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Policy Statement

Mental health is 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. (World Health Organization)

In our school our Christian vision shapes all we do:



Christ Church School, Hampstead

A village school in London inspiring *life in all its fullness*

Jesus, The Good Shepherd, promises 'life in all its fullness'. (JOHN 10:10)

At Christ Church we believe every child and adult in our school should be able both to experience life in all its fullness now and to aspire to life in all its fullness in the future.

We all seek to inspire life in all its fullness for all in the school through:

- ensuring a **safe, welcoming and inclusive environment** for children and adults, where everyone is valued and has the opportunity to contribute and flourish;
- the pursuit of **academic excellence** in all areas, with a determined desire for each child to make the best possible progress as a result of high aspirations, hard work and the development of a personal love for learning alongside the highest-quality teaching and support;
- offering the widest possible **breadth of curriculum** both within school and through extra-curricular activities, enriched by the vast range of opportunities locally and across London;
- **creativity and positivity** in all we do, mixing innovation with tradition;
- planned and spontaneous opportunities for **spiritual development** through reflection, discussion and harnessing curiosity, as well as the provision, at the heart of our school life, of daily opportunities for prayer and worship;
- the development and modelling of **strong, positive and loving relationships**, with peers, amongst the school community and in the wider community;
- the promotion of **respect and compassion for ourselves and for all others**, by cultivating positive emotional and physical well-being, by celebrating the diversity within and outside our school and by encouraging all of us to be empowered global citizens, guided at all times by the example of Christ's compassion alongside the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- engendering a **sense of community and responsibility** for others and for our local and global environment and enjoying working together towards our common goals and expecting and valuing contributions from all.

All our work in school is brought to life through our Christian values of **compassions, creativity, courage, simplicity and community**.

In line with our vision statement this policy explains how the school promotes, for all children and adults, compassion for ourselves by cultivating positive emotional well-being. Without this compassion for ourselves and positive emotional well-being, children and adults will not be able to experience the *life in all its fullness* that we aspire to for all in our school.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and well-being. This policy is intended as guidance for all adults teaching, leading and working in the school including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy has been created using the Camden Model Mental Health and Well-being Policy (2022 version) and the Church of England Mental Health and Well-being Advice for Schools (2018). It has also been reviewed by the 'Change

Team' a group of adults representing SLT, teachers, TAs, Governors, parents and a Health and Well-being Consultant working for Camden Learning. This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical Conditions Policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and well-being overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need. This Policy should also be read alongside our Work / Life Balance statement (Appendix A), Safeguarding Policy, staff handbook and code of conduct and positive behaviour and anti-bullying policies.

The COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 and 2021 has had and continues to have an impact on many children and young people's mental health, as well as on their families and on staff members. Some will have experienced anxiety, stress, loss and bereavement and trauma that continue to have a lasting impact on their mental health and wellbeing.

The policy aims to:

- promote positive mental health and well-being in all staff and pupils
- increase understanding and awareness of common mental health difficulties and reduce the stigma sometimes associated with mental health
- alert staff and parents to early warning signs of poor mental health and well-being
- provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and well-being issues
- provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers
- describe the provision (both universal and targeted) that we have in place to support mental health and well-being

We pursue these aims using both universal, whole-school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and well-being, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and well-being policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and well-being issues.

Responsibilities

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the positive mental health of pupils. Staff with a specific, relevant remit include the Headteacher/Designated Safeguarding Lead, Mental Health Lead, SENDCo and PSHE Lead.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or well-being of a pupil should speak to the Headteacher in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by SENDCo or Headteacher. Please see the SEND policy for more information.

Monitoring and Evaluating

The implementation of this policy will be monitored through a number of activities:

- SLT will regularly review training needs of the staff.
- Relevant topics will be brought to school council so that children's voice can be heard.
- Teachers will use circle time to investigate children's worries or concerns and ensure these are addressed appropriately.
- The school will draw on outside resources including Camden consultants and experts, Mental Health Hub, iMHARs, Educational Psychologists to review its practice.
- Discussion with Governors on Behaviour and Safety and Teaching, Learning and Standards committees

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years to ensure it is an accurate reflection of current best practice.

