



Supporting Pupils with Mental Health

Responsible for policy:
Review:
Chair of Directors

CC3: Quality, Performance and Standards
Triennial



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Definitions

In this **Supporting Pupils with Mental Health Policy**, unless the context otherwise requires, the following expressions shall have the following meanings:

- i **'The Romero Catholic Academy'** means the Company named at the beginning of this **Supporting Pupils with Mental Health Policy** and includes all sites upon which the Company is undertaking, from time to time, being carried out. The Romero Catholic Academy includes; **Corpus Christi, Good Shepherd, Sacred Heart, Blue Sky, SS Peter and Paul, St Gregory, St John Fisher, St Patrick, Cardinal Wiseman, Shared Services Team.**
- ii **'Romero Catholic Academy'** means the Company responsible for the management of the Academy and, for all purposes, means the employer of staff at the Company.
- iii **'Board'** means the board of Directors of the Romero Catholic Academy.
- iv **'Governance Professional'** means the Clerk to the Board or the Clerk to the Local Governing Body of the Academy appointed from time to time, as appropriate.
- v **'Chair'** means the Chair of the Board of the Directors or the Local Governing Body appointed from time to time.
- vi **'Chief Executive Officer (CEO)'** means the person responsible for performance of all academies and staff within the Multi Academy Company and is accountable to the Board of Directors.
- vii **'Diocesan Education Service'** means the education service provided by the diocese, which may also be known, or referred to, as the DES.
- viii **'Local Governing Body'** means the governing body of the School.
- ix **'Governing Body Representatives'** means the governors appointed and elected to the Local Governing Body.
- x **'Principal'** means the substantive Principal, who is the person with overall responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school.
- xi **'Pupils'** means Children (EYFS), Pupils (KS1-KS4), Students (KS5). For the purposes of the policy, we will use pupil throughout.
- xii **'School'** means the school or college within The Romero Catholic Academy and includes all sites upon which the school undertaking is, from time to time, being carried out.
- xiii **'Shared Services Team'** means the staff who work in the central team across the Company (e.g. HR/ Finance)
- xiv **'Vice-Chair'** means the Vice-Chair of the Governing Body elected from time to time.
- xv **'Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO)'** means the officers working on behalf of Coventry City Council and the Coventry Safeguarding Pupils Partnership to address, advise and manage allegations and concerns against staff, carers and volunteers by addressing matters of safety and wellbeing of pupils and young people
- xvi **'Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)'** means the person appointed to take lead responsibility for child protection issues in school
- xvii **Special Educational Needs (SEN):** A child or young person has SEN if they have a learning difficulty or disability which calls for special educational provision to be made for him or her. A child of compulsory school age or a young person has a learning difficulty or disability if he or she has a significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of others of the same age, or has a disability which prevents or hinders him or her from making use of educational facilities of a kind generally provided for others of the same age in mainstream schools or mainstream post-16 institutions.
- xviii **Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCo):** A qualified teacher in a school or maintained nursery school who has responsibility for co-ordinating SEN provision. In a small school, the headteacher or deputy may take on this role. In larger schools there may be a team of SENCos. Other early years settings in group provision arrangements are expected to identify an individual to perform the role of SENCo and childminders are encouraged to do so, possibly sharing the role between them where they are registered with an agency.
- xix **Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP):** An EHC plan details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person who has SEN or a disability. It is drawn up by the local authority after an EHC needs assessment of the child or young person has determined that an EHC plan is necessary, and after consultation with relevant partner agencies.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a clear framework for identifying, supporting, and responding to the mental health and wellbeing needs of pupils across The Romero Catholic Academy. It aims to ensure that all pupils feel safe, valued, and supported in their emotional development, and that staff are equipped to recognise and respond to mental health concerns effectively. This policy promotes a whole-school approach to mental wellbeing, aligned with safeguarding responsibilities and inclusive education practices.

The Romero Catholic Academy fully recognises its responsibilities for pupils with mental health and wellbeing needs. In our eight schools, we want our pupils to:

- Be motivated and enjoy learning
- Develop a range of skills and be mentally and physically fit to equip them for a successful adult life, be independent and ambitious
- Be confident, happy and feel safe
- Be friendly, respectful, caring and polite
- Experience success every day

2. Scope

This policy applies to all pupils enrolled in schools within The Romero Catholic Academy, including Corpus Christi, Good Shepherd, Sacred Heart, Blue Sky, SS Peter and Paul, St Gregory, St John Fisher, St Patrick, Cardinal Wiseman, and the Shared Services Team. It is relevant to all staff members, including teaching, support, and leadership teams, and outlines responsibilities for identifying, supporting, and referring pupils with mental health needs. The policy also extends to collaboration with parents/carers and external agencies to ensure a holistic and coordinated approach to pupil wellbeing.

The schools in the Romero Catholic Academy:

- Aim to increase the level of awareness and understanding amongst staff and parents/carers of issues involving the mental health of our pupils, with self-harm, eating disorders, anxiety, depression, loss and bereavement.
- Aim to detect and address problems in the earliest stages where they exist in thinking and attitudes to self/image, self-esteem and self-control.
- Aim to increase the appropriate level of support available to pupils with mental health issues in partnership with outside health agencies and child support groups.
- Aim to continue to promote positivity around Mental Wellbeing and to reduce the stigma associated with Mental Health.

3. Types of Mental Health

Self-Harm

Self-Harm describes a wide range of behaviours that people use to cope with difficult feelings and distressing life experiences.

