

OUR LADY'S CATHOLIC COLLEGE

Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy



**"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will
give you rest."
*Matthew 11:28***

Approved by:

Full Governing Body

Responsible Officer

Assistant Headteacher (Safeguarding, SEND and Mental Health)

Designated Mental Health Lead

Mrs Joanne Loxam

Review Cycle

Annual

Date Adopted

September 2026

Review Date

September 2027

Status

Linked Policies

This policy should be read alongside:

- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- Attendance Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Medical Needs Policy
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education Policy
- Staff Code of Conduct
- Equality Information and Objectives
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Staff Wellbeing Strategy
- Whistleblowing Policy

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1. Vision and Catholic Ethos

At Our Lady's Catholic College, we believe that every person is created uniquely in the image and likeness of God. Every member of our school community possesses inherent dignity, worth and potential, regardless of background, circumstance or ability.

Our mission is rooted in Gospel values of compassion, justice, forgiveness, service and hope. We are committed to ensuring that every child feels safe, valued, respected and known. We recognise that positive mental health is fundamental to learning, healthy relationships, spiritual growth and personal development.

Mental health is everyone's responsibility. Creating a mentally healthy school requires the collective commitment of governors, leaders, staff, pupils, parents, carers and external partners. We strive to foster an environment in which every young person can flourish academically, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

As a Catholic school, we understand wellbeing as encompassing the whole person. We seek not only to promote emotional resilience but also to nurture faith, hope, purpose and belonging. Through our curriculum, pastoral care, chaplaincy, enrichment opportunities and daily relationships, we encourage pupils to develop confidence, compassion and the resilience needed to navigate life's challenges.

We are committed to reducing stigma surrounding mental health and promoting a culture in which seeking help is recognised as a sign of strength. We believe that no child should struggle alone, and we are dedicated to ensuring that support is accessible, timely and appropriate.

2. Policy Statement

Our Lady's Catholic College is committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all pupils, staff and members of our wider school community.

We recognise that mental health exists on a continuum. Every individual experiences periods of emotional wellbeing and times when additional support may be required. Mental health difficulties can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, culture, faith, disability or family circumstances.

Positive mental health is fundamental to educational success, attendance, safeguarding and personal development. Pupils who experience good emotional wellbeing are more likely to attend school regularly, engage positively in learning, develop healthy relationships and achieve their potential.

We adopt a proactive, preventative and inclusive approach. Rather than responding only when difficulties arise, we seek to build resilience, protective factors and positive coping strategies across the whole school community.

Where mental health needs emerge, we are committed to identifying concerns early, working collaboratively with families and partner agencies, implementing appropriate support and reviewing provision regularly. Our response is underpinned by safeguarding principles, the graduated approach to SEND and evidence-informed practice.

We recognise that some pupils may face additional barriers due to adverse childhood experiences, trauma, neurodiversity, disability, bereavement, caring responsibilities, discrimination, poverty or other vulnerabilities. We therefore seek to remove barriers to participation while maintaining high expectations for all.

3. Policy Aims

This policy aims to:

- promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing across the whole school community
- foster a culture of belonging, inclusion and respect
- ensure that every pupil feels safe, valued and listened to
- develop resilience, confidence and positive coping strategies
- reduce stigma associated with mental health
- enable early identification of emerging concerns
- ensure timely intervention and access to appropriate support
- provide clear referral pathways for staff
- ensure mental health is considered alongside safeguarding, attendance and SEND
- support pupils experiencing emotional distress, anxiety, trauma or mental illness
- strengthen partnership working with parents and carers
- provide staff with confidence, knowledge and appropriate training
- promote staff wellbeing and professional resilience
- ensure compliance with statutory guidance and best practice
- Establish clear systems for monitoring, evaluating and continually improving provision.

4. Our Commitment

At Our Lady's Catholic College we are committed to:

- creating a culture where kindness, compassion and respect underpin daily life
- ensuring every child has a trusted adult they can speak to
- recognising the links between mental health, safeguarding, attendance and achievement
- promoting inclusion through adaptive teaching and high-quality pastoral support
- listening to pupil voice and responding meaningfully
- working collaboratively with families and external agencies
- continually developing staff knowledge and confidence
- ensuring that support is proportionate, timely and evidence-informed
- maintaining high expectations while providing appropriate adjustments where needed
- Embedding wellbeing into every aspect of school life rather than viewing it as a standalone initiative.

