherently across the whole school. Through this whole-school scheme, pupils develop their sense of identity and build positive, respectful relationships. These consistent approaches help pupils to understand their own physical and mental health and build resilience as they move through the school. Teachers are also guided to use the 'Resilience Framework' (see Appendix 4) to supplement their PSHE long-term planning when they feel it is relevant or particularly supportive of a class, group or individual. Aspects of the Framework make ideal themes for PSHE lessons and complement both the school's Christian values and our approach to teaching about learning behaviour. For example, 'understanding boundaries and keeping within them' is an appropriate lesson for the beginning of the school year when the children within classes are helping to devise class rules. The children's version of the Resilience Framework and an interactive version, which gives extra information, research and ideas about each section, are saved on the 'Staff Shared' network drive in the 'Mental Health & Resilience' folder. The Resilience Framework approach is taken from www.boingboing.org.uk, where many more useful resources are available. The version for children was adapted by Marton Primary School, Blackpool.
- Children are taught explicitly about emotional wellbeing and basic information about how their emotions can affect their behaviour as part of the PSHE curriculum. They learn to recognise when they are feeling anxious or angry so that they can then start to take responsibility for self-regulating. Methods

for self-regulating and self-soothing may include keeping a diary; using a feelings chart; taking time for personal reflection to think about why they are upset; and breathing exercises to calm down and give thinking time. Through PSHE, children in Key Stage 2 are given basic information about the brain, including which parts of the brain are for rational thinking (neocortex), for emotions (limbic brain) and instinctive responses (reptilian brain). They learn that in stressful situations, people may go into 'fear, fight or flight' mode and may not be using their rational, thinking brain. Children are taught to visualise this using the **'hand model' of the brain** which may help them to recognise when they are about lose control so that they can begin to develop self-regulating strategies. For further information about the 'hand model', see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_dxnYhdyuY and https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gm9CIJ74Oxw. Naming and discussing the brain and how they respond to situations can help children to understand and manage their feelings.

- Adults are aware of a range of resources that can be used to support children's emotional wellbeing (see Appendix 1). As well as planned lessons as part of the curriculum, adults will use resources and learning activities to be responsive when classroom life seems to have become particularly stressful or unhappy.
- All children are encouraged to be reflective, for example through their responses to Collective Worship, which are gathered for class Worship books. Reflection is encouraged through a range of quiet, calm activities, including visualisation and mindfulness. Staff members are encouraged to use 'relaxation scripts' (see resources in Appendix 1) and music to create a calm environment and culture. Ultimately, the aim is that children will be able to use these techniques themselves to self-regulate their feelings and behaviour.
- It is important to establish regular routines and boundaries in the classroom. These are made clear to children through the use of displays and visual timetables. When routines change, we make every effort to warn children in advance and we are mindful of the impact this may have on individual children and the class dynamic.
- Adults relate to children in a caring compassionate way, reflecting and modelling the school's Christian values. Adults are expected to be empathetic and this quality is also strongly encouraged in children when dealing with a difficult situation. When resolving a problem, children will be brought together to allow the opportunity for openness and empathy, if the adult feels this is appropriate. The staff Code of Conduct strongly discourages adults from shouting at children except in extreme circumstances. We adopt a calm, consistent and respectful manner when talking to children, which both models the behaviour we expect from them and helps to diffuse potentially confrontational situations. Adults are careful about the language used with children and avoid being sarcastic or belittling them.
- The school's culture and the way relationships are developed are influenced by the principles of PACE (developed by Dan Hughes, psychiatrist). PACE stands for Playfulness, Accepting, Curiosity, and Empathy. When dealing with misbehaviour, adults separate the behaviour from the child. Using careful language, it is made clear that it is the behaviour that is not acceptable rather than the individual. Staff members show curiosity about children and make an effort to get to know them. For example, we celebrate children's achievements outside school in termly achievement assemblies and we use activities designed to help us find out about children's interests in transition sessions at the beginning and end of academic years.