Our provision: Universal / whole school approach

The following section is about how we want to prepare children for coping with everyday stresses of life now and equip them for the future, so that they know what they can do to support their mental health and well-being. The emphasis is on prevention of mental health issues escalating. The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the scale of mental health difficulties and our aim is to reduce the stigma surrounding mental health to ensure that everyone feels able to ask for help if they need to be able to talk about their feelings and manage their emotions.

This section also includes information about the information and support available to all families and to all staff members.

1. Teaching and Talking about Mental Health and Well-being

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and 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 each cohort but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

The 'Happiness Project' has been developed by the school to teach about ten themes which support proactive strategies for positive mental health and well-being. The project has been run in full in 2016, 2018 and 2021 and in part in the intervening years and aims to explicitly teach children and adults about positive mental health and equip them with tools to support their well-being (See Appendix B).

Alongside direct teaching, other initiatives such as 'buddy bench', the use of worry boxes in classrooms, the practice of mindfulness, breathing techniques and displays will also support children's ability to help themselves through times of low mood or difficult situations and help them to build resilience.

2. Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. We will promote leaflets created by the Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families:

<https://www.annafreud.org/media/7198/supporting-mental-health-and-wellbeing-in-schools.pdf>

<https://www.annafreud.org/media/7228/tmh-parent-leaflet-final-all-approved-laid-out-for-web.pdf>

<https://www.annafreud.org/media/7653/3rdanna-freud-booklet-staff-wellbeing-web-pdf-21-june.pdf>

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

3. Working with All Parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health difficulties on our school website including a page of 'wellbeing tips' which is added to weekly. <https://christchurchschool.co.uk/wellbeing-tips/> and a range of parent workshops linked to mental health and well being topics
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information sessions
- 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

4. Training and the role of staff

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 pupils safe. Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our appraisal process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils. Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host or arrange additional training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health. Examples of training include Mental Health First Aid Training for all staff and using Educational Psychologists or Camden Consultants to deliver training tailored to the needs of the school.

An accountability framework has been created which shows how staff and other stakeholders share responsibility for well-being in the school. (See Appendix C). Our Mental Health Lead will be taking part in the national senior mental health lead training.

5. Staff well-being

The school recognises the importance of positive mental health and well-being for staff and each term has a staff well-being week with organised activities and a mindful approach to workload. The school has a work / life balance statement which aims to promote this balance (Appendix A).

The self-evaluation document, which forms part of the staff appraisal, includes a question so that staff can highlight any suggestions for improving the workplace with mental health in mind. Leaflets created by the Anna Freud Centre for Children and Families are displayed in the staffroom which include helpful websites indicating where to go to for further advice and support. A clear induction programme is in place to welcome new staff. Any personal issues of well-being are addressed in a sympathetic manner and with the support of the Governing Body. The school aims to be a flexible and supportive as possible, whilst always prioritising the children's well-being and learning. Where staff need additional support, they have access to both the Employee Assistance Programme and a confidential counselling, coaching and therapy service funded by the school and provided by the Brandon Centre. Information about how to access this service is displayed in the staff room.

Our provision: Specific / targeted approach

Some children will need extra support for dealing with mental health difficulties. The following section reflects on how the school can support early diagnosis of need and then support the child and family.

1. Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional well-being issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Headteacher.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Missing PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

2. Managing disclosures

If a pupil chooses to disclose a concern about themselves or a friend to a member of staff, the school's safeguarding procedures should be followed in accordance with our Safeguarding policy. The member of staff should respond in a calm, supportive manner and report to the Designated Safeguarding Lead as soon as possible. Working with parents, and the issue of confidentiality, will depend upon the nature of the disclosure. Where at all possible the child and parents will be involved in deciding the best path forward to support the child's well-being and mental health. This could include a referral to an external service such as CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) or to another appropriate source of support.

3. Individual Care Plans

An individual care plan will be created for any pupil causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This is drawn up with involvement from the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play
- Specific support strategies e.g. adult support in the playground

4. Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health challenges, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support or information.

Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is involved 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 doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend needs help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Appendix A

Staff work life balance and well-being statement

Background to this statement

Staff work life balance and well-being has been a longstanding priority at our school. This statement was originally discussed and written in consultation with staff as one of the 2008-2009 school improvement plan priorities as a result of feedback in the staff survey in May 2008. Following the staff and governors 'long term vision' day in June 2012, staff work life balance and well-being was included as a school improvement plan priority for 2012/13. This statement was reviewed as part of the school improvement work on this target. This statement was reviewed and amended further in 2016 with input from staff members and governors. This review included consideration of the DfE-commissioned independent reviews of teacher work load (data, marking and feedback, planning and resources). There was a further review of this statement in 2019 in the light of our reviewed school vision statement and our Mental Health and Well-Being Policy.