We recognise that positive mental health is not solely the absence of mental illness but the presence of strong relationships, hope, purpose, resilience, belonging and opportunities to flourish.

5. Legislative and Statutory Framework

This policy has been developed in accordance with current legislation, statutory guidance and evidence-informed best practice. It reflects Our Lady's Catholic College's commitment to safeguarding, inclusion, equality and promoting positive mental health for every member of the school community.

National Legislation

This policy is underpinned by:

- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Education Act 2002
- Education Act 2011
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998
- Data Protection Act 2018
- UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

Statutory Guidance

This policy should be read alongside:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE, 2025)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (2023)
- SEND Code of Practice: 0–25 years (2015)
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE)
- Behaviour in Schools Advice (DfE)
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance (DfE)
- Relationships, Sex and Health Education Guidance
- Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing
- Lancashire Safeguarding Children Partnership Procedures
- Lancashire SEND Local Offer

Our Principles

At Our Lady's Catholic College we believe:

- Positive mental health is fundamental to learning.
- Mental health is everyone's responsibility.
- Early intervention improves outcomes.
- Strong relationships are protective.
- Safeguarding and wellbeing are inseparable.
- Inclusion means adapting provision without lowering expectations.
- Pupils thrive when they feel safe, respected, listened to and valued.
- Families are key partners in supporting emotional wellbeing.

Mental health support is not viewed as an isolated intervention but forms part of our wider commitment to safeguarding, attendance, behaviour, SEND and educational inclusion.

6. Roles and Responsibilities

Promoting positive mental health is the responsibility of every member of our school community.

Whilst designated staff lead specific aspects of provision, every adult within school contributes to creating a culture in which pupils feel safe, supported and able to flourish.

6.1 Governing Body

The Governing Body will:

- ensure appropriate policies are in place
- monitor the effectiveness of mental health provision
- receive regular safeguarding and wellbeing reports
- ensure sufficient resources are available
- promote a culture of inclusion and belonging
- challenge and support leaders regarding wellbeing outcomes
- ensure statutory safeguarding responsibilities are fulfilled
- Review relevant pupil outcome data including attendance, exclusions and safeguarding trends.

Governors recognise that positive mental health contributes directly to educational outcomes, attendance, and behaviour, safeguarding and school improvement.

6.2 Headteacher

The Headteacher will:

- promote a whole-school culture of positive wellbeing
- ensure sufficient staffing and resources
- oversee implementation of this policy
- ensure staff receive appropriate training
- support staff wellbeing
- monitor quality assurance
- ensure mental health remains central to school improvement planning
- Ensure safeguarding procedures are consistently followed.

The Headteacher is ultimately accountable for ensuring this policy is implemented effectively.

6.3 Assistant Headteacher (Safeguarding, SEND and Mental Health)

The Assistant Head teacher will:

- provide strategic leadership for mental health provision
- ensure effective safeguarding systems operate alongside mental health support
- oversee referrals to external agencies
- coordinate support for vulnerable pupils
- monitor provision through quality assurance
- analyse attendance, behaviour and safeguarding data
- advise governors
- oversee staff training
- Review policy effectiveness annually.

This role ensures that safeguarding, SEND and emotional wellbeing operate as an integrated system rather than separate processes.

6.4 Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)

The DSL will:

- respond to safeguarding concerns linked to mental health
- assess levels of risk
- coordinate multi-agency working
- liaise with Children's Social Care
- liaise with health professionals
- oversee child protection procedures
- ensure appropriate recording on CPOMS
- monitor vulnerable pupils
- Provide advice and supervision to staff.

Where mental health concerns present a safeguarding risk, safeguarding procedures will always take precedence.

6.5 Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads

Deputy DSLs will:

- support the DSL in day-to-day safeguarding practice
- respond to concerns in the absence of the DSL
- attend multi-agency meetings
- support referrals
- monitor vulnerable pupils
- Advise staff.

