Painsley Catholic College

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

INTERNAL POLICY

Approved by:	Governors	**Date:** September 2026
Last reviewed on:	September 2026	
Next review due by:	December 2027	

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Last Updated September 2026

Policy Statement

> *Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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 Organisation)*

Catholic Social Teachings should be part of what underpins the whole experience in a Catholic school. In this policy, we particularly focus on the Catholic Social Teachings of 'Dignity at Work' and 'Rights and Responsibilities'.

At Painsley Catholic College, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using, whole school approaches for pupils through prayer and liturgy, PSHE curriculum and Pastoral / Citizenship time and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils (referrals to outside organisations / counsellors). For staff, we have a risk assessment that meets the HSE Management Standards. It ensures full consideration is given to working practices so that staff wellbeing is nurtured with leaders considering how workload and deadlines can be improved.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff, and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our SEND policy where a pupil has an identified special educational need and the anti-bullying policy. Additionally, the Workload and Wellbeing statement clearly sets out the expectations for all stakeholders of the Painsley Catholic Academy. Pertinent Painsley multi-academy values include:

People Really Matter!
Leaders who are relentlessly positive
Strong courageous leadership habits within every leader; be bold, be brave!

Work in an environment in which people feel safe, seen, heard and respected
A culture of talking straight, demonstrating respect, confronting reality, clarify expectations, keep commitments
Have high expectations of everybody and value them at all times

The Policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff in the workplace
- Provides support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to staff suffering mental ill health
- Provide support to pupils suffering from mental health and their peers and parents or carers

Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students and staff, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Mr D J Bullock - Designated Safeguarding Lead / Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead (Mental health first aider)
- Mrs S Barker – Senior Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead
- Mrs Lisa Dudley – Deputy Designated Safeguard Lead
- Mrs A Dudley / Miss L Rhodes / Mrs J Ingram – Mental Health first aiders
- Year 7 Pastoral leads – Mr McCusker / Mrs Lambert
- Year 8 Pastoral leads – Mrs Taylor / Mr Rushton / Mr Harvey / Mrs Sowter-Allen
- Year 9 Pastoral leads – Mrs Skellern / Miss Fish / Mrs Wright / Miss Moore / Mr Bullock
- Year 10 Pastoral leads – Miss Blackburn, Mr Mayer, Mrs Cornwell, Mr Alcock, Mr Palmer
- Year 11 Pastoral leads – Mr Allen, Miss Dutton, Mr Morris, Mr Hendley
- KS3 Lead Mr Waugh, KS4 Lead Mrs Rooney
- Mr Hendley – Personal Development Lead (PSHE/RSHE/Citizenship)
- Mrs R Waugh - Principal

Staff

Mental health and staff wellbeing have a high priority at Painsley Catholic College. Leaders have a pastoral responsibility to safeguard the mental health and wellbeing of all school staff. It is important that staff know how to identify signs of declining mental health. Leaders receive training to know what support is available internally, locally, nationally and remotely (online). By having open and candid conversations about mental health and wellbeing, leaders ensure that good mental health remains high on the development agenda.

Some of the signs that there might be a serious problem include:
•increased tiredness or absences
•angry or aggressive behaviours
•poor concentration, where a colleague cannot focus
•a colleague seems withdrawn, silent, lacks friends, especially if this is a change in behaviour
•a colleague appears overly anxious or worried, even fearful.

Particularly helpful external organisations are:

•Mind
•TeacherMentalHealth.org
•Young Minds
•Samaritans.

It is important in our school to provide support to those in need and to give time to a colleague who is suffering from mental health. A gentle discussion and encouragement can go a long way in raising a person's self-esteem and may encourage them to seek further help.

We have an open culture whereby staff can raise issues regarding workload and pressures. Leaders should respond openly and caringly to such concerns. The aim should be to ease the pressure and raise an individual's self-esteem and provide the support necessary.

The following are some of the strategies employed to support mental health and wellbeing.

A communication charter for staff/pupils/parents.

Staff/pupils/parents and Governors follow the Workload and Wellbeing statement.

Staff and governors have been informed to not send emails before 8am or after 7pm or at the weekends.

Development and accountability strategies, such as coaching sessions, include staff feedback so they have the opportunity to comment on their perceptions and fairness of the process.