- Adults are mindful of the times when children can be overwhelmed or that can be triggers for emotional responses and misbehaviour. For example, transitions, such as when children need to queue, get changed, wash hands for lunch or move around the building, can be times when misbehaviour is most likely to occur. Adults plan for and manage these times carefully to minimise problems, such as ensuring that particular children are not together.
- Good classroom management ensures that children are challenged but do not feel threatened. For example, questions are differentiated and targeted carefully. Children are rewarded for success but not humiliated by failure. Instead, they are supported with steps to help them achieve in the future. Feedback is primarily given through live-marking during the lesson. Marking and feedback dialogue in children's books is supportive, noting what children have achieved and moves them on to the next steps in their learning in a positive manner. Learning is sufficiently stimulating and challenging, with extension work as required, but tasks are presented in ways that are structured and achievable with clear expectations.
- The school's Christian values are an essential part of daily school life. Every classroom has a Christian values display. Through Collective Worship, we study a different value each half term and reward children who demonstrate these values in their everyday behaviour and relationships. This moral foundation helps to give children a 'secure base' and prepares them for life beyond school. The values are taken from the 'Roots and Fruits' document, which sets out assemblies to be used in school. The values include 'courage', 'hope', 'perseverance', 'forgiveness' and 'compassion', which complement aspects of the Resilience Framework, such as 'Being brave', 'Instil a sense of hope' and 'Remember tomorrow is another day'. Therefore, these principles are constantly reinforced through PSHE lessons, Collective Worship and classroom displays.
- We develop compassion and empathy through activities that encourage children to reflect on others' positive qualities and achievements. For example, children may write compliments or certificates for one another during class Worship.
- Adults foster a classroom culture in which it is okay for children to be open and share their worries, for example by using a 'worry box' for children to seek help. In most cases, children with anxieties are supported by the Pastoral Support Worker, who shares with them a procedure for seeking help by putting their name in the 'worry monster' in the Pastoral Support Room. It is absolutely essential for adults to be honest with children. For example, adults must be clear that they cannot keep secrets and may need to pass a child's worry onto someone else if it is a safeguarding concern. Also, adults need to be honest about the fact that they may not be able to 'solve' all the worries that children have. They may or not be able to 'solve' a problem but just talking about it may help it to feel better. If children feel that adults have not been honest or trustworthy, then this could have a very detrimental effect on their wellbeing.
- St Mary's is a **THRIVE** school. This means that we use the THRIVE approach to support children, for example by validating their feelings and offering experiences and opportunities that encourage talk, interaction and social and emotional development. All children benefit from access to a THRIVE Practitioner and from other staff members' understanding of the approach.

9. Supporting Individuals

Fostering an open, compassionate and empathetic culture, in which children are encouraged to be reflective and resilient, will be sufficient to support most children, most of the time.

However, when an individual child does not respond to whole-class approaches or presents with more significant problems, it is important to identify this and to take positive action to meet that child's needs. It is essential that staff members **intervene at an early stage** if they have concerns about the welfare of an individual.

The support that adults in class may provide for individuals includes:

- Using emotions or feelings charts to help the child identify how they are feeling at different times in the day;
- Keeping a diary about relationships, mood or wellbeing;
- Keeping a diary or memory book focused on positive experiences, events or relationships;
- Liaising with parents, e.g. through a home-school book, and agreeing strategies to be used at home and school for consistency, such as sharing two good things with a parent at the end of each day;
- Building in breaks so that the child does not become over-whelmed;
- Agreeing a safe space where the child can go for time-out or to think (the teacher and child should agree boundaries for how time-out should be used);
- Agreeing strategies with the child, e.g. how to feel calmer, so that children retain some control over how to manage their wellbeing;
- Giving consideration to the possible underlying causes of children's behaviours – not just *what* they are doing but *why* they are doing it – staff members should allow children the opportunity to reflect on their actions;
- Use risk assessments and behaviour plans in order to plan for changes in routine, managing transitions or supporting children to cope with other known triggers. When a risk assessment has been completed, this is shared with all adults who work with that child;
- Use the 'Resilience Framework' (see Appendix 4) to help identify if the child's wellbeing is affected by any of their needs not being met. The Framework encourages adults to consider a child's emotional needs more broadly.

Staff members will discuss with school leaders, the Pastoral Support Worker or the Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator (SENDCo) the strategies that they will use to meet the needs of an individual.