6.6 SENCO

The SENCO plays a central role in supporting pupils whose mental health may be linked to special educational needs or disabilities.

Responsibilities include:

- coordinating the graduated approach
- identifying emerging SEMH needs
- ensuring reasonable adjustments are implemented
- advising teachers
- liaising with Educational Psychology
- coordinating EHCP processes
- supporting transitions
- ensuring provision maps reflect emotional wellbeing needs
- Monitoring outcomes.

The SENCO works closely with pastoral staff to distinguish between safeguarding concerns, mental health difficulties and SEND, recognising that these areas frequently overlap.

6.7 Pastoral Support Officers (PSOs)

PSOs are often the first point of contact for pupils experiencing emotional distress.

They will:

- build trusted relationships
- monitor attendance and wellbeing
- support pupils daily
- liaise with families
- contribute to early intervention
- maintain accurate CPOMS records
- monitor pupils following disclosures
- coordinate pastoral support plans
- Work alongside the DSL and SENCO.

6.8 School Counsellors

Our Lady's Catholic College employs professionally trained Pupil Counsellors who play an integral role within the school's graduated response to promoting emotional wellbeing and supporting pupils experiencing mental health difficulties. Working within the ethical framework of the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) and in accordance with *Counselling in Schools: A Blueprint for the Future*, our counsellors provide high-quality therapeutic support for pupils experiencing a wide range of emotional, social and psychological difficulties. Their work aims to improve pupils' emotional wellbeing, resilience, engagement with education and overall life outcomes. Counsellors work within clearly defined professional boundaries and always in accordance with safeguarding legislation and school procedures. Confidentiality is respected wherever possible; however, where there are concerns that a child may be at risk of significant harm, safeguarding responsibilities take precedence.

The School Counsellors will:

- Provide individual therapeutic counselling following an assessment of a pupil's emotional and psychological needs.
- Deliver evidence-informed interventions that promote resilience, emotional regulation and positive coping strategies.
- Support pupils experiencing anxiety, low mood, bereavement, trauma, relationship difficulties, emotional dysregulation, self-esteem difficulties and other emotional or mental health concerns.
- Provide support for vulnerable groups, including pupils at risk of exclusion, children looked after and previously looked after, young carers, pupils experiencing safeguarding concerns and those with social, emotional or behavioural needs.
- Liaise closely with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL), Deputy DSLs, SENCO, Pastoral Support Officers, school leaders, teachers, parents and carers to ensure a coordinated approach to supporting pupils.
- Contribute to safeguarding by identifying and escalating concerns in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.
- Signpost and facilitate referrals to appropriate external agencies, including CAMHS, School Nursing, Children's Social Care, Early Help and other specialist services where appropriate.
- Maintain accurate, confidential and GDPR-compliant case records and contribute appropriately to CPOMS and safeguarding records where required.
- Attend regular clinical supervision with a suitably qualified supervisor to ensure safe, ethical and reflective practice.
- Deliver consultation, advice and guidance to staff to improve understanding of children's emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- Contribute to staff training and professional development relating to emotional wellbeing, trauma-informed practice and supporting pupils in emotional distress.
- Develop targeted group interventions and preventative wellbeing programmes where identified through school need.
- Promote positive mental health throughout the school community through assemblies, awareness campaigns, wellbeing events and curriculum contributions where appropriate.
- Provide anonymised management information to the Senior Leadership Team and Governing Body regarding the use, accessibility and impact of the counselling service, ensuring confidentiality of individual pupils is maintained.
- Work collaboratively with external professionals to ensure joined-up support for pupils with complex or enduring mental health needs.

Counselling forms one part of the school's wider graduated response to emotional wellbeing. The counsellors work collaboratively alongside safeguarding, SEND, pastoral staff, attendance, the school nurse and external professionals to ensure that pupils receive coordinated, timely and proportionate support.

All counselling provision is reviewed regularly to evaluate its effectiveness, identify emerging themes and ensure that support continues to meet the changing needs of our pupils and school community.

