

# **St Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy**



## **Pupil mental health and wellbeing policy**

We commit ourselves to love,  
respect and serve one another  
as disciples of Jesus Christ

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# 1. Policy statement

At St Bede's Catholic Voluntary Academy we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

This policy was written in consultation with our wellbeing officer, safeguarding lead, PSHCE lead and SENDco.

Staff of St Bede's said the following:

Mental health is how you feel emotionally, these can be positive emotions and negative emotions. These emotions can then have a physical reaction, for example stress, anxiety and feeling ill.

St Bede's staff understand the importance of finding positive methods of looking after their own mental health and to remain as mentally healthy as possible. It is important for everyone to determine what helps to improve and maintain their own mental health and wellbeing.

At St Bede's there is a Staff-Mental health champion for staff drop ins, CMAT mental health support, and CPD for mental health. For student's mental health, staff are aware of several different supportive interventions including PSHCE lessons, assemblies, 1-1 and group interventions and external agency support.

The voice of students was obtained to support this policy.

Students' of St Bede's are aware that mental health can be positive and negative, and everyone has mental health. Students are able to identify strategies of how to look after their own mental health and wellbeing with examples of spending time with loved ones, exercising, participating in sports and hobbies they enjoy, drawing and listening to music to name a few. Students are able to identify support in school that is offered for mental health and wellbeing and PSHCE lessons, and assemblies for whole school support. Students vocalised that the student well-being surveys were a positive system for them to offer their voice on their own and others mental well-being. Students were able to identify where to seek further support if this is needed via their trusted adults, form tutor, head of year and the safeguarding team.

# 2. Why mental health is important

This policy is intended to:

- Provide guidance to school staff on our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across all communities in the school
- Inform pupils and parents about the support that they can expect from the school in respect of supporting mental health and wellbeing

Read this policy in conjunction with:

SEND policy

Behaviour policy

Anti-bullying policy

Safeguarding policy

- 3. Policy aims
- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school
- Create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion
- Foster a positive atmosphere in school, where pupils feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly

- Celebrate all of the ways pupils achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom
- Allow pupils to participate in forming our approach to mental health by promoting pupil voice
- Give pupils the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Spread awareness of the varieties of ways mental health issues can manifest
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Provide support to staff working with pupils with mental health issues
- Provide support and access to resources to pupils experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them

## 4. Legal basis

This policy was written with regard to:

- The Equality Act 2010
- The Data Protection Act 2018
- Articles 3 and 23 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

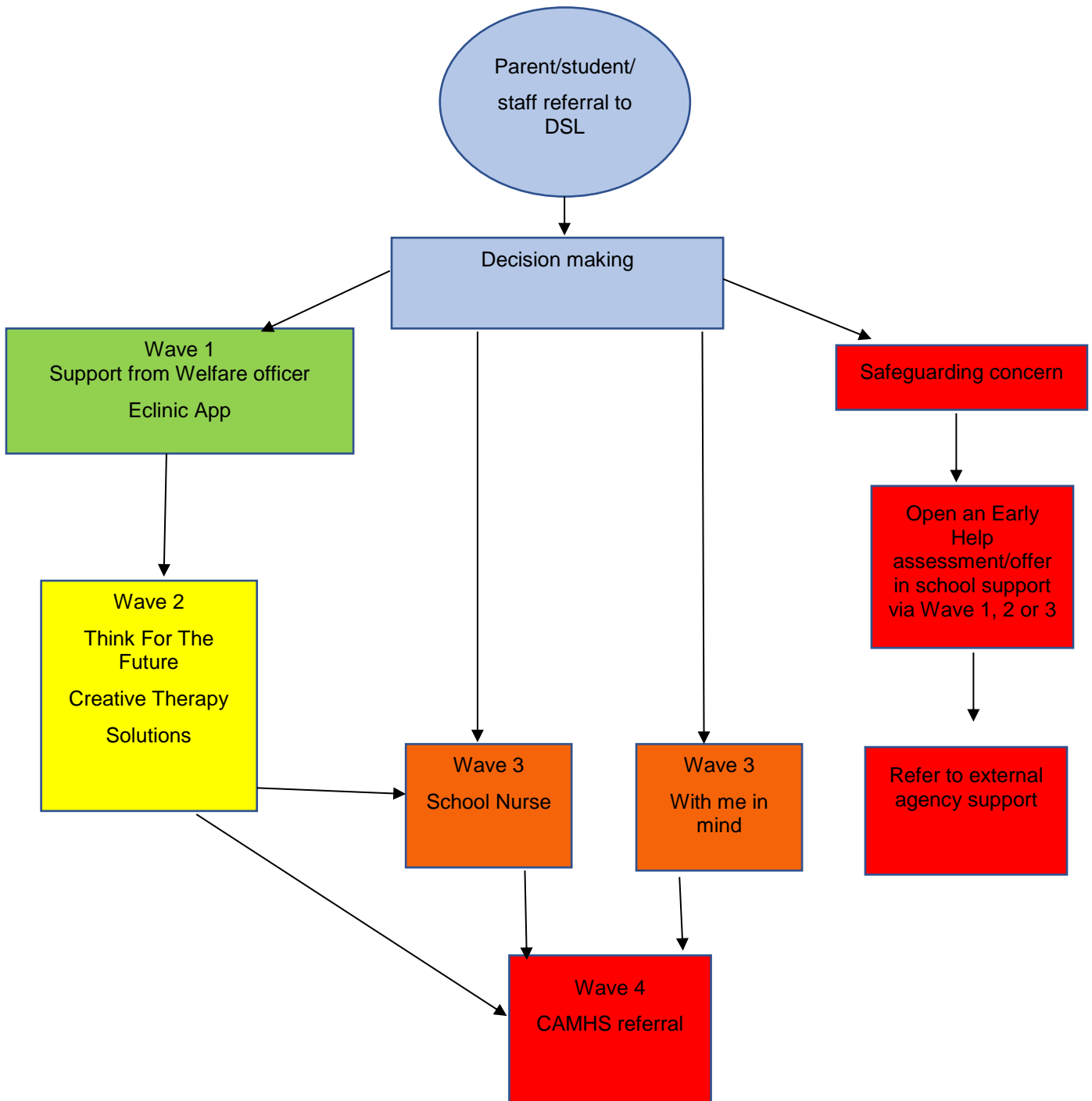
## 5. Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the safeguarding team via CPOMS and follow up with a conversation about the concern.

