



## **St John's School Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy**

Reviewed: June 2025

Next review: June 2026 (or sooner if legislation or practice changes)

Policy Owner: DSL & Safeguarding Team

### **1. Policy Statement**

At St John's School, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all pupils and staff. We believe everyone's mental health is as important as their physical health. We aim to create a culture where everyone feels safe to talk about worries without fear of stigma.

We recognise that some young people will experience mental health difficulties, and that early identification and support can prevent problems from escalating. This policy sets out how we spot concerns, how we respond, and how we work with pupils, parents, carers and external agencies.

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, SEND Policy, and Behaviour Policy.

### **2. Aims**

We will:

- Create a 'Talking School' culture where mental health is openly discussed.
- Support early identification of pupils at risk.
- Provide clear pathways for staff to raise concerns.
- Ensure all staff understand their role in safeguarding mental health.
- Work with parents and carers as partners.
- Signpost to trusted external services.
- Promote resilience, self-esteem and healthy coping skills through the curriculum and daily life.



### **3. Scope**

This policy applies to the whole school community: pupils (Nursery/EYFS, Junior, Senior, Boarding), staff, volunteers and governors.

### **4. Roles & Responsibilities**

Head of School – overall responsibility for mental health provision.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – takes the lead on child protection and complex mental health concerns.

Safeguarding Team – includes the DSL, Deputy DSLs, SENDCo and Heads of School; responsible for managing referrals and support plans.

SENDCo – coordinates support for pupils with additional needs.

Tutors/Teachers – day-to-day monitoring of pupils' wellbeing; first point of contact for concerns.

Parents/Carers – keep the school informed about any mental health issues.

Pupils – encouraged to share worries and look out for each other.

### **5. Safeguarding & Confidentiality**

Safeguarding is at the heart of our mental health provision. Where staff believe a pupil is at risk of harm to themselves or others, normal safeguarding procedures must be followed (refer to Safeguarding Policy).

Staff must never promise total confidentiality — information will be shared on a need-to-know basis in line with statutory guidance.

### **6. Recognising Concerns: Common Conditions**

All staff should be alert to changes in pupils' behaviour, appearance or performance. Signs to look out for include:



Possible Issue	Key Warning Signs
Anxiety & Low Mood	Withdrawal, excessive worry, panic attacks, poor sleep, loss of interest
Eating Disorders	Rapid weight loss, secretive eating, obsessive talk about food/weight
Self-Harm	Unexplained injuries, covering up, talk of hopelessness
ADHD / Behaviour	Impulsivity, inattention, disruptive outbursts
Substance Misuse	Smell of alcohol/drugs, sudden behaviour changes
Trauma (PTSD)	Nightmares, flashbacks, hyper-vigilance

Staff are not expected to diagnose. Always share concerns with the Safeguarding Team.

## 7. Responding to Concerns

If worried about a pupil:

- ✓ Stay calm and listen.
- ✓ Reassure – you will help them get support.
- ✓ Do not promise confidentiality.
- ✓ Record what the pupil says, using their words.
- ✓ Pass concerns to the Safeguarding Team immediately.

Emergency: If a pupil is in immediate danger (e.g. risk of suicide) call 999, stay with the pupil, and inform the DSL.



## 8. Levels of Need

We follow a simple framework:

Level	Example	Who Supports?
L1	General wellbeing needs	Tutor, everyday PSHE & pastoral support
L2	Emerging concern (e.g. anxiety)	Tutor/Class teacher + Safeguarding Team, possible Counsellor
L3	Significant concern (e.g. self-harm)	Safeguarding Team, referral to CAMHS
L4	Risk of significant harm	DSL; child protection procedures; multi-agency plan

## 9. Mental Health Plans & Risk Assessments

Where appropriate, the Safeguarding Team will coordinate a Mental Health Care Plan for pupils with ongoing needs. This may include agreed strategies, risk management and external agency involvement. Example risk assessments are kept in the Safeguarding Team's working documents, not included in this policy.

## 10. Counselling & Support Services

- The school can arrange a visiting Counsellor.
- Pupils can access this via referral through the Safeguarding Team.
- Parents will be informed if a referral is agreed.
- Counselling is short-term, supportive and focused on building resilience.

## 11. Working with Parents & Carers



We expect parents to inform us of any mental health concerns or relevant family circumstances. We will work in partnership, share concerns honestly, and signpost additional help where needed. Information is shared on a need-to-know basis.

## **12. Education & Prevention**

Mental health is promoted through:

- The PSHCE curriculum and enrichment programme.
- Tutor time discussions.
- Assemblies and awareness events.
- Training for staff to spot signs and respond confidently.

## **13. Complaints**

If parents or pupils are unhappy with the support offered, they should first speak with their child's Tutor or the Safeguarding Team. If concerns remain, the school's Complaints Policy should be followed.

## **14. Monitoring & Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the DSL and Safeguarding Governor, with input from pastoral staff and the school community.

## **15. Key Contacts**

- Designated Safeguarding Lead: Jenni Yeoman - [jenni.yeoman@iesmail.com](mailto:jenni.yeoman@iesmail.com)
- Deputy DSLs: Amanda Churchill ([amanda.churchill@iesmail.com](mailto:amanda.churchill@iesmail.com)), Annabel Goody ([annabel.goody@iesmail.com](mailto:annabel.goody@iesmail.com)), Adam Smallwood ([adam.smallwood@iesmail.com](mailto:adam.smallwood@iesmail.com)), Bryan Kane ([bryan.kane@iesmail.com](mailto:bryan.kane@iesmail.com)).
- SENDCo: Jenni Yeoman - [jenni.yeoman@iesmail.com](mailto:jenni.yeoman@iesmail.com)
- School Counsellor: Details provided when required.



## 16. Helplines & Resources

- Childline: 0800 1111 – [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk)
- Samaritans: 116 123 – [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)
- YoungMinds: [www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)
- Papyrus (Suicide Prevention): 0800 068 4141
- Kooth (Online Counselling): [www.kooth.com](http://www.kooth.com)

## Appendix A: Quick Guide for Staff – What to Do

- ✓ Stay calm, listen, do not judge.
- ✓ Record concerns factually.
- ✓ Report concerns immediately to the Safeguarding Team.
- ✓ Call 999 if a child is in immediate danger.
- ✓ Never promise secrecy — always explain you must pass on worries for their safety.