6.9 School Nurse

The School Nurse contributes through:

- health advice
 - emotional wellbeing support
 - physical health screening
 - liaison with health services
 - Support regarding sleep, healthy lifestyles and emotional wellbeing.
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6.10 Teaching Staff

Every teacher is a teacher of wellbeing.

Teachers will:

- create psychologically safe classrooms
- build positive relationships
- recognise early warning signs
- promote resilience
- make reasonable adjustments
- record concerns promptly on CPOMS
- contribute to support plans
- Maintain high expectations while recognising individual need.

Teachers should never attempt to diagnose mental health conditions. Their role is to notice, respond, record and refer appropriately.

6.11 Teaching Assistants

Teaching Assistants play a vital role in:

- relationship building
- emotional regulation
- observation
- promoting independence
- reinforcing coping strategies
- supporting inclusion
- Reporting concerns promptly.

6.12 All School Staff

Every adult working within school has a responsibility to:

- promote positive mental health
- challenge stigma
- model respectful relationships
- recognise indicators of concern
- respond calmly and compassionately
- report concerns immediately
- follow safeguarding procedures
- maintain professional curiosity
- Complete required safeguarding and mental health training.

Mental health is not solely the responsibility of pastoral staff; every interaction between adults and pupils contributes to the culture of the school.

6.13 Pupils

Pupils are encouraged to:

- look after their own wellbeing
 - seek help when needed
 - support one another appropriately
 - report concerns about themselves or others
 - participate in wellbeing initiatives
 - contribute to pupil voice opportunities
 - respect differences
 - Help create a safe and inclusive school community.
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6.14 Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are valued partners.

We ask parents to:

- share concerns early
- attend meetings
- work collaboratively with school
- reinforce positive strategies at home
- support attendance
- inform school of significant changes
- Access external support where appropriate.

Strong home-school partnerships are fundamental to achieving positive outcomes for children experiencing emotional or mental health difficulties.

7. Leadership and Governance

Mental health and wellbeing form part of Our Lady's Catholic College's wider safeguarding and school improvement strategy.

Senior leaders will monitor:

- attendance trends
- EBSA
- behaviour
- exclusions
- safeguarding concerns
- child-on-child abuse
- bullying
- referrals to external agencies
- pupil voice
- staff wellbeing
- SEND outcomes
- Vulnerable groups.

Governors will receive regular reports enabling them to evaluate the effectiveness of provision while maintaining appropriate confidentiality.

Our aim is not simply to respond to mental ill health but to create a culture in which every pupil, every member of staff and every family feels that they belong, are valued and are supported to flourish academically, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

8. Whole School Approach to Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing

Our Whole School Commitment

At Our Lady's Catholic College we believe that positive mental health is not the responsibility of one individual or one team. It is created through the everyday culture of the school, the quality of relationships, high expectations, effective teaching, strong safeguarding, inclusive practice and timely intervention.

Our approach reflects the Department for Education's whole-school and college approach to mental health and is based upon prevention, early identification, graduated support and partnership working.

We recognise that pupils cannot achieve their academic potential unless they feel emotionally safe, respected, included and valued. Consequently, emotional wellbeing is embedded throughout every aspect of school life rather than being delivered solely through targeted interventions.

Our approach is underpinned by five key principles:

- Every child is known.
- Every child belongs.
- Every child is listened to.
- Every child is supported.
- Every child is challenged to achieve their full potential.

We strive to develop emotionally healthy, resilient young people who are equipped with the confidence, skills and strategies to manage adversity, maintain healthy relationships and flourish both within school and beyond.

9. Creating a Mentally Healthy School Culture

Positive mental health is promoted through every interaction between adults and pupils.

Senior leaders actively promote a culture in which:

- kindness is expected and modelled
- diversity is celebrated
- discrimination is challenged
- pupils feel psychologically safe
- restorative conversations are valued
- adults remain professionally curious
- pupils know how to access help
- successes are recognised and celebrated
- mistakes are viewed as opportunities to learn
- Pupils develop increasing independence and resilience.

This culture is reinforced through our Catholic ethos, daily interactions, assemblies, tutor programme, curriculum, enrichment opportunities and pastoral systems.