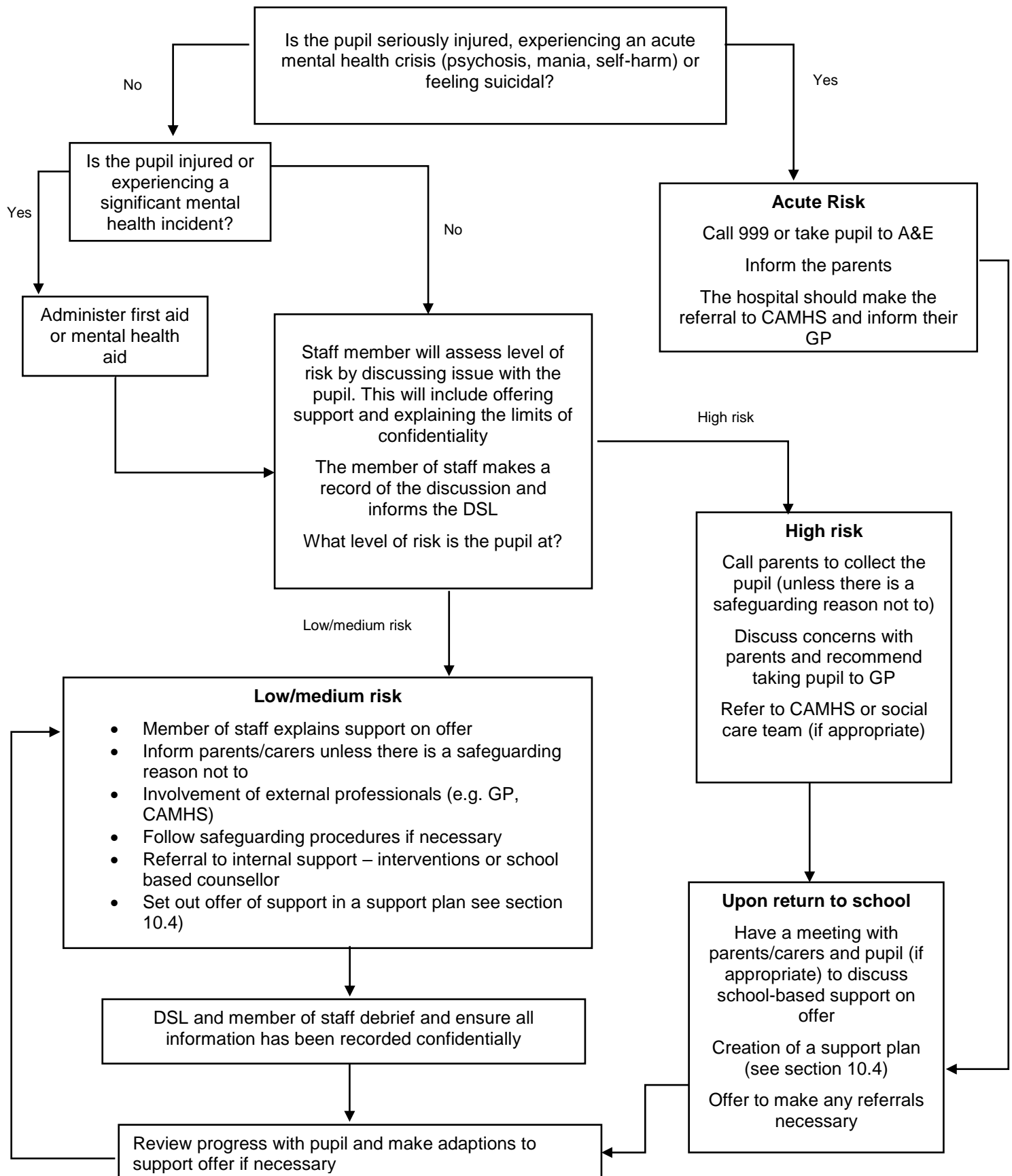
Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Headteacher
- Behaviour and inclusion lead
- Designated Safeguarding lead
- SENDCO
- Welfare officer
- Safeguarding officers