Pastoral Support Worker

If strategies used in class do not have a significant impact on the individual's wellbeing, the class teacher may refer the child to the school's Pastoral Support Worker for individual or small-group support. Teachers should use the internal referral form to make their concerns clear. The Pastoral Support Worker may:

- Communicate with parents to share concerns and find out more about changes in the child's life and how the child presents at home;
- 'Check in' with the child on a regular basis to give them the time and opportunity to share their worries;
- Meet the child regularly to provide planned support, e.g. to improve self-esteem;
- Work with the child in a small group, e.g. on developing friendships;
- Arrange for the child to attend a lunch time nurture group, which is led by a staff member.

THRIVE Practitioner
Teachers undertake a low-key assessment of all pupils each term. This helps to identify individuals for support and intervention. Planned interventions then assist with children's emotional and social development. The THRIVE Practitioner may work with individuals or small groups through practical, hands-on and playful activities. The THRIVE Practitioner may also provide a 'soft' start for children who require support with transition at the beginning of the school day. As well as timetabled and planned interventions, the THRIVE Practitioner may also respond to pupils' needs as they occur, providing a safe space in the THRIVE room and opportunities for calming activities and reflection. The THRIVE Practitioner is also trained as an ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant).

Service Children's Champion
Our Service Children's Champion helps to support our military children and families at St Marys. Putting this support in place reflects the importance of service children within our school community. They make a hugely valuable contribution to our school and we want to make sure that we look after their particular needs. The Service Children's Champion liaises directly with parents and other staff members to ensure that service children are well supported and understood. The Service Children's Champion also meets regularly with service children, exploring their wellbeing and other needs and providing support as appropriate. The Service Children's Champion is also trained as an ELSA.

Liaising with External Agencies
Where concerns about a child's wellbeing are very serious or internal school support has had limited or no impact, then the school will liaise with external professional agencies. As appropriate, the Pastoral Support Worker, Headteacher and SENDCo will consult with one another and agree the best approach. They may agree to undertake the following referrals:

Referral / Agency	***Referral Completed By:***
School Nursing Team	Pastoral Support Worker
Common Assessment Framework (CAF) form with the parent in order to access multi-agency support and intervention from the Early Help Team	Pastoral Support Worker / Headteacher
Counselling / therapy through a paid-for / external service, such as YMCA or 4YP	Pastoral Support Worker
Emotional Wellbeing Hub referral	Pastoral Support Worker
Letter for parent to take to GP	Pastoral Support Worker / Headteacher / SENDCo

Financial Commitments
The school is dedicated to supporting wellbeing and we recognise that to genuinely address the personal needs of members of the school community requires careful resource management and financial commitment. The school is committed to:

- Employing a Pastoral Support Worker, who takes a lead on supporting pupils' mental health;
- Employing a THRIVE Practitioner, who takes a lead on supporting pupils' emotional and social development;
- Employing a Service Children's Champion, who takes a lead on supporting pupils from military families;
- Including an allowance in the budget each year for support from play therapists / counsellors;
- Including an allowance in the budget each year for a staff counselling service.

10. Policy Links

This policy should be used in conjunction with the school's policies for Child Protection & Safeguarding, Behaviour, Anti-Bullying and the staff Code of Conduct.

Appendix 1 – Useful Resources

Websites:

www.boingboing.org.uk (a range of supportive materials, including the Resilience Framework)

www.anxietyuk.org.uk (helpline – 08444775774)

www.childline.org.uk (help for children – 08001111; help for adults concerned about a child – 08088005000)

www.whole.org.uk (campaigns about stigma related to mental health)

www.mentalhealth.org.uk (research, reports and information)

www.papyrus-uk.org (prevention of young suicide)

https://theymca.org.uk/support-advice

https://youngminds.org.uk

www.samaritans.org

Books:

Attachment in the Classroom – Heather Geddes

Inside I'm Hurting – Louise Bomber

The Relaxation and Stress Reduction Workbook for Kids – Lawrence ShapiroRelax Kids: The Magic Box – Marneta Viegas

A Volcano in My Tummy: Helping Children to Handle Anger – Eliane Whitehouse & Warwick Pudney