Mental wellbeing is considered when making decisions regarding curriculum, behaviour, attendance, safeguarding, SEND and school improvement.

10. Universal Provision

Universal provision is available to every pupil and aims to prevent mental health difficulties from developing or escalating.

At Our Lady's Catholic College this includes:

Positive Relationships

Every pupil has daily contact with trusted adults through:

- Form Tutors
- Pastoral Support Officers
- Subject teachers
- Teaching Assistants
- School Counsellors
- SEN Team
- DSL Team
- School Nurse
- Chaplaincy.

Strong relationships remain the single greatest protective factor for children's emotional wellbeing.

High Quality Teaching

We recognise that learning environments significantly influence emotional wellbeing.

Teachers are expected to:

- establish predictable routines
- communicate high expectations
- use adaptive teaching to remove barriers
- celebrate effort and progress
- maintain psychologically safe classrooms
- develop positive teacher-pupil relationships
- recognise signs of emotional distress
- Promote resilience and independence.

High quality teaching remains the first and most important intervention for many pupils experiencing emerging emotional difficulties.

Personal Development Curriculum

Our Personal Development curriculum provides planned opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge, understanding and skills relating to:

- emotional wellbeing
- healthy relationships
- resilience
- managing stress
- anxiety
- online safety
- body image
- healthy lifestyles
- sleep
- self-esteem
- bereavement
- grief
- consent
- substance misuse
- recognising abuse
- healthy friendships
- financial wellbeing
- Preparing for adulthood.

Learning is age-appropriate, evidence-informed and revisited throughout each key stage.

Catholic Life and Chaplaincy

As a Catholic school we recognise that spirituality can contribute positively to wellbeing.

Opportunities include:

- prayer and reflection
- liturgical celebrations
- retreats
- charitable activities
- pupil leadership
- social justice projects
- chaplaincy support
- Opportunities for quiet reflection.

These experiences promote belonging, hope, compassion and purpose.

Pupil Voice

We believe that listening to pupils improves wellbeing.

Pupil voice is gathered through:

- School Council
- safeguarding student voice interviews
- SEND pupil voice
- anti-bullying surveys
- wellbeing questionnaires
- pastoral meetings
- restorative conversations
- Governor meetings with pupils.

Feedback informs school improvement planning and helps ensure that provision reflects the lived experiences of pupils.

11. Attendance and Emotional Wellbeing

The school recognises the close relationship between attendance and emotional wellbeing. Persistent absence may be both:

- an indicator of underlying emotional distress; and
- A contributing factor to deteriorating mental health.

Where attendance concerns emerge, staff will seek to understand the reasons behind absence rather than making assumptions.

Support may include:

- Pastoral Support Officer intervention
- attendance mentoring
- Ready to Learn provision
- phased reintegration
- reasonable adjustments
- multi-agency meetings
- Early Help
- medical advice
- SEND review
- counselling support
- Safeguarding assessment.

For pupils experiencing Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA), the school adopts a graduated, child-centred approach that balances empathy with the expectation that attendance remains important for educational progress, emotional development and safeguarding

12. Behaviour and Mental Health

The school recognises that behaviour is a form of communication. Some behaviours may indicate underlying emotional distress, trauma, unmet need or mental health difficulties. However, we also recognise that understanding behaviour does not mean excusing behaviour.

The school will:

- seek to understand underlying causes
- make reasonable adjustments where appropriate
- implement graduated support
- teach replacement behaviours
- maintain clear expectations
- Safeguard all members of the community.

Where pupils engage in child-on-child abuse, discriminatory behaviour, violence, serious bullying or behaviour that places others at risk, appropriate safeguarding and behaviour procedures will always be followed.

A mental health difficulty or neurodevelopmental condition does not remove a pupil's responsibility to work towards safe behaviour nor diminish the school's responsibility to protect other pupils and staff.

Where appropriate, sanctions will be implemented alongside therapeutic support, restorative work and reasonable adjustments.

13. Inclusion and SEND

The school recognises the significant overlap between Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and mental health.

Some pupils may experience emotional difficulties as a consequence of:

- Autism
- ADHD
- Speech, Language and Communication Needs
- Specific Learning Difficulties
- Physical disability
- Medical conditions
- Sensory impairment.