The most recent review of this statement took place in 2022, with input from staff and governors and took into account the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and the changes this period had brought about in working practices.

This statement runs alongside relevant statutory documentation and school policies including current policies on Pay, Appraisal and PPA.

Aim of our work-life balance and well-being statement

- To ensure that the school inspires *life in all its fullness* for the adults within our school by ensuring appropriate attention is paid to staff well-being.
- To ensure that the Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team, Governing Body, the whole staff team, members of the wider school community, including parents, and the Local Authority and Diocese acknowledge that staff work-life balance and well-being is an important issue for Christ Church School.
- To ensure that staff work-life balance and well-being issues are taken into account in a reasonable way in all short, medium and long-term school improvement planning, timetabling, staff deployment and task delegation, including in discussions with Local Authority and Diocesan advisors, inspectors and other outside consultants.

Agreed principles of our staff work-life balance and well-being statement

The entire staff team agree with the ethos and content of the school's vision statement and are prepared to work extremely hard so that all children and adults are able to both to experience life in all its fullness now and aspire to life in all its fullness in the future.

The staff team are the most important resource and asset of the school and therefore require and deserve care and attention to be paid to their well-being.

Work-life balance and well-being issues affect all members of staff, regardless of their role, hours, the age of children they work with or level of pay or responsibility. However, these issues may affect members of staff in different ways and to different extents.

Work-life balance issues affect different members of staff in very individual ways and will sometimes require personal action plans and solutions. The school leadership team and Governing Body will not seek to impose one particular method of managing work load on the staff team but acknowledge that different strategies may be successful for different members of staff.

Staff performance will be judged according to pupil progress, school improvement and other measurable outcomes, in line with the school's agreed appraisal policy, and will take no account of factors such as number of hours worked or extra time spent in school.

The Head Teacher and other members of the Senior Leadership Team have a responsibility to set an example of reasonable work life-balance. The Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body also have a responsibility to monitor staff members' work-life balance and adjust timetabling and allocation of tasks accordingly.

The teaching staff team agree that there will inevitably be times of greater and lesser work load throughout the school year and that some of these times may necessitate working longer hours, including in the evenings and at weekends.

When appropriate, whole school or individual professional development opportunities will include training in skills related to work-life balance and well-being issues. The school should create regular opportunities for staff to share successful strategies for managing work load. The school also recognises that dedicating time and resources to training appropriate staff to take on particular additional or different roles or tasks is a valuable way of addressing work load issues for other members of staff.

Individual members of staff should take their own part in taking responsibility for their own work-life balance, including monitoring their own working hours and how they spend their time, identifying and implementing possible personal improvements to their own working patterns and discussing work-life balance issues with the Senior Leadership Team.

The Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body acknowledge that in the interests of work-life balance and well-being, reasonable decisions will need to be taken to complete some tasks to a 'good enough' level.

Work-life balance and well-being strategies at Christ Church School

The school has in place several short- and long-term strategies to address staff work-life balance and well-being issues, some of which are listed below. The school aims to add to and amend the list of strategies in place, as necessary and appropriate.

The school's leadership and Governing Body acknowledge that they alone cannot address all school staff work-life balance and well-being issues but that the local and national agendas also have a considerable impact in this area.

Strategies currently in use:

Practical/organisational

- Efficient systems in place e.g. risk assessments, ordering resources, trip procedures
- Important dates for entire year set and shared at beginning of year – guidance on how to adapt planning to fit in with specific events and expectations clear
- High workload events spread out throughout the year
- Well-run and timed staff meetings
- Parents evenings at optimum time, taking into account staff feedback
- IT improvements and continuing investment
- Secure remote access to the school IT system from teachers' homes using laptops loaned from school
- Effective administrative support
- Teaching assistants' time spread throughout the school to support all teachers and classes
- Additional hours of TA admin support time, including specifically for admin support for homework
- Timetabling of lunch time supervision staff to lessen the need for other staff to cover lunch as far as possible
- Computer network with range of saved, shared documents to use and adapt