Helping Children with Loss – Margot Sunderland

Sitting Still like a Frog – Eline Snel

The Huge Bag of Worries – Virginia Ironside

The Dot – Peter H. Reynolds

Something Else – Kathryn Cave

In My Heart: a Book of Feelings – Jo Witek

Angry Arthur – Hiawyn Oram

Appendix 2

St Edmundsbury and Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust

St Mary's Church of England Primary School

Workload and Wellbeing Statement

Introduction

The wellbeing and workload of staff members is taken seriously in all schools in the St Edmundsbury & Ipswich Diocesan Multi Academy Trust (MAT). The Church of England is committed to promoting "life in all its fulness" and all schools have links to local churches, clergy and the Diocesan education team, who support wellbeing in schools as part of our Christian care for staff and pupils. Leaders in the MAT and each individual school have taken positive action to reduce workload and support staff wellbeing. The MAT has established a working group of Headteachers to review and address these matters across all MAT schools, as well as undertaking a MAT-wide wellbeing and survey, the results of which have been shared with schools. While recognising the importance of supporting staff members, it is essential to take into account the entitlement of all pupils to a high standard of education.

This statement should be reviewed and agreed by Local Governing Bodies, with school-specific amendments as appropriate.

Agreed Actions

All MAT schools will implement the following strategies to reduce workload and support wellbeing.

MAT

- Facilitate regular meetings of the Headteacher working group on workload and wellbeing.
- Arrange and purchase a whole-MAT subscription to the Employee Assistance Programme.
- Require the submission of summative assessment data no more than once per term at the end of term.
- Include staff workload and wellbeing as a standing agenda item for Headteachers' meetings.
- Facilitate networking opportunities in order that staff members from across the MAT can share resources and expertise, such as shared PD Days; subject leader networks and time for planning themed activities. This will include making appropriate use of Zoom & Team Meetings for CPD, network and staff meetings.

- Organise wellbeing support meetings for Headteachers.
- Encourage Headteachers and staff to access appropriate wellbeing events, such as those organised by the Diocese.

Local Governing Bodies

- Local Governing Bodies will consider and adopt the MAT statement about workload and wellbeing.
- Identify a named Governor to monitor and support staff wellbeing.
- Include wellbeing as a standing agenda item for the Local Governing Body.
- Ensure that all staff are offered the opportunity to take part in a MAT survey about staff workload and wellbeing at least annually, with results reviewed by Governors. Governors should also consider additional ways of consulting and supporting staff members and monitor to ensure that the school has fostered a supportive ethos and culture.
- Have regard to the workload and wellbeing of the Headteacher, particularly in relation to meeting times and duration, and encourage them to access appropriate wellbeing support.

Senior Leaders

- Identify a named 'Wellbeing Champion' within the staff team to lead on initiatives that reduce workload and support wellbeing.
- Establish a small working group to review and monitor workload and wellbeing.
- Provide subscriptions, schemes of work and resources, in consultation with relevant staff members, in order to reduce the burden of planning, such as Ark Mathematics Mastery; No Nonsense Spelling; Get Set 4 PE, Hamilton plans etc.
- Encourage teachers to provide feedback for pupils primarily through 'live marking' so that the burden of marking after lessons is reduced.
- Senior leaders require submission of summative data no more than once per term in line with MAT data collection.
- Publish the dates and purpose of staff meetings each term. Where there is insufficient business, do not hold a meeting and allow staff to manage their own workload.
- Do not hold staff meetings during the weeks when parent consultations are held.

Wellbeing Champion & Working Group

- Review surveys and devise an action plan at least annually.
- Lead on implementing the action plan to reduce workload and support wellbeing, reviewing impact at least annually.
- Lead a staff meeting on workload and wellbeing at least annually.
- Ensure that there is at least one social event annually that staff members can access, such as a meal. Organisation of this event can be delegated to other individuals or groups in school.

- Establish a wellbeing information and celebratory display

Staff Members

- Involve teachers in reviewing and agreeing formats for annual reports to parents.
- Involve teachers in reviewing and agreeing policies that impact on workload, especially policies on feedback and marking.
- Be responsible for one's own wellbeing, managing workload smartly and efficiently and sharing ideas that reduce workload.
- Have consideration for the workload and wellbeing of colleagues, being mindful of the impact of their own behaviour on others. Furthermore, staff members should share genuine concerns about colleagues' wellbeing with Senior Leaders, the Wellbeing champion or Governors.
- Contribute to a culture in which changes and problems are understood in a broader educational and pastoral context and require positive solutions.
- Participate in surveys regarding workload and wellbeing as requested.

