



St Martin's School

Wellbeing and Mental Health Policy



Introduction

Good Mental Health is 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 their community. (World Health Organisation August 2014)
St Martin's School recognises that we have an important role, acting as a source of support and information to the school community.

Policy Aims

This policy sets out the School's approach to promote positive mental health and wellbeing and is designed to help staff to identify and support pupils in need of help and follow appropriate referral pathways and procedures. This policy must be read in conjunction with the First Aid Policy (when linked to a physical medical issue) Safeguarding Policy and SEND Policy. It has been written with regard to Keeping Children Safe in Education September 2023.

Responsibilities

All St Martin's School staff are responsible for fostering a culture which encourages pupils to openly discuss any issues / concerns they have, including any mental health issues. Additionally, the following staff members with a specific relevant remit include –

Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead – **Mrs Joanna Wilson**

SENDCO – **Mrs Vivian Davies**

Head and Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – **Mrs Samantha Mbah**

Deputy Head and DDSL – **Mr Daniel Guyster**

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to Joanna Wilson. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the usual child protection procedures should be followed. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the usual medical emergencies should be followed.

Mental Health care plans

Our Mental Health care plans have three tiers -

Tier One - A pupil who has a diagnosis will receive an Individual Health Care Plan. This will be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include details of a pupil's condition, special requirements and precautions, medication and side effects, what to do and who to contact in an emergency – to be updated at regular intervals.

Tier Two – If a pupil does not have a formal diagnosis but there are concerns about their mental health, a Care Plan will be completed with details of concerns, special requirements and precautions and what to do and who to contact in an emergency.

Tier Three – If a parent or guardian flags a short-term concern which could affect the mental health of a child (i.e. death of a family member, parental divorce, family illness etc.) a 'welfare' email is sent to all adults in school to ensure the child can be supported. If this concern becomes a longer term concern or a greater concern, it will become a Tier Two concern and a Care Plan will be put in place. The Wellbeing and Mental Health Lead will discuss the welfare note with the child's class teacher and the child's mental health / level of concern discussed regularly. The W&MH Lead or the class teacher will 'touch base' with each child as is deemed appropriate in each individual case. The W&MH Lead will discuss concerns with parents, as is deemed appropriate – and in line with our Safeguarding Policy. They will also be added to the Safeguard My School platform choosing the 'welfare concern' plus any other 'drop down' deemed appropriate in order that the DSL and DDSL are aware of the concern. The Wellbeing and Mental Health Lead will keep the DSL up to date, as deemed appropriate. The W&MH Lead will be supported by the DSL.

Warning Signs and Disclosures

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate that a pupil 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 communicate their concerns with the Wellbeing and Mental Health Lead / Head Teacher. Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or 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
- Lateness to or absence from School
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Challenging behaviour such as stealing or bullying

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff. Therefore all staff will be trained how to respond appropriately to a disclosure. If a pupil 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 in line with the School's Safeguarding Policy. All disclosures should be recorded in writing using 'Safeguard my School' platform. This should be followed up in person with the DSL / Wellbeing and Mental Health Lead.

Communication

Parents will be informed if their child is in danger / makes a disclosure. If appropriate, the child will be encouraged to tell their parents themselves, supported by the Wellbeing and Mental Health Lead. If a pupil gives reason to believe that there may be an underlying child protection issue, the DSL or DDSL must be informed immediately and advice sought. Parents should disclose to the School any known mental health concerns. This includes any change in family circumstances that may impact the pupil's wellbeing. Regular reminders will be placed in the school newsletter to remind parents of this.

External Support Links

Should the school believe that external support may be needed, the Wellbeing and Mental Health Lead will make a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.) The school has a comprehensive list of therapists which can also be privately provided – it is the parents responsibility to check the therapists suitability for their child. Other helpful links – www.nhs.uk/mental-health
www.youngminds.org.uk
www.actionforchildren.org.uk

Absence

If a child is absent for any length of time then appropriate arrangements will be made for work to be accessed via the school portal (or by other means.) This will be in discussion with parents and appropriate medical professions. The child's mental health vulnerability will always prioritise over academic work. If the school considers that the presence of a pupil is having a detrimental effect on the wellbeing and safety of other members of the school community and that a person's mental health concern cannot be managed effectively and safely within the School, the Proprietor reserves the right to request that parents withdraw their child temporarily until appropriate reassurance have been met.

Written by: Mrs J Wilson (W&MH Lead)
Policy date: 5th March 2024

Ratified by: Mrs S Mbah (DSL)
To be reviewed: May 2025 (and as necessary)