Examples of self-harm such as;

- Cutting
- Burning
- Severe scratching
- Biting
- Scalding
- Pulling out hair
- Picking at skin or re-opening wounds

It is estimated that 1 in 15 young people in the UK have deliberately self-harmed at some point and the most common age is between 11-25.

Young people who have self-harmed give different reasons as to why they feel the need to hurt themselves. It is important that for each young person we understand the reasons why so we can best tailor the support and address the underlying causes that are leading to self-harming.

Eating Disorders

While on the surface disordered eating appears to be all about food and weight it is often the outward expression of emotional problems. Eating disorders include but are not exclusive to Anorexia Nervosa, Bulimia Nervosa, and Binge Eating Disorder. Disordered eating affects the physical and emotional well-being of an individual and leads to changes in behaviour. Very often masked by the eating disorder there is usually an underlying reason this can be a coping mechanism, and this is a way of gaining control.

Signs may display the following behaviours such as;

- Loss of concentration
- Skipping meals
- Disappearing to the toilet after meals
- Preoccupation with body Image, dieting.
- Excessive exercise
- Secretive behaviour
- Becoming irritable and withdrawing from social activities particularly those involving food.

Anxiety

Some people will experience levels of anxiety from time to time. Most people can relate to feeling tense, uncertain and fearful for example before an exam. These in turn can lead to sleep problems, loss of appetite and the ability to concentrate.

However, if anxiety overwhelms a child, they may not be able to deal with daily activities. If the anxiety stays as a high level the young person may feel powerless, out of control and sometimes this can sometimes lead to a panic attack.

Examples of anxiety such as;

- Phobias
- Obsessive Compulsive disorder
- Generalised Anxiety disorder, (GAD)
- Post -traumatic stress disorder, (PTSD)
- Panic Disorder

Depression

In its mildest form depression can be being in low spirits, it does not stop you leading a normal life but makes things harder to do and seem less worthwhile. At its most severe (Clinical Depression) can be life threatening. Some young people need medication to alleviate their symptoms.

Examples of depression can such as;

- Change in normal pattern of behaviour
- Withdrawal from school, social activities and friendship groups
- Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)
- Bi-Polar disorder or Manic Depression.

Loss and Bereavement

- We acknowledge that in the case of the death of a pupil's parent or close relative, it is best that a family member breaks the news with the support of an appropriate member of staff. If this is not possible the Senior Mental Health Lead will ensure someone suitable to break the news to the pupil or member of staff concerned.
- The news of the death will be given to all relevant staff as soon as possible.
- Pupils who experience such a loss will require early intervention and support
- As communities of faith, where appropriate we will support staff and pupils with liturgy and opportunities for private and collective prayer.

All staff who are concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a pupil should speak with the Principal, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) who will have daily contact with the pupil to share concerns.

- If any member of staff feels that the pupil is any immediate danger of harm, then the normal child protection procedures should follow. The staff member should refer to the Safeguarding and Child Protection policy
- If the pupil has seriously self-harmed then staff should follow the normal procedures for medical emergencies, including alerting reception so that the appropriate first aid can be given and if necessary, contacting the emergency services for admission to hospital.
- Staff are encouraged to seek the advice of the Principal, DSL and/or DDSL, or SENCO who will either advise, signpost to the appropriate agency (CAMHS, school nurse) or request a written referral.
- All referrals or concerns will be discussed weekly by the relevant staff
- Where appropriate, pupils may have experienced loss or bereavement the Senior Mental Health Lead will consider the action required, follow the agreed procedures, take notice of the guidance and examples and can be aware of the impact of shock on each other and the wider community as detailed in the Bereavement Policy. Please see our Bereavement Policy for further details.

4. Supporting Students With Mental Health Issues

This policy reflects the SEND Code of Practice (2015, updated 2024), recognising that persistent mental health difficulties may constitute a Special Educational Need (SEN). The school follows a graduated approach of assess, plan, do, review in supporting pupils with SEMH needs.

This policy is aligned with [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#), which emphasises the importance of mental health in safeguarding and the need for early help and clear referral pathways.

School can offer a number of services and signpost others.

In School support:

- Positive support with trained staff
- Pastoral
- Peer listeners
- Social and Emotional aspects of learning
- My Happy Minds (Primary) My Mind Coach (Secondary)
- PSHE
- Regular updating of student noticeboard Positive Wellbeing

Outside Agencies:

- GP
- Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS) and Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs)
- Drop in with School nurse/Health Mentor
- Off the Record Counsellor
- Safeguarding Team and Local Authority

5. Supporting Staff Who Are Working with Students who have Mental Health Issues

The Romero Catholic Academy acknowledges that staff who are working closely with distressed students exhibiting mental health problems like self-harm, eating disorders and depression can themselves be placed under emotional strain.

Support will be provided to all staff who request it in terms of management supervision with either the Principal, a member of the Senior Leadership Team and the HR department. Where appropriate external counselling can be sourced for staff if this is appropriate.

The school will provide a range of training in dealing with pupils with mental health problems.

6. Links to other Policies

This document is linked to our;

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Bereavement Policy
- Relationship and Positive Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse Policy
- First Aid Policy
- SEN and Disability Policy
- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions and Administration of Medication

7. Useful Links

- [DFE Mental Health and Behaviour in schools](#)
- [MindEd for Families](#)
- [Anna Freud National Centre for Pupils and Families](#)
- [Place 2 Be](#)
- [Youngminds](#)

8. Monitoring and Review

The Board of Directors delegate the implementation of this policy to the Governing Body of each school. This policy will be reviewed by CC3 Quality, Performance and Standards.