Equally, pupils with mental health difficulties may subsequently require SEND assessment where needs become long-term or significantly impact learning.

The school adopts the graduated approach of:

Assess

Plan

Do

Review

Support is regularly reviewed to ensure interventions remain proportionate, effective and responsive to changing needs.

Reasonable adjustments will be implemented where appropriate in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

14. Trauma-Informed Practice

We recognise that some pupils have experienced adverse childhood experiences, loss, abuse, neglect, domestic abuse or other traumatic events.

Trauma can affect:

- attention
- memory
- emotional regulation
- executive functioning
- relationships
- attendance
- behaviour
- Learning.

Staff are encouraged to remain professionally curious and consider whether behaviour may reflect underlying need. Trauma-informed practice does not replace accountability but helps staff respond in ways that promote regulation, safety and recovery.

Approaches include:

- predictable routines
 - calm communication
 - relational practice
 - emotional coaching
 - co-regulation
 - restorative conversations
 - reducing unnecessary confrontation
 - Promoting emotional literacy.
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15. Protective Factors

The school actively seeks to strengthen protective factors known to improve emotional wellbeing.

These include:

- positive adult relationships
- strong peer relationships
- regular school attendance
- participation in enrichment activities
- physical activity
- healthy sleep routines
- positive self-esteem
- opportunities for leadership
- success in learning
- faith and spirituality
- family engagement
- community involvement
- Access to timely support.

Building resilience is viewed as a long-term developmental process rather than a single intervention.

16. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Mental health affects pupils from every background. Some groups may experience additional barriers to accessing support, including:

- disadvantaged pupils
- pupils with SEND
- children looked after and previously looked after
- young carers
- pupils from minority ethnic communities
- LGBTQ+ young people
- pupils experiencing bereavement
- pupils experiencing discrimination
- Pupils with chronic medical conditions.

The school is committed to ensuring that support is equitable, culturally sensitive and accessible to all. No pupil will experience discrimination because of their mental health, disability, protected characteristic or family circumstances. We actively promote a culture where difference is respected, stigma is challenged and every member of our community is able to flourish.

17. Our Lady's Catholic College Mental Health Support Pathway

At Our Lady's Catholic College we operate a graduated, child-centred approach to supporting pupils' emotional wellbeing. We recognise that mental health exists on a continuum and that pupils may move between levels of support as their needs change. Support is proportionate to need, reviewed regularly and delivered collaboratively through safeguarding, SEND, pastoral systems, attendance, counselling services, parents and external professionals.

Universal Support (Available to Every Pupil)

All pupils benefit from a whole-school approach that promotes resilience, belonging and emotional wellbeing.

Universal provision includes:

- A dedicated Form Tutor.
- Year-based Pastoral Support Officers (PSOs).
- Positive relationships with teaching and support staff.
- High-quality adaptive teaching.
- Personal Development (PSHE and RSE).
- Chaplaincy and Catholic Life.
- Assemblies promoting wellbeing.
- Anti-bullying education.
- Student leadership opportunities.
- Enrichment activities and extra-curricular provision.
- Access to the School Nurse.
- Access to school counselling through referral.
- Safe and inclusive learning environments.
- Positive behaviour support.
- Emotional wellbeing campaigns.
- Student Voice opportunities.
- Daily safeguarding culture.

Every member of staff contributes to creating an environment where pupils feel safe, respected and able to seek help.

Targeted Support

Where concerns begin to emerge, additional support may be introduced. Support may include:

Pastoral Support Officers

PSOs provide:

- regular wellbeing check-ins
- mentoring
- attendance support
- family liaison
- emotional support
- behaviour support
- transition support
- Restorative conversations.

PSOs remain the key pastoral contact for pupils and families.

Ready to Learn Provision

The Ready to Learn provision offers structured support for pupils experiencing anxiety, emotional vulnerability or difficulties accessing learning.

This provision may include:

- morning check-ins
- emotional regulation support
- supported transitions into lessons
- short-term personalised plans
- liaison with families
- coordination with teaching staff
- Gradual reintegration following periods of absence.