Trusting – we do not direct 1265 hours – in fact most teachers are directed for 1260 hours. This is so staff can work from home rather than be directed at school.
Supporting staff at work – simple things can add up to big changes in overall feelings of wellbeing – so we try to ask "How are you?", we listen when employees ask for help and try to be flexible and considerate. We truly believe in exceptional communication and believe that this is at the heart of the process of maintaining a healthy, positive mental health environment.

We are highly visible around the school and promote behaviour for learning.
We drop into lessons to ensure that pupils are behaving appropriately and completing work as necessary.

We do not allow staff to be put into awkward situations and are always present at parents' evenings etc.

The chaplaincy team play a key role in supporting staff in our Catholic school.

Communicating – we help employees to fulfil their job and encourage them to talk to us about issues affecting both their home and work life. See Appendix D for details.

Keeping a healthy workplace – we keep our workplace healthy and safe for employees – fitness sessions are offered / there is an induction to the fitness suite / healthy options on offer in the canteen / free flu jabs / the building is kept clean and tidy.

Encouraging healthy living – we encourage our employees to live healthy lives, for example, by offering healthier food in the dining room. Offering food and refreshments before parents' evenings

Monitoring employees – we make it our business to know that employees are healthy and feel well. Return to work meetings take place to ensure the staff member is fit for work. A number of members of staff have gone home from illness during the day. Set procedures are in place for informing school of an absence. Phased returns are encouraged where appropriate. We monitor absence records to ensure that any patterns and warning signs are raised quickly so the employee can be supported.
Being pro-active – we look at our records regularly so we can identify problems and then take action to solve them.

Supporting employees who are not fit for work – we help them return to work, for example, by using fit notes to identify work they may be able to do etc.

Investing/Training – we spend money on health and wellbeing and professional development to relieve the stress of uncertainty. Indeed, we spend a considerable amount on the professional development of all staff.

We do our best to ensure that the environment is pleasant and the building is modern and comfortable.

Keeping staff informed – we make our employees aware of health issues by including them in information and advice in the workplace e.g. working at heights, manual handling issues, using the internet etc. / safeguarding procedures.

There is a change team group which a number of staff sit on, a wellbeing questionnaire and action plan to improve wellbeing.

We are one of the first schools to sign up to the Wellbeing Award Scheme.

A weekly good practice session focuses on strategies that have an impact and reduce workload through, for example, a more efficient approach to assessment.

Mental health and wellbeing is a set item on leadership discussions.

Job descriptions clearly set out roles and responsibilities.

Staff are asked what day is best for them to complete duty so they are not teaching 5 lessons as well as doing other duties.

Staff choose when interventions will take place to fit in with their schedule.

Other strategies include consideration of:
lead-in times for significant changes.
reducing the speed and frequency of change.
protecting teachers from unnecessary administrative tasks.
keeping meeting times to a minimum. For example, meetings are replaced with a written bulletin.
delegating the assessment policies to departments so staff can have a say in devising them.
the demands of the calendar. We attempt to stagger those tasks that increase workload.
publicly thanking staff for their efforts and wishing them a 'Happy Birthday'!

Pupils

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the

pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated safeguard lead who will inform the Principal. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting a first aider and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS / Younger Minds is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Mr D Bullock - mental health lead / safeguard lead, Mrs S Barker – senior deputy safeguard lead and Mrs L Dudley – Deputy designated safeguard lead or Mrs M Barlow (EWW). Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided in Appendix D.

Individual Care Plans

An individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health will be completed. This will be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This will include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play
- A risk assessment

Teaching and Mental Health

When children and staff are rewarded and feel they can achieve their goals, they feel good about themselves which benefits their mental health and wellbeing. When children and staff are rewarded this leads to increased motivation which in turn increases resilience and improved positive mental health.

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils and staff to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental RSE/RHE/PSHE / Citizenship curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Signposting

We will ensure that governors, staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined in Appendix A.

We will display relevant sources of support throughout school and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

Warning Signs

School staff will be aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil or other member of staff is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should **always** be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with DSL, DDSL, Line manager or the mental health and emotional wellbeing lead.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretively
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Anti-Bullying

Bullying including sexual violence and harassment can affect physical and emotional health, both in the short term and later in life. It can lead to physical injury, social problems and emotional problems. Those who are bullied are at increased risk of mental health problems and problems adjusting to school. Bullying also can cause long-term damage to self-esteem. This is why this policy is used in conjunction with the anti-bullying.
Any pupil who is identified as being bullied and is vulnerable to mental and emotional problems will be monitored closely by the wellbeing and safeguarding lead.

Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why? For more information about how to handle mental health disclosures sensitively see appendix C.

All disclosures should be recorded on my concern and held on the pupil's confidential file.

This information should be shared with the mental health lead, Mr D Bullock. See appendix D for guidance about making a referral to CAMHS.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil or staff on, then we should discuss with the pupil and staff:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a pupil without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. Pupils up to the age of 18 who we feel are in danger of harm or feel have poor mental health then the staff member must pass this on through the relevant safeguarding channels.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the mental health lead or deputy leads. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence; and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed if we have a concern over the pupil's physical or mental wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying safeguarding issues, parents should not be informed, but the safeguard lead and first response must be informed immediately.

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, and other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too, e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means for parents contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow-up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents via the website
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through information evenings

Supporting Peers

When a pupil or staff member is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends or colleagues. Friends or colleagues often want to support but do not know how. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends or colleagues may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations with the pupil or staff member who is suffering and in the case of pupils their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What is helpful for friends and colleagues to know and what they should not be told
- How friends and colleagues can best support
- Things friends and colleagues should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend or colleague may need help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's / colleagues' condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Physical Activity

Research shows that physical activity improves mood and mental health. Exercise promotes chemicals in the brain that improve your mood and make you more relaxed. Specifically, the brain releases feel-good chemicals called endorphins throughout the body. Physical activity reduces anxiety and depressed mood, and enhances self-esteem.

Training

As a minimum, all governors and staff will receive training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular safeguarding training to enable them to keep pupils safe. This will be covered as part of the Wednesday morning briefings or as part of a school inset. Most staff will also gain key information about signs of mental wellbeing through their planning when teaching this topic area as part of the Emmaus and pastoral programme.

We will host relevant information on our website about the signs of mental health illness. The MindEd learning portal[1] provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our appraisal process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with our CPD Coordinator, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 1 year as a minimum. It is next due for review in September 2027.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to Mr D Bullock our mental health lead via email djb@painsley.staffs.sch.uk

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

Appendix A: Further information and sources of support about common mental health issues

Support on all these issues can be accessed via Young Minds (www.youngminds.org.uk), Mind (www.mind.org.uk) and (for e-learning opportunities) Minded (www.minded.org.uk).

Self-harm

Self-harm describes any behaviour where a young person causes harm to themselves in order to cope with thoughts, feelings or experiences they are not able to manage in any other way. It most frequently takes the form of cutting, burning or non-lethal overdoses in adolescents, while younger children and young people with special needs are more likely to pick or scratch at wounds, pull out their hair or bang or bruise themselves.

Online support

SelfHarm.co.uk: www.selfharm.co.uk
National Self-Harm Network: www.nshn.co.uk

Books

Pooky Knightsmith (2015) *Self-Harm and Eating Disorders in Schools: A Guide to Whole School Support and Practical Strategies*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Keith Hawton and Karen Rodham (2006) *By Their Own Young Hand: Deliberate Self-harm and Suicidal Ideas in Adolescents*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Carol Fitzpatrick (2012) *A Short Introduction to Understanding and Supporting Children and Young People Who Self-Harm*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Depression

Ups and downs are a normal part of life for all of us, but for someone who is suffering from depression these ups and downs may be more extreme. Feelings of failure, hopelessness, numbness or sadness may invade their day-to-day life over an extended period of weeks or months, and have a significant impact on their behaviour and ability and motivation to engage in day-to-day activities.

Online support

Depression Alliance

Books

Anxiety, panic attacks and phobias

Anxiety can take many forms in children and young people, and it is something that each of us experiences at low levels as part of normal life. When thoughts of anxiety, fear or panic are repeatedly present over several weeks or months and/or they are beginning to impact on a young person's ability to access or enjoy day-to-day life, intervention is needed.

Online support

Anxiety UK: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Books

Lucy Willetts and Polly Waite (2014) *Can I Tell you about Anxiety?: A guide for friends, family and professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Carol Fitzpatrick (2015) *A Short Introduction to Helping Young People Manage Anxiety*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Obsessions and compulsions

Obsessions describe intrusive thoughts or feelings that enter our minds which are disturbing or upsetting; compulsions are the behaviours we carry out in order to manage those thoughts or feelings. For example, a young person may be constantly worried that their house will burn down if they don't turn off all switches before leaving the house. They may respond to these thoughts by repeatedly checking switches, perhaps returning home several times to do so. Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) can take many forms – it is not just about cleaning and checking.