Appendix 3 – **Staff Wellbeing Support**

Please see the information below, provided by our wellbeing partners: Care First and Inspire.

Care First

When you don't feel you can talk to friends, family or people at work, Care First is an independent and confidential counselling, help and support service available to you free 24 hours a day, every day of the year. Our team of professionally trained, qualified and BACP Accredited Counsellors are available 24/7 to offer support for personal or workplace related issues. As well as the headline issues surrounding mental health, our Care First counsellors are also trained in dealing with both work and home grievances, bullying and harassment issues, domestic violence, relationships at both home and at work and much more. No matter how big or small the problem may be, our counsellors are here for you to provide you with unbiased support away from the situation. Everyone has very individual needs for support, Care First provides short term focussed counselling, so the Care First Counsellor will assess your circumstances when you call to establish what the most appropriate form of support will be for you. It might be that you just need a brief conversation with the Counsellor that day, or you may benefit from a few more sessions.

Care First also offer an Information Service. A team of Information Specialists are available Monday to Friday, 8.00 am to 8.00 pm to answer any practical queries you may have. Whether you have a one-off question or a problem which takes longer to resolve, perhaps requiring ongoing help, we are here to help. Care First provides help with a range of practical issues including: legal enquiries, family and personal issues, benefits, health, housing, taxes and debt.

Visit: www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk to view our articles on health and well-being, or call 0808 168 2143 for in the moment support. Your User Details are *Username: SCC* and *Password: wellbeing*