Ready to Learn is intended to remove barriers to learning while maintaining pupils' connection with mainstream education.

ARK Provision

ARK provides short-term intervention for pupils requiring additional pastoral or emotional support.

The provision focuses upon:

- emotional regulation
- restorative conversations
- reflection
- repairing relationships
- problem-solving
- Planning successful return to learning.

ARK is not a long-term placement or specialist therapeutic provision. It is designed to provide timely intervention that enables pupils to successfully re-engage with mainstream lessons.

School Counselling Service

Professional Grade 7 School Counsellors provide therapeutic intervention following assessment of need.

Counselling may support pupils experiencing:

- anxiety
- low mood
- bereavement
- trauma
- emotional dysregulation
- relationship difficulties
- family difficulties
- self-esteem concerns
- emerging mental health difficulties.

Counsellors work within BACP ethical guidance, maintain confidential records and contribute to safeguarding processes where required.

SEND Support

Where emotional wellbeing is significantly impacting learning, the SEND Team may implement:

- Assess-Plan-Do-Review cycles
- reasonable adjustments
- adaptive teaching strategies
- executive functioning support
- sensory regulation strategies
- communication support
- emotional regulation programmes
- Individual support plans.

Mental health support and SEND support should complement one another rather than operate separately.

Specialist Support

Where pupils require more intensive intervention, referrals may be made to external professionals.

These may include:

- GP
- School Nursing Service
- Lancashire Mental Health Support Teams (where available)
- CAMHS
- Educational Psychology
- Children's Social Care
- Early Help
- Lancashire SEND Team
- Young People's Service
- Specialist voluntary organisations.

School will always seek to work collaboratively with families throughout referral processes unless safeguarding concerns indicate otherwise.

18. Identifying Mental Health Needs

Mental health difficulties can present in many different ways. Staff should remain professionally curious and avoid making assumptions about the reasons for changes in behaviour, attendance or presentation.

Possible indicators include:

Emotional Indicators

- anxiety
- persistent sadness
- tearfulness
- excessive worries
- hopelessness
- panic attacks
- emotional outbursts
- Low self-esteem.

Behavioural Indicators

- withdrawal
- increased aggression
- risk-taking
- deterioration in behaviour
- repeated conflict
- refusal to engage
- perfectionism
- Significant changes in friendships.

Physical Indicators

- changes in eating
- sleep difficulties
- unexplained pain
- fatigue
- neglect of appearance
- Weight change.

Educational Indicators

- declining attainment
- reduced concentration
- increasing absence
- persistent lateness
- school avoidance
- loss of motivation
- Reduced participation.

Safeguarding Indicators

Mental health concerns may coexist with:

- abuse
- neglect
- domestic abuse
- exploitation
- online harm
- child-on-child abuse
- self-harm
- suicidal ideation
- Substance misuse.

Where safeguarding concerns are present, safeguarding procedures always take priority.

19. Responding to Concerns

Every member of staff has a responsibility to act when concerned about a pupil's emotional wellbeing.

Staff should:

Notice

Observe changes in behaviour, mood, attendance or presentation.



Listen

Provide time and space for the pupil to talk.

Remain calm.

Avoid judgement.

Do not promise confidentiality.



Reassure

Acknowledge the pupil's feelings.

Explain that help is available.



Record

Record factual information promptly on CPOMS.

Avoid speculation or diagnosis.



Report

Inform the appropriate PSO and the DSL where required.

Never investigate concerns independently.



Review

The appropriate member of staff will coordinate next steps, monitor progress and review support.

Immediate Risk

If a pupil:

- discloses suicidal intent
- reports serious self-harm
- presents with psychosis
- poses immediate danger to themselves or others
- makes allegations of abuse
- presents with significant safeguarding concerns

Staff must immediately contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy DSL.

Where appropriate:

- emergency services may be contacted
 - parents informed (unless this increases risk)
 - Children's Social Care consulted
 - Safeguarding procedures initiated.
-

20. Recording Concerns

Accurate recording protects both pupils and staff.

All mental health concerns must be recorded promptly using CPOMS.

