



PUPIL WELL-BEING IN ST. JOHN BOSCO RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

INTRODUCTION

“Mental health is a state of well-being 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 her or his community.” (World Health Organization 2014)

Mental Health, whether it is children or adults, can have a rather negative stigma attached to it, yet we believe that by raising the profile of this very important issue then only good things can come from it.

Children’s mental health and well-being is being reported on more and more, as you may have come across in the news quite frequently over the last few months. With a range of issues surrounding social media, self-esteem, social mobility and diet, among many others, it is clear that there is a nationwide concern emerging around children’s mental health - to the extent where the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge have pledged to offer their time and support.

What’s also apparent is that this issue is not specific to any particular age group, with children in primary schools, secondary schools and further education being recognised. It is fair to say that there is no ‘magic fix’ to this, but at St. John Bosco School we always try to support children’s mental health and any worries they may have.

We firmly believe that a happy child is a happy learner!

WHAT IS MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING?

Feelings of contentment, enjoyment, confidence and engagement with the world are all a part of mental wellbeing as are self-esteem and self-confidence. So are good relationships, which bring joy to you and those around you and the feeling that you can do the things you want to do.

It can help to think about "being well" as something you do, rather than something you are. The more you put in, the more you are likely to get out.

“No-one can give wellbeing to you. It's you who has to take action.”

At St John Bosco School we have two named members of staff who are available to chat with you about any issues you may have in school.

OUR WELLBEING CHAMPIONS ARE:

FOUNDATION STAGE/KEY STAGE 1:

MISS KELLY

KEY STAGE 2:

MRS COOKE

A Pastoral Support Worker also comes into school one afternoon per week to help us support our pupil wellbeing.

SCHOOLS ARE A CRUCIAL ENVIRONMENT FOR PROMOTING EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND RESILIENCE.

Schools are a universal service, accessed five days a week by most children. This means that over the course of their education, children spend over 7,800 hours at school. With such a huge amount of time spent in the classroom, schools provide an ideal environment for promoting good emotional wellbeing and identifying early behaviour changes and signs of mental distress.

For children experiencing adversity at home, school can also provide a consistent, protective and therapeutic environment, which can help them to cope. Parents see schools and teachers as the first port of call when raising concerns about their child's emotional wellbeing and mental health. Research has found that parents of children with mental health problems are most likely to seek advice or help from a teacher rather than any other professional or service.

Emotional wellbeing is a clear indicator of academic achievement and success in later life. There is clear evidence that emotional wellbeing is a key indicator of academic achievement, and subsequently improved outcomes in later life. The Department for Education has found that, on average, children with higher levels of emotional, behavioural, social and school wellbeing, had higher levels of academic achievement and were more engaged in school. Further evidence points to how pupils' ability to manage emotions can support or impede their learning, their academic engagement, work ethic, commitment and ultimate school success.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SCHOOL-BASED APPROACHES TO WELLBEING

There is growing evidence of the effectiveness of school-based approaches to promoting emotional wellbeing. Schools can play an important role in providing a safe, consistent environment for vulnerable children who may experience difficulties or adversity at home, as well as in early identification of need.

There is clear evidence that emotional wellbeing is a key indicator of academic achievement, and subsequently improved outcomes in later life

WISE UP – PRIORITISING WELLBEING IN SCHOOLS

Evidence shows that mental health initiatives in schools can lead to significant improvements in children's mental health, social and emotional skills, and reductions in classroom misbehaviour, anxiety, depression and bullying. Meanwhile, as discussed above, focusing on the wellbeing of students has also proven to be beneficial for a school's academic output. Overall, "whole school approaches" are most effective in promoting wellbeing and good mental health. These approaches can improve staff and pupil wellbeing, and have a positive impact on the prevention and reduction of mental health problems across school populations. Indeed, Ofsted has identified a strong correlation between schools that achieved a high grade for personal, social, health and economic education and those that were graded outstanding for overall effectiveness.

By a "whole school approach", we mean involving every individual in the school community: pupils, parents and all staff and volunteers. Crucially, it's also about strategy and leadership; the systems and structures within the school. Everyone has the chance to understand and implement practical things which will contribute to changes in practice and benefit all the pupils in the school. Additionally, this includes the school's relationship to the local community and wider mental health system, and their confidence and ability to commission relevant services. It can include strengthening relationships with local providers and commissioners to improve pathways into services for children and young people.