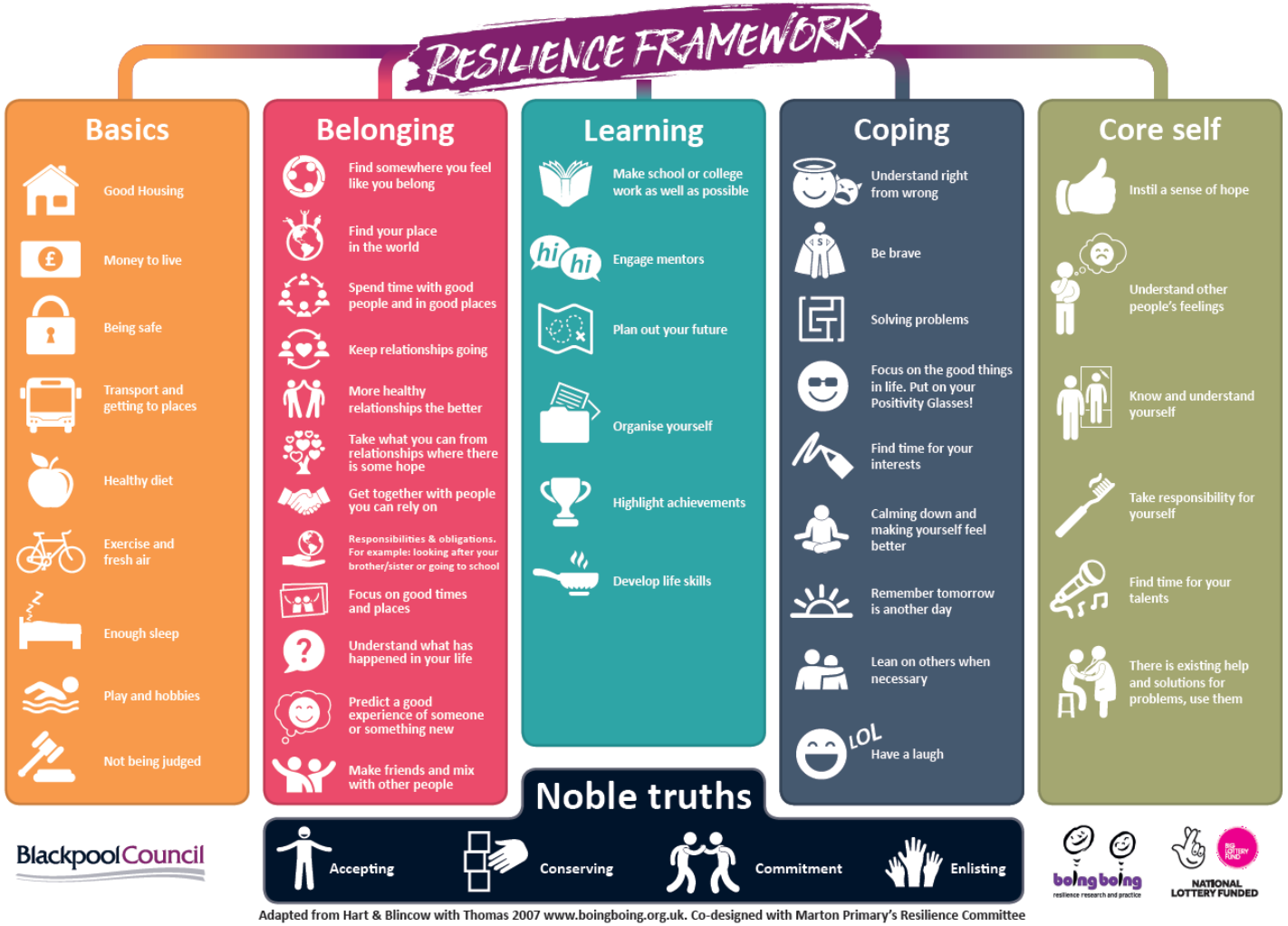
Inspire Counselling

The Head and Governors of your school recognise that much is demanded of you. Our **Staff Support Scheme** has been set up to provide confidential & professional support for staff at your school. It aims to provide you with a 'fast track' service that, as far as possible, minimises your wait for counselling.

All that you need do to access this scheme is to telephone or e-mail us, making it clear that you are part of the **School Staff Support Scheme** so that we can prioritise you. You will be offered an Initial Assessment appointment with our Counselling Team Manager. This provides an opportunity to meet us, talk through your situation & your desired outcomes. If it is agreed that counselling might help with your issues you will be offered a further 6 counselling sessions. If we consider that the services of ***Inspire*** are not appropriate for your needs, we will try to suggest an alternative service. Counselling sessions will be arranged for a mutually convenient time.

Tel: 01473 217694 Email: contact@inpirecounselling.org.uk Web: inspirecounselling.org.uk

Appendix 4 – The Resilience Framework *(Taken from www.boingboing.org.uk)*



Adapted from Hart & Blincow with Thomas 2007 www.boingboing.org.uk. Co-designed with Marton Primary's Resilience Committee

Appendix 5 – Key Website for Research, Advice & Support

https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/

Mentally Healthy Schools is a free website for primary schools, offering school staff information, advice and practical resources to better understand and promote pupils' mental health and wellbeing. Mentally Healthy Schools was launched in 2018 by the Duchess of Cambridge as a legacy of the Heads Together campaign.

One in 10 primary school children aged five to 10 has an identifiable mental health condition – that's around three children in every class. Among this age group, boys are twice as likely as girls to have a mental health problem.

The site is divided into four sections:

- **Teaching resources:** quality-assured lesson plans, assembly plans and PSHE resources to support and assist in teaching and learning about general mental health and wellbeing.
- **Risks and protective factors:** a look at the issues which can undermine a child's mental health, including bullying, family breakdown and more. Includes information on identifying pupils who may be at risk and practical resources to help support and build resilience.
- **Mental health needs:** focuses on children who are struggling or are mentally unwell. It helps schools understand your role and how you can help promote your pupils' recovery.
- **Whole-school approach:** helps school leaders develop the wider support across the school to help children, families and staff thrive.

The resource Library includes many useful resources, such as:

- 10 Step Guide to Mindful Listening
- 10 practical tips for school staff to help children settle when starting primary school
- 10 steps towards school staff wellbeing
- 10 ways for parents to help their children cope with change

A useful section on 'Mental Health Needs' includes information on:

- Anxiety
- Bereavement
- Eating disorders
- Low mood or depression
- Self-harm

There is a page devoted to having a whole-school approach, which includes sections on:

- Parent / carer engagement
- Children's voice
- Leadership and improvement