St. Martin's Church of England (Aided) Primary School

> *'Serve one another in love'*
> *Galatians 5v13*

"St. Martin's School isn't just a school, it's a family. Firmly rooted in the Christian faith, the St. Martin's family will share the love of Christ with our diverse school community – all unique and special, made in God's image, with everyone welcomed and included."

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The aims of the policy are to:

- describe St. Martin's School's approach to mental health issues
- increase understanding and awareness of mental health issues so as to facilitate early intervention of mental health problems
- alert staff to warning signs and risk factors provide support and guidance to all staff, including non-teaching staff and governors,
- dealing with pupils who suffer from mental health issues
- provide support to pupils who suffer from mental health issues, their peers and parents/carers.

St. Martin's School's approach to mental health:

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines mental health as 'a state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.' This directly links with our school vision in supporting pupils to recognise their unique gifts and apply them in their everyday life, local and wider community successfully with love and tolerance.

Emotional health and wellbeing promotes school improvement and success in a various ways:
- Pupils are happy and engaged with their learning
- Pupils and staff have high esteem and resilience
- Improved standards in every subject
- Effective teaching
- Improved behaviour
- Improved attendance for staff and pupils
- Positive respectful relationships between pupils and staff

Lead members of staff
- DSLs (Mrs Barber, Mrs Plumpton, Mrs Cliffe, Mrs Newton)
- Mental health lead (Mrs Barber)
- Compass Buzz mentor (Mrs Murray)
- Thrive Practitioner (Mrs Garton)
- SENDCo (Mrs Cliffe)
- Staff wellbeing leads (Mrs Smith, Mrs Murray, Mrs Jones)

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Pupil Identification

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:
- All children are valued
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- Children feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued
- Bullying is not tolerated
- PSHE is taught regularly and consistently and gives children opportunities to understand emotions, feelings and learn key skills in how to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child should speak to any of the key members of staff mentioned in this policy.

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns to DSLs via CPOMs.

Possible warning signs include: (this is not an exhaustive list)
- 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
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Noticeable changes in appearance/behaviour/attitude
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretively
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Managing disclosures

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to knowhow to respond appropriately to a disclosure. If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'.

If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the safeguarding lead or deputies.

If the child 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 CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the DSLs/SENCO.

Curricular and Extra-curricular Support

We support the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils through:

- A strong school ethos which empowers tolerance and respect, including respect for difference and diversity
- Establishing clear rules, routines and expectations about behaviour
- Encouraging positive, caring and constructive relationships
- Having active listeners, including assistants and adults other than school staff to whom a child may turn
- Enhancing school and classroom layout with pupils in mind, facilities and resources, such as our sensory room
- the background of individual pupils and their physical, social and emotional needs
- Consistent support for vulnerable children and those with SEND from trained teams of pastoral, learning support, teaching assistants and other agencies where appropriate.

- A balanced curriculum with opportunities for intellectual, physical and expressive development
- Using a range of teaching styles such as Circle Time appropriate to pupils' age, ability and level of maturity
- Opportunities for pupil leadership through school council, worship leaders, eco club, school prefects and other roles
- Opportunities for reflection and spiritual development through art, literature and the RE curriculum
- Having nurture groups for general wellbeing as well as specific mental health, such as interventions dealing with anxiety or emotions

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 issues on our school website
- 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
- 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 coffee mornings
- 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 where appropriate

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 safeguarding training to enable them to keep students safe.

We will host relevant information on our school server for staff who wish to learn more about mental health and e-mail updates will be sent out by the Headteacher or SENDCo. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue. www.minded.org.uk

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 training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

<u>Helpful Websites</u>

Young Minds: http://www.youngminds.org.uk/for_parents
Childline: http://www.childline.org.uk
Mind: http://www.mind.org.uk/
NHS:
http://www.nhs.uk/livewell/mentalhealth/Pages/Mentalhealthhome.aspx
Mental Health Foundation: http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/
Anna Freud website: https://www.annafreud.org/
Heads together: https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/