STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING POLICY

'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full' John 10:10

THE ETHOS OF SALESIAN COLLEGE

It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning, as well as their physical and social health and their mental wellbeing in adulthood.

The department for Education recognises that, "in order to help their pupils succeed: schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy." Mental health is at the heart of living the Christian life. Trying to live the Gospel values such as the Beatitudes is key to happy mental health, an example being, "happy are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven,"(Mt 5:3) so this is why we promote Catholic life and all its elements. In school such activities as reflection and prayer in lessons, celebrating Mass, putting Christianity in action to make a difference to others are just some of the ways of promoting positive mental health.

However, school contribution should be considered as one element of a wider multi–agency approach.

DEFINITION OF 'MENTAL HEALTH' & 'MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTIES'

Mental health can be defined as "*the emotional and spiritual resilience which enables us to enjoy life and to survive pain, disappointment and sadness"*.

For the purposes of this policy, the term "mental health difficulties "refers to:

- Long term mental illnesses or psychiatric conditions - which may be classified as a disability under the Equality Act (2010).
- Emerging mental health problems which may develop into conditions which require ongoing support or intervention.
- Temporary debilitating mental health conditions or reactions which impact on a student's ability to fulfil their academic potential.

There are a range of conditions which come under the umbrella term "mental health difficulties," including anxiety, depression, eating disorders, bipolar mood disorder, schizophrenia (psychotic episodes), self-harm, obsessive compulsive disorder, and many more, as diagnosed by a relevant medical practitioner.

As a school we understand that some mental health difficulties are temporary due to exceptional circumstances, while others reflect emerging longer term mental health illness.
This policy recognises new information on mental health (paragraphs 4 and 34-38) which are listed below:

- Mental health is explicitly included in the definition of safeguarding, which now includes "preventing impairment of children's **mental** and physical health or development"
- New paragraphs have been added to say:

- All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation
- Only trained professionals should make a diagnosis of a mental health problem, but staff are well placed to observe children and identify those whose behaviour suggests they may be experiencing a mental health problem, or be at risk of developing one
- Abuse, neglect and other traumatic adverse childhood experiences can have a lasting impact, and it's key that staff are aware of how these experiences can affect children's mental health, behaviour and education
- Staff should take action on any mental health concerns that are also safeguarding concerns, following the College's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) or deputy
- There's government guidance available on preventing and tackling bullying and mental health and behaviour, as well as Public Health England guidance on promoting children's emotional health and wellbeing and lesson plans and teaching materials from Rise Above

In addition, the College in its development plan foci regards personal wellbeing as a key area to fully develop. The College has reviewed its commitment towards student mental health and engaged the services of a school counsellor from 2020.

AIMS OF THE POLICY

Poor mental health undermines educational attainment. Salesian College aims to offer important opportunities to prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience; providing students with inner resources that they can draw on as a buffer when negative or stressful things happen, helping them to thrive even in the face of significant challenges. Having a sense of belonging to a school is a recognised protective factor for mental health.

Salesian College aims to be a safe and affirming place for children where they can develop a sense of belonging and feel able to trust and talk openly with adults about their problems.

IDENTIFICATION

Behavioural difficulties do not necessarily mean that a child or young person has a possible mental health problem or a special educational need. Consistent disruptive or withdrawn behaviours can, however, be an indication of an underlying problem, and where there are concerns about behaviour there should be an assessment to determine whether there are causal factors such as undiagnosed learning difficulties, difficulties with speech and language or mental health issues.

Only a medical professional should make a formal diagnosis of a mental health condition. Schools, however, are well placed to observe children day–to–day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be suffering from a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

There are two other key elements that enable a school to reliably identify children at risk of mental health problems:

- effective use of data so that changes in students' patterns of attainment, attendance or behaviour are noticed and can be acted upon:

- And an effective pastoral system so that at least one member of staff knows every student well and can spot where poor or unusual behaviour may have a root cause that needs addressing.

The main types of mental health needs are:

- conduct disorders e.g. stealing, defiance, fire – setting, aggression and anti - social behaviour;
- emotional disorders e.g. phobias, anxiety states and depression; stress
- hyperkinetic e.g. disturbance of activity and attention;
- developmental disorders e.g. delay in acquiring certain skills such as speech, social ability or bladder control, primarily affecting children with autism and those with pervasive developmental disorders;
- attachment disorders e.g. children who are markedly distressed or socially impaired as a result of an extremely abnormal pattern of attachment to parents or major care givers; and
- other mental health problems including eating disorders, habit disorders post – traumatic stress syndromes, somatic disorders; and psychotic disorders e.g. schizophrenia and manic-depressive disorders.

MONITORING OF THE POLICY

The effectiveness of this policy will be monitored through: -

- Pastoral management meetings between, Safeguarding Team, Head of Year and Tutors then Head of Year and SLT.
- Speaking to students as to their wellbeing over a period of time.
- Discussion at school council / student voice meetings.

SUPPORTING STAFF WHO ARE WORKING WITH STUDENTS WITH MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES

Salesian College acknowledges that staff who are working closely with distressed students can themselves be placed under emotional strain and aims to increase the level of awareness and understanding amongst staff of issues involving the mental health of young people, in particular concerns with self-harm, eating disorders, depression and anxiety. The College will provide a range of opportunities for staff to access training in dealing with students with mental health problems, including opportunities to talk with other specialist professionals working with students with recognised mental health issues.

- Staffroom committee / Staff Forum
- Annual Staff Mental Health & wellbeing survey
- Creation of a Staff Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy
- Introduction of the role of SMHL who is also a member SLT
- Though the work of the staff mental health & wellbeing committee (meet every half term)
- INSET opportunities
- HR support

- Access to counselling

MONITORING, EVALUATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The monitoring and evaluation of this policy will be carried out by the Deputy Head (Safeguarding Lead) and reported as requested by Governors.

LINKED POLICIES

9.1 Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy;
9.2 Safeguarding Policy;
9.3 Anti-Bullying Policy;
5.6 SEND Policy;
9.6 Medical Needs Policy;
Staff Mental Health & wellbeing Policy
7.1 Health and Safety Policy

POLICY CONTROL	
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