'Extras', praise, thanks and time out of class

- Sharing positive ideas and achievements in meetings
- Staff well-being week each term, including no staff meeting or class assembly and staff social/well-being activities
- Monday fruit in the staff room
- Appreciation of staff effort and time – thank yous, 'treats', Governors pay for tea/coffee and school lunches for staff members etc
- Lunch time supervisor staff lunch at Christmas
- Flexibility over unpaid leave when appropriate
- Flexibility and understanding of personal circumstances
- 'Go home early' days for staff in run up to Christmas
- Blocks of time for PPA: regular and effectively covered, with provision for work space
- Curriculum/leadership time for specific curriculum/leadership tasks when appropriate
- Staff social events – range of different events to include all staff
- Planned absences for courses covered by high quality drama/dance workshops with no planning, marking or follow up
- Time out of class for class teachers for assessment/marking each term
- Allocated time out of class or allocated staff meeting time for Personal Plan/ Provision map writing
- Day out of class (and off site) for class teachers to write reports each year

Sources of support

- Supportive colleagues, willing to share ideas and time, including as part of professional development
- Approachable Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team
- Flexible use of INSET days when appropriate
- Annual, individual discussion with a member of the Governing Body to provide confidential feedback on the school, including work load issues
- Regular opportunities for informal and formal discussion of work life balance and well-being issues with leadership team
- Access to confidential support for staff members through the Employee Assistance Programme or the Brandon Centre confidential counselling, coaching or therapy sessions

The Senior Leadership Team, through formal and informal discussions with staff and analysis of the results of staff surveys, will evaluate and monitor the impact of this statement and the strategies currently in place.

This document was most recently updated in April 2022 and will be reviewed regularly to ensure it is an accurate reflection of practice in the school.

Appendix B

The Happiness Project Summary

The Happiness Project is a twelve-week positive mental health initiative which was delivered over a term. The first week is an opportunity to assess the children's current level of well-being, for example through conducting interviews with children or using the 'Children's Happiness Scale'. This gives a baseline by which the impact of the project can be measured. Next came ten themed weeks, each looking at a different way in which children could recognise and then have an impact on their own happiness. Each week the Head teacher introduces the theme in assembly and the teachers follow up with lessons and activities. Specialist workshops are organised to support several of the themes including mindfulness, breathing techniques and a range of 'try something new' activities. Parent workshops are also offered on subjects such as supporting children's positive self-image and resilience. Parents are also updated using weekly newsletters about the messages and activities at school.

Week 1—**Setting goals** and knowing the steps needed to achieve these.

Week 2—**Giving** can make the giver feel happy as well as the recipient.

Week 3—**Friends and Family** are an important source of happiness.

Week 4—**Trying something new** can be exciting and build resilience.

Week 5—**Emotions**: we need to be able to name them, recognise them and also focus on the positive ones.

Week 6—**Healthy body** including eating nutritious food, exercising, sleeping well and drinking lots of water are needed to maintain our well-being.

Week 7—**Simplicity (Mindfulness)**: being in the moment and appreciating the natural wonders around us, learning techniques for calming our moods.

Week 8—**Celebrating differences**: We are all unique and different and that is wonderful!

Week 9—**Resilience**: being able to bounce back when things go wrong.

Week 10—**Belonging**: being members of different groups can help us feel part of something bigger and give us meaning.

The final week consists of a celebration or review of some kind and includes taking messages of happiness into the wider world.

If you would like more information on how your school could deliver a similar project, then please do get in touch with us admin@cchurchnw3.camden.sch.uk.

Appendix C

Accountability framework for emotional well-being

Class teachers and other class staff may have a key role to play in children's well-being as they are likely to be the adults who children talk to, or who notice signs of children's well-being deteriorating. They might also be the first people that parents may talk to if they are concerned about their child's well-being. If required, they can take any concerns to the Head Teacher or Deputy Head and SENDCo. It might then be appropriate to refer to outside agencies such as CAMHs or Behavioural Support Outreach Team.

Adults have responsibility for their own well-being, however as an employer, the school (Head Teacher and Governors) contribute by promoting work / life balance and providing support in cases of mental health issues. As adults working together, we have a duty to support colleagues in dealing with the challenges of working in a school.