Records should:

- be factual
- use the pupil's own words where possible
- distinguish fact from opinion
- record actions taken
- identify who has been informed
- Include agreed next steps.

Records should never:

- contain personal opinions
- include unsubstantiated assumptions
- Attempt to diagnose mental illness.

All records remain confidential and are managed in accordance with GDPR and safeguarding legislation.

21. Information Sharing and Confidentiality

The school recognises that trust is fundamental to supporting pupils. However, confidentiality cannot be absolute where safeguarding concerns exist. Pupils will be informed:

- who information will be shared with
- why it is necessary
- What support will follow?

Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis. Where concerns relate to significant harm, safeguarding responsibilities override confidentiality. The welfare of the child remains paramount at all times.

22. Working with Parents and Carers

Parents and carers are essential partners in promoting positive mental health.

Where appropriate we will:

- involve parents early
- share concerns sensitively
- agree support plans
- signpost services
- review progress regularly
- Maintain open communication.

We recognise that parents may themselves require advice or reassurance when supporting a child experiencing emotional difficulties. School will provide information, guidance and signposting wherever appropriate. Where safeguarding concerns indicate that informing parents may increase risk to the child, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will determine the appropriate course of action in line with statutory safeguarding guidance.

23. Reviewing Support

Mental health support is not static.

Support plans will be reviewed regularly to consider:

- pupil voice
- parent feedback
- attendance
- behaviour
- safeguarding
- academic progress
- emotional wellbeing
- Effectiveness of interventions.

Provision will be adjusted in response to changing needs.

Our aim is always to build resilience, independence and confidence so that pupils are increasingly able to manage challenges successfully while remaining fully included within the life of Our Lady's Catholic College.

LOOK AFTER YOUR WELLBEING

You Matter.
Your Mental
Health Matters.



Everyone has good days and difficult days.

If you're feeling worried, stressed, angry, lonely or overwhelmed,
you don't have to deal with it alone.



THE LANCASHIRE MIND 5 WAYS TO WELLBEING



CONNECT

Spend time with people who make you feel safe.



- Talk to a friend
- Spend time with family
- Join a club or team
- Ask someone how they are doing



BE ACTIVE

Moving your body helps your mind.



- Go for a walk
- Play sport
- Dance
- Ride your bike
- Stretch between lessons



TAKE NOTICE

Pause and appreciate the little things.



- Notice nature
- Put your phone away for a while
- Focus on your breathing
- Keep a gratitude journal



KEEP LEARNING

Trying something new builds confidence.



- Learn a new skill
- Read a book
- Cook something
- Try a new hobby



GIVE

Small acts of kindness make a big difference.



- Smile at someone
- Help a classmate
- Volunteer
- Say thank you
- Encourage a friend

These five simple actions have been shown to improve wellbeing and resilience.



WHO CAN HELP?



IN SCHOOL

Speak to:

- ✓ Your Form Tutor
- ✓ Progress Leader
- ✓ Pastoral Support Officer
- ✓ School Counsellor
- ✓ SEND Team
- ✓ Safeguarding Team
- ✓ Any trusted adult

If you're worried about yourself or someone else, tell an adult straight away.



SUPPORT OUTSIDE SCHOOL

kooth



Free, safe and anonymous online mental health support for young people.

- ✓ Online counsellors
- ✓ Live chat
- ✓ Self-help tools
- ✓ No referral needed

kooth.com

Lancashire
mind

Support for young people aged 10+, wellbeing resources and coaching.

lancashiremind.org.uk

CAMHS

(Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services)

Specialist NHS support for young people experiencing significant mental health difficulties.

Usually accessed through a referral from a GP or another professional.



YOUNG MINDS

Advice and information about anxiety, stress, exams, friendships, self-esteem and much more.

youngminds.org.uk

IF YOU NEED HELP URGENTLY



NHS MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS LINE

(Lancashire & South Cumbria)

0800 953 0110

24 hours a day, every day



CHILDLINE

0800 1111

Free, confidential support for anyone under 19.



EMERGENCY

If you or someone else is in immediate danger:

Call 999



It's OK not to be OK.



Asking for help is a sign of strength.



You are never a burden.



There is always someone who wants to help.

You've got this.

