



# Mental Health First Aider Policy 2022-2023

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this Mental Health First Aid Policy is to outline Rossington St Michael's CE Primary School's approach to Mental Health First Aiders in the workplace by setting out guidance in terms of the role of the Mental Health First Aider, the Responsibilities for Employers and Expectations and support for Employees. This policy is applicable to all of our employees.

## **General Definitions**

**Mental Health First Aid** is the help offered to someone developing a mental ill health problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing mental illness or a mental health crisis. The first aid given until appropriate professional help is received, or the crisis resolves.

A **Mental Health First Aider** is a person who has been formally accredited to administer mental health first aid in their workplace, by attending a Mental Health First Aid Course that has been delivered by an Accredited Mental Health First Aid Instructor.

## **Role of the Mental Health First Aider**

The Mental Health First Aider must:

- Hold a current Mental Health First Aid certificate endorsed by Mental Health First Aid England and be available for any additional training as required;
- Spend the vast majority of their working hours on site at the workplace for which they are nominated;
- Be able to be called away from their normal duties at short notice if required;
- Be able to maintain confidentiality as appropriate;
- Demonstrate an ability to relate well to other workers.

## **It is the responsibility of the Mental Health First Aider to:**

- Maintain their Mental Health First Aider accreditation with Mental Health First Aid England
- Provide mental health first aid within their work place as needed, at their level of competence and training;
- Escalate and document any matters if required in a prompt and appropriate fashion;
- Complete available refresher training as directed/required.

## **Confidentiality**

All at Rossington St Michael's school recognise that respecting the privacy of information relating to individuals who have received mental health first aid or may be experiencing a mental health problem or a mental health crisis at work is of high importance.

All Mental Health First Aiders are obligated to treat all matters sensitively and privately in accordance with Rossington St Michael's confidentiality protocols.

If at any time the Mental Health First Aider assesses there is a risk of harm to another individual, they must escalate the matter to the Head Teacher and they will advise on next steps.

If there is an urgent risk identified, emergency services should be contacted immediately.

### **Responsibilities of the Employer**

It is the responsibility of the employer to:

- Allow the Mental Health First Aider to undertake appropriate training as required;
- Advise the Mental Health First Aider if there are any psychological hazards in the workplace;
- Clearly communicate to workers how they can access the help of a Mental Health First Aider in suitable public areas;
- Provide an appropriate space within the workplace that is accessible and suitable for private conversations;
- Ensure workers have access to accredited Mental Health First Aiders at all time, where possible;
- Instruct Mental Health First Aiders not to exceed providing help, which is outside the scope of the mental health first aid;
- Ensure workers know what to do in a mental health crisis situation;
- Provide the funding and time for the Mental Health First Aider to maintain their Mental Health First Aid Accreditation.

### **Expectations of all workers**

It is expected that all workers will take reasonable care for their own health, safety and wellbeing whilst at work and also take reasonable care to ensure their acts or omissions do not adversely impact and affect the health, safety and wellbeing of other workers.

All workers are encouraged to speak to a Mental Health First Aider at any time should they feel they may be developing a mental health problem, experiencing a worsening of an existing mental illness or experiencing a mental health crisis.

If at any time a worker forms a belief that another worker may be developing a mental health problem, suffering from a mental illness or experiencing a mental health crisis they should contact a Mental Health First Aider who can signpost to the relevant support available.

In order to support the well-being of all our staff and pupils, we have a number of staff members who are trained in Mental Health First Aid. These adults are identifiable by their green lanyards, worn at times when they are emotionally available to provide support.

Adults who can provide this support are:

Mrs Cousins (Headteacher)– Senior Mental Health First Aider and Train the Trainer.

Mr Walker (Assistant Headteacher)- Mental Health First Aider- Adult

Mrs Norton (TA)– Mental Health First Aider and Train the Trainer.

Mrs Atherton- Mental Health First Aider- Adult and Youth

Mrs Dyson (SENCO)- Mental Health First Aider - Youth

Mrs Soffe- Mental Health First Aider- Youth

All Mental Health First Aiders are offered support through Supervision with a member of the Senior Leadership Team or through staff Peer Supervision.

### **Withdrawal**

If you wish to withdraw from your role as a Mental Health First Aider, please notify the Headteacher.

### **Lifestyle Choices**

There are some really simple things employees can do to make themselves feel fit and well.

- **Take the time** - It's easy to become so immersed in stressful situations that you can't afford the time or the personal space to stand back and re-evaluate your objectives in life and how you can achieve them. Take the time to ask yourself some questions and make sure you're doing the right things to achieve your goals.
- **Keep active** - Exercise is a proven way to keep fit and well. Exercise can make you feel better instantly through the release of uplifting chemicals into your body. Even just half an hour's brisk walk every other day can make all the difference. Keep active.
- **Eat well** - A balanced diet is the key to good health. People under stress tend to over and under eat, or slip into the habit of rushed inadequate meals. Research shows direct links between what we eat and how we feel.

- **Sleep well** - Apart from making you feel tired and run down, not getting enough sleep makes you more prone to health problems. Aim for a good night's sleep every night.
- **Relax** - Relaxation is one of the most effective ways of promoting wellness. Make sure you take time out of your day to relax.
- **Drink sensibly** - Even though it might make us feel good in the short term, alcohol is a depressant drug.
- **Keep in touch** - It is important to maintain relationships at home and at work. Relationships have a huge impact on how we feel on a daily basis.

### **Commitment to Work Life Balance**

The school is committed to improving employees' work life balance and their well-being;

### **Unmeasured working time**

Where employees are contracted to work unmeasured time, for example the Leadership Team, the Trust undertakes to ensure that the schools' requirements and expectations are reasonable.

### **Employment Policies and Practices**

The school undertakes to adopt and apply the appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of part time working, flexible working patterns etc. where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the school. This extends to the school adopting policies and providing clear guidance on time off for public or Trade Union duties, or for personal reasons (see Leave of Absence Policy).

### **Individual and Team Workloads**

The school ensures that timetables reflect a fair and reasonable balance of work between different employees. The school will ensure that new and emerging priorities are discussed with the employees affected and that ways of managing the implications for individual workloads are addressed.

### **Employee Voice/Questionnaire**

The Trust carries out an annual workforce questionnaire which focuses on working conditions, covering issues such as the working environment in classrooms and on the school site. It also focuses on the more specific demands of roles, covering issues such as:

- Workload pressures
- Support from colleagues and Leadership
- Availability of training and development opportunities

### **FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS**

Once the questionnaires have been collated, Trust Leaders will:

- Calculate the average score for each question
- Write a report/action plan highlighting the areas of good and bad feedback
- Arrange a whole-team staff meeting to discuss findings of the report
- Report findings to Governors

### **Implementing Changes**

Information from the report and the meeting helps Trust Leaders to create an action plan for the whole school and individual employees. These plans may focus on smaller changes, such as improving communication with Leadership or encouraging employees to prioritise work, or longer-term priorities such as developing the school building. The Trust ensures that the questionnaire bring about continuous school improvement and increase the quality of mental health of all employees.