



# **Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

**2024-2025**



## **OUR TRUST'S PRAYER**

Heavenly Father

Let peace, friendship and love grow in our schools

Send the Holy Spirit to give:

Excellence to our learning

Love to our actions and

Joy to our worship

Guide us to help others

So that we may all

Learn, Love and Achieve, Together with Jesus.

Amen

## Our Christian Vision is:

*'Learning and growing together to achieve our best in the love of God'*

'Learning and growing together to achieve our best in the love of God' sums up our school vision and ethos that all children will have the opportunity to experience God's love and fulfil their potential across the curriculum, valuing themselves and others, living out our Christian values in order to make a positive difference in the world. This vision underpins our behaviour policy.

## School Aims

In order to prepare today's children for tomorrow's challenges, Rainford CE Primary Schools aims to achieve the following:

- Every child will be encouraged to understand the meaning and significance of faith, experience God's love and develop the spirituality to enable them to live out our Christian values of love, joy, peace, friendship, forgiveness, perseverance and justice
- Every child will achieve their full potential through being a highly motivated, resilient and independent learner who embraces new experiences, has confidence to tackle challenges and go onto develop a lifelong love of learning.
- Every child will value themselves as a unique individual with special qualities and strengths developing self-discipline and honesty; taking responsibility for their own actions and appreciating their ability to make a positive difference in the world.

- Every child will appreciate and respect others, celebrate differences between individuals and groups and respect and care for God’s creation and the environment.
- Every child will be encouraged to make healthy choices and appreciate the benefits of a healthy lifestyle.

In order to do this, we will constantly reflect the Christian ethos of our school in our relationships with our children, their families, our staff, the church and the wider community.

## Policy Statement

At Rainford CE Primary School, we are committed to promoting a whole school approach to positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all students, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows students’ voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Rainford CE Primary School’s whole school approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

## Aims

### **Our aims are:**

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

## Key Staff Members

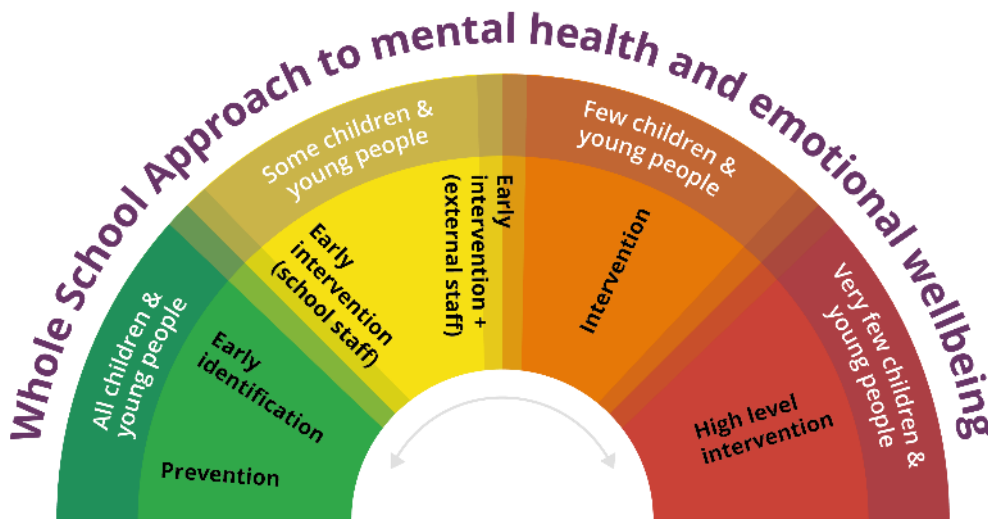
This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of students, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Designated Senior Mental Health Lead – Mrs. Rose Bradshaw

- School Commissioned Mental Health Staff – St. Helens Mental Health Support Team
- Designated Safeguarding Lead – Mrs Emma Shawcross
- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads – Mrs. Louise Thompson, Mrs. Rose Bradshaw
- Special Educational Needs Coordinator – Mrs. Rose Bradshaw
- PSHE Coordinator – Mrs. Victoria Rhodes

## Levels of Need

- If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of student, in the first instance they should speak to the Senior Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead (Mrs Rose Bradshaw). Please refer to the school’s mental health pathway (example attached).
- If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school’s child protection procedures should be followed.
- If the child presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.



