



SAINT AUGUSTINE'S RC HIGH SCHOOL

DRAFT EMOTIONAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

POLICY

Date approved by Governors: October 2022
Review Date: September 2023

School Mission Statement

At Saint Augustine's we believe that every person is made and loved by God. This is why we respect one another. Within our school community our young people will learn to act justly, love tenderly and recognise God in their lives.

Our school helps families to educate their children in accordance with the principles and teachings of the Catholic Church in an environment which inspires, encourages and supports the development of our pupils through nurturing their gifts and talents.

Our school community will keep alive the memory of Jesus through the Eucharist and through the practice of our Faith. We want everyone at Saint Augustine's to experience the joy of the Gospel in their journey through school and beyond.

Together we will work to make a difference in our community and in the wider world. We follow the example of Saint Augustine by stepping out in faith and celebrating our reasons for living and hoping.

'Although the life of a person is in a land full of thorns and weeds, there is always a space in which the good seed can grow. You have to trust God.'

Pope Francis

School Ethos and Culture

This positive ethos is reaffirmed in all our communications to parents, prospective parents and carers. Behaviour policies have been developed to ensure that there is a balance between rewards and sanctions and pupils are made aware throughout the year of our high expectations of them and of how their positive behaviour will be rewarded and promoted. Our staff, at every level, give a high priority to our pupils' emotional health and well-being.

The World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing " a state of wellbeing 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 his or her own community."

Everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable. At times, anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop good mental health. The mental health of all children and young people, adults in schools, parents and carers and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of development, learning, achievement and experience. St Augustine's is committed to raising awareness, increasing understanding and providing a place where all pupils feel safe, happy and successful.

The Needs and Care of Vulnerable Children

All staff at St Augustine's RC High School follow relevant Department for Education guidance in order to identify children who are experiencing or who are at risk of experiencing behavioural, emotional or social difficulties.

The school has three designated senior members of staff who are responsible for Child Protection/Safeguarding. Vulnerable children, including those with specific behavioural, emotional or social difficulties can be provided with individual support plans and structured intervention to match their identified needs.

School staff continue to develop their expertise through professional development and liaison with external agencies. When working with other agencies to support and assist individuals and their families, the procedures are based on identified best practice.

Feedback provided by individuals and their families is regularly monitored to ensure that they feel the support they are offered is effective and appropriate.

The Curriculum

Teaching and learning about social and emotional skills is an integral aspect of our school curriculum. This is reinforced by extra-curricular provision ranging from Rainbows, which caters for young people who are experiencing loss, through to retreats, which are offered to all pupils and which focus on relationships and making a positive contribution to society.

Our approach as a school to Teaching and Learning and our related CPD provision for staff is underpinned by a holistic approach to the education of the individual as well as promoting positive social skills.

We provide a range of contexts in which our pupils are able to describe how they learn to explore, manage and express their feelings and are able to empathise with others.

Support and Advice in Times of Need

Our pastoral support system proactively enables pupils and staff to access advice, especially in times of need, crisis and other major life changes.

We ensure that all pupils and staff understand the pastoral system and are easily able to access it when required. This includes the school's Counselling Service, run by our own qualified and accredited school counsellor, who specializes in working with young people.

An additional layer of support is provided by our Pupil Support and Well-Being Room which caters for more pupils who have been identified as struggling to fully access and take advantage of school life. We have clearly identified routes of referral to these services for children and staff to enable everyone to be aware of how to seek help and assistance if the need arises. Access to this strand of our pastoral system is through a referral from the Year Leader, after consultation with other school staff. A panel meeting is held every week where the appropriate support is put in place and this could be - nurture, academic assistance and/or behaviour mentoring and can be offered to support a holistic approach towards emotional health and well-being. If further support is required we work with the Mental Health in Schools Team (MHST). These Mental Health Practitioners work for a period of time either in school or online with pupils. Parents/carers will be asked for permission before a referral is completed.

Resisting Stigma and Discrimination

The school has firm and effective procedures to respond to and combat potential stigma and discrimination. Clear policies have been formulated to take active preventative measures against all forms of stigma and discrimination including racism, sexism, homophobia and slurs against family background and social and economic circumstances, as well as criticism of personal characteristics and physical appearance. This ethos is reflected in all our working practice as well as in all our communications. Staff and pupils are made fully aware of these procedures and policies.

Confidence and Self-Esteem

A wide range and variety of extra-curricular activities are provided for pupils that offer them opportunities to take on responsibilities and engage in school projects which assist them in building confidence and self-esteem. These activities cater for all needs, abilities and interests of our school community. Throughout the year regular displays, communications to parents and school assemblies celebrate the positive activities, achievements and contributions to the community of our children. We encourage our Pupil Council, with elected membership and represents all year groups to bring forward any suggestions that could improve our pupils wellbeing. We have a reward system which recognizes positive behavior, personal and academic achievement, effort and other achievements. Our safeguarding ambassadors are available for pupils to speak to regularly.

Bullying

The school has a clear policy on anti-bullying which is owned, understood and implemented by the whole of our school community. The staff know their role and are given support by the school leadership team when this is requested. Our practice is to ensure prompt reporting to parents and carers of any concerns that are raised. We keep records of all bullying incidents and have a follow-up procedure in place which allows us to monitor the children involved in bullying incidents.

Confidentiality

The school follows standard Department for Education, Local Authority and Legal Services' advice on confidentiality issues in all aspects of practice. The need to protect young people is sensitively weighed against their rights as individuals to privacy and confidentiality. The over-riding principle in all decisions is that they are made with the best interests of the young person in mind and THEIR SAFETY is the most important consideration in any decision that is taken.