## Referral flow chart



## 6. Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



## 7. Warning signs

All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in mood or energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

## 8. Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the safeguarding team (As per policy). All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file on CPOMS.

When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

- The initials of staff who is making the record
- The full name of the pupil(s) involved will be linked on CPOMS
- The date, time and location of the disclosure
- The context in which the disclosure was made
- Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff

## 9. Confidentiality

Staff should not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret, instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the most appropriate support for the circumstances.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

- Who they will share the information with
- What information they will share
- Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents will be informed and consent will be obtained unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the safeguarding policy will be followed.

## **9.1 Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures**

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff offers support
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with the safeguarding team
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who you will share the information with and explain why you need to do this.
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure and share the information with the safeguarding team
6. The safeguarding officers will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

## **10. Supporting pupils**

### **10.1 Baseline support for all pupils**

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, the school offers support to all pupils by:

- Raising awareness of mental health and wellbeing support offered to all pupils in the school
- Signposting all pupils to sources of online support via the school website
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of the school
- Monitoring pupils mental health through focus groups and questionnaires
- Appointing a senior mental health lead with strategic overview of our whole school approach to mental health and well-being
- Making classrooms a safe place to discuss mental health and well being



## **10.2 Assessing what further support is needed**

If a pupil is identified as needing mental health support, the welfare officer/safeguarding officers will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to making an assessment and providing tailored support, as outlined in the referral flow chart. The school will offer support in cycles of:

- Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are
- Creating a plan to provide support
- Taking the actions set out in the plan
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

## **10.3 Internal mental health interventions**

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

### **Wave 1**

Support with the welfare officer

Directed to online support services

### **Wave 2**

Think for the future mentor support- group or 1-1 sessions

Creative therapy 1-1

Solutions sessions 1-1

### **Wave 3**

School nurse referral

With me in mind referral

### **Wave 4**

CAMHS referral (usually following WMIM consultation)

## **10.4 Individual support plan**

A pupil will be offered an individual support plan if this is deemed appropriate when determining support.

Individual support plans are written in collaboration with the pupil (if appropriate), their parent/carers, and any other relevant professionals.

The pupil's support plan will contain the following details:

- The SEMH concern (and its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments)

- The pupil's needs resulting from the condition
- Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs
- The level of support needed
- Who will provide the support
- Who in the school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

## 10.5 Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer the school provides, the school will make, or encourage parents to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- GP or pediatrician
- CAMHS
- Mental health charities (e.g. [Samaritans](#), [Mind](#), [Young Minds](#), [Kooth](#))
- Local counselling services

## 11. Supporting and collaborating with parents and carers

We will work with parents and carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

These conversations can be difficult, so the school will ensure that parents are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the conversation.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record.

If appropriate, a support plan will be created in collaboration with parents/carers (see section 10.4).

## **12. Supporting peers**

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be extremely challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

## **13. Signposting**

Sources of support will be displayed around the school and linked to on the school website, so pupils and parents are aware of how they can get help.

The school website highlights online sources for support for mental health

The Welfare officer will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

## **14. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness**

### **14.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE**

We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Pupils will be taught to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Keep themselves safe

For more information, see our PSHE curriculum.

### **14.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health**

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging pupils to disclose when they think their mental health is deteriorating

## **15. Training**

All staff will be offered training so they:

- Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

## **16. Support for staff**

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can be distressing for staff. To combat this we will:

Treat mental health concerns seriously and support staff experience own mental health concerns

- Offer the safeguarding and pastoral team supervision sessions through With me in mind
- Create a pleasant and supportive working environment
- Have regular well-being CPD sessions to promote staff wellbeing.

## **17. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by every two years. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.