**Green = Prevention and early identification.** This level is for all children and young people and represents the basic level of mental health awareness and support strategies that all children and young people need for positive emotional wellbeing.

**Yellow = Early Intervention.** At this level of need children/young people will be showing early signs of distress that may be the start of an emerging mental health issue. Short-term interventions that build coping strategies are given to prevent these issues from developing – small changes to prevent bigger challenges.

**Orange = Intervention.** At this level children and young people will need more specific support as their mental health problem will be more developed and significantly impacting their day-to-day life. There may also be other complexities such as trauma or neurodevelopmental conditions. Interventions are chosen to suit the needs of each child/young person and will vary in modality, and intensity.

**Red = High Level Intervention.** At this level children and young people will need high-level support for mental health conditions that require support from Alder Hey Fresh CAMHS. Children may be at crisis point, require medication, or several different types of specialist support.

## Individual Care Plans – Helping Hands Plans

When a pupil has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation (orange/red level), an Individual Care Plan will be implemented using our Helping Hands Plan system and proforma. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.

This plan should include (where relevant):

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- For pupils who self-harm or have had suicidal ideation it is helpful to draw up a safety plan with them. An example of this can be found withing the Serious suicide awareness training.
- The role of the school and specific staff

## Promotion of Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing

Promoting positive mental health is the responsibility of everyone in our school, and we foster an environment that leads to inclusion, diversity and respect.

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum and through workshops delivered through external agencies (e.g. Barnardos Workshops on Social Emotional Literacy delivered to all year groups).

We will follow the guidance issued by the PSHE Association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively: <https://pshe-association.org.uk/guidance/ks1-4/mental-health-guidance>

Incorporating this guidance into our curriculum at all stages allows us to promote students' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of students' own emotions as well as those of other people.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing students who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting students to support any of their friends who are facing challenges.

## Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards, common rooms, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure students understand:

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

## Recognising signs and symptoms of mental distress

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should alert Mrs Rose Bradshaw (Senior Mental Health Lead) or the Designated Safeguarding Lead (Mrs. Emma Shawcross).

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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
- Skipping 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

## Targeted Support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing adverse mental health. For example: those who are in care; young carers; those who have had previous access to CAMHS; those living with parents/carers with a mental illness; and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with school nurses and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working closely with Liverpool City Council Children's Services, Liverpool CAMHS and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;
- Identifying and assessing in line with the Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT), children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers. Agree an Individual Care Plan as the first stage of a 'stepped care' approach;
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs;
- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including Liverpool CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality;
- Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

Our school is ACE aware and implements trauma-informed practice.

## Managing Disclosures

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded as soon as possible (immediately if there is a risk of harm) using CPOMS, including:

- date
- name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation
- agreed next steps

This information will be shared with Mrs Rose Bradshaw (Senior Mental Health Lead) and Mrs Emma Shawcross (Designated Safeguarding Lead).

## Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the student. We will tell them:

- who we are going to tell
- what we are going to tell them
- why we need to tell them
- when we're going to tell them

Ideally, consent should be gained from the student first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as students up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

Parents must always be informed, but students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, a timescale of 24 hours is recommended to share this information before the school makes contact with the parents/carers.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, child protection procedures should be followed.

## Working with Parents and Carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.
- Who should be present – students, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that, for a parent, hearing about their child experiencing mental health difficulties can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agree are added to the pupil's record on CPOMS and an Individual Care Plan (Helping Hands Plan) created if appropriate.

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.);
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners; and
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

## Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how.

To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the student who is suffering 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
- 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

## Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep students safe. Mrs. Emma Shawcross has received Mental Health First Aid Training.

We will host relevant information on our website for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. Regular training can be accessed through

<https://www.liverpoolcamhs.com/training/>

The MindEd learning portal also provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more students.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health. In January 2025, all teachers will receive Barnardos PATHS training.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Mrs Rose Bradshaw (Senior Mental Health Lead) who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.



## Rainford CE Primary School - Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Pathway

