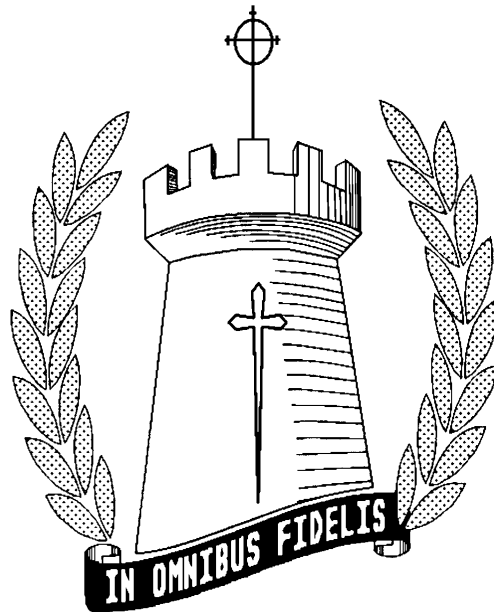


# ST. DAMIAN'S RC SCIENCE COLLEGE



## Mental Health Policy

<b>Approved by Governors:</b>	<b>November 2017</b>
<b>Date to be reviewed:</b>	This policy will be reviewed every two years
<b>Designated Person:</b>	Mrs M Banks
<b>Governor with Remit:</b>	Mrs L Keogh

# Students' Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

## Rationale

St Damian's RC Science College fully recognises its responsibilities for students with mental health and wellbeing needs.

At St Damian's RC Science College, we want our students:

- 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

## We are a School

- Where God is at the heart of all we do.
- God's word guides us to improve our relationships with others.
- We welcome people into our community
- We are committed to learning and achieving our best
- We have high expectations of staff and students
- We value the role of parents and carers
- We continue to work towards outstanding in all areas.

## Ownership

The students' Mental Health and Well Being and Guidance has been created by staff who have worked closely with students and outside agencies over a number of years and with reference to The Mental Health Standards, Jan 2014.

## **Targets**

The school aims to increase the level of awareness and understanding amongst staff and parents/carers of issues involving the mental health of young people, in particular with self-harm, eating disorder, anxiety, depression, loss and bereavement.

The school aims to detect and address problems in the earliest stages where they exist in thinking and attitudes to self/image, self-esteem and self-control.

The school aims to increase the appropriate level of support available to students with mental health issues in partnership with outside health agencies and child support groups.

The school aims to continue to promote positivity around Mental Well Being. To reduce the stigma associated with Mental Health.

## **Policy**

There is a fine line between appropriate responsiveness and inappropriate intrusiveness into the personal lives of students and families. However, all staff must respond to their responsibility to ensure the well-being and welfare of all students, progress and achievement in school depends on this.

Early intervention is paramount to success. All referrals will be made to Margaret Banks.

This policy and guidance should be made with close reference to the Confidentiality Policy and Child Protection Policy.

## **What is Self-Harm?**

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

Some people have described self harm as a way to express suicidal feelings and thoughts without taking their own life.

Examples (not exhaustive)

- 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 have said they do it for a distraction, as self-punishment, as a way to symbolically cleanse themselves and to gain control, as a way to communicate without words, as a release of tension or as a form of comfort, to make themselves unattractive, to make them feel real or alive and because they may see it as a ritual or rite of passage into a group.

### **What is an Eating disorder?**

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 also 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.

Young people may display the following behaviours

- Loss of concentration
- Skipping meals
- Disappearing to the toilet after meals
- Pre occupation 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 fearful for example before an exam. These in turn can lead to sleep, problems, loss of appetite and ability to concentrate. This kind of anxiety can be useful because it makes you more alert and enhance performance. 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 lead to a panic attack.

Examples: (not Exhaustive)

- 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 doesn't stop you leading a normal life not 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;

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

### **Loss and Bereavement**

Pupils who experience such a loss will require early intervention and support

The process of referral

- All staff who is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a student should speak with the student's form tutor who has a daily contact with the student to share concerns.
- Form tutor should then notify the HOY, who will support the Form Tutor in the monitoring and support of the pupil. (Guidance provided by SSO).
- If any member of staff feels that the student is any immediate danger of harm, then the normal child protection procedures should follow. Refer to MBS, KMN, SHR, PHN.
- If the student 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 Student Support Officer, KMN, 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 , KMN MBS

### **Supporting students with mental health issues.**

School is able to offer a number of services and sign post others.

#### **In School support:**

- Mentoring, Form Tutor.
- AMBROSE.
- Positive support with trained staff, Student Support
- Peer listeners
- Social and Emotional aspects of learning, PSHE, most subjects.
- Regular updating of student noticeboard Positive Wellbeing

#### **Outside Agencies:**

- GP
- Child and Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Drop in with School nurse/Health Mentor
- Off the Record Counsellor
- Safeguarding, LA.

### **Supporting staff who are working with students with mental health issues.**

St Damian's School 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 a CAHMS primary mental health worker or any middle or senior leader in the school.

The school will provide a range of training in dealing with students with mental health problems. The training will be undertaken during directed time but may also be requested on a voluntary basis.

### **Personnel**

Governor	<b>Mrs L Keogh</b>
The designated person in charge of Child Protection	<b>Mrs M Banks</b>
Student Support Officer	Mrs J Wilkinson
Child Protection	Mrs S Hunter
SENCO/AMBROSE	Mrs R Seddon.

### **Monitoring, evaluation and accountability.**

The monitoring and evaluation of this policy will be carried out by Assistant Head Inclusion and reported to Governors as requested.

### **Linked Policies**

- Child Protection Policy
- Anti- Bullying Policy
- SEN, Policy and procedures.
- Confidentiality policy
- Medical needs policy