Online support

OCD UK: www.ocduk.org/ocd

Books

Amita Jassi and Sarah Hull (2013) *Can I Tell you about OCD?: A guide for friends, family and professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Susan Conners (2011) *The Tourette Syndrome & OCD Checklist: A practical reference for parents and teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Suicidal feelings

Young people may experience complicated thoughts and feelings about wanting to end their own lives. Some young people never act on these feelings though they may openly discuss and explore them, while other young people die suddenly from suicide apparently out of the blue.

Online support

Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org

www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/research-and-resources/on-the-edge-childline-spotlight/

Books

Keith Hawton and Karen Rodham (2006) *By Their Own Young Hand: Deliberate Self-harm and Suicidal Ideas in Adolescents*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Terri A.Erbacher, Jonathan B. Singer and Scott Poland (2015) *Suicide in Schools: A Practitioner's Guide to Multi-level Prevention, Assessment, Intervention, and Postvention*. New York: Routledge

Eating problems

Food, weight and shape may be used as a way of coping with, or communicating about, difficult thoughts, feelings and behaviours that a young person experiences day to day. Some young people develop eating disorders such as anorexia (where food intake is restricted), binge eating disorder and bulimia nervosa (a cycle of bingeing and purging). Other young people, particularly those of primary or preschool age, may develop problematic behaviours around food including refusing to eat in certain situations or with certain people. This can be a way of communicating messages the child does not have the words to convey.

Online support

Beat – the eating disorders charity: https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/get-information-and-support/get-help-for-myself/i-need-support-now/helplines/

Books

Bryan Lask and Lucy Watson (2014) *Can I tell you about Eating Disorders?: A Guide for Friends, Family and Professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Pooky Knightsmith (2015) *Self-Harm and Eating Disorders in Schools: A Guide to Whole School Support and Practical Strategies*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Pooky Knightsmith (2012) *Eating Disorders Pocketbook*. Teachers' Pocketbooks

Appendix C: Talking to pupils when they make mental health disclosures

Focus on listening

If a pupil has come to you, it's because they trust you and feel a need to share their difficulties with someone. Let them talk. Ask occasional open questions if you need to in order to encourage them to keep exploring their feelings and opening up to you. Just letting them pour out what they're thinking will make a huge difference and marks a huge first step in recovery. Up until now they may not have admitted even to themselves that there is a problem.

Don't talk too much

The pupil should be talking at least three quarters of the time. If that's not the case then you need to redress the balance. You are here to listen, not to talk. Sometimes the conversation may lapse into silence. Try not to give in to the urge to fill the gap, but rather wait until the pupil does so. This can often lead to them exploring their feelings more deeply. Of course, you should interject occasionally, perhaps with questions to the pupil to explore certain topics they've touched on more deeply, or to show that you understand and are supportive. Don't feel an urge to over-analyse the situation or try to offer answers. This all comes later. For now your role is simply one of supportive listener. So make sure you're listening!

Don't pretend to understand

The concept of a mental health difficulty such as an eating disorder or obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) can seem completely alien if you've never experienced these difficulties first hand. You may find yourself wondering why on earth someone would do these things to themselves, but don't explore those feelings with the sufferer. Instead listen hard to what they're saying and encourage them to talk and you'll slowly start to understand what steps they might be ready to take in order to start making some changes.

Don't be afraid to make eye contact

It's important to try to maintain a natural level of eye contact (even if you have to think very hard about doing so and it doesn't feel natural to you at all). If you make too much eye contact, the pupil may interpret this as you staring at them. They may think that you are horrified about what they are saying or think they are a 'freak'. On the other hand, if you don't make eye contact at all then a pupil may interpret this as you being disgusted by them – to the extent that you can't bring yourself to look at them.

Making an effort to maintain natural eye contact will convey a very positive message to the pupil.

Offer support

Never leave this kind of conversation without agreeing next steps. These will be informed by your conversations with appropriate colleagues and the school' policies on such issues. Whatever happens, you should have some form of next steps to carry out after the conversation because this will help the pupil to realise that you're working with them to move things forward.

Acknowledge how hard it is to discuss these issues

It can take a young person weeks or even months to admit to themselves they have a problem, themselves, let alone share that with anyone else. If a pupil chooses to confide in you, you should feel proud and privileged that they have such a high level of trust in you. Acknowledging both how brave they have been, and how glad you are they chose to speak to you, conveys positive messages of support to the pupil.

Don't assume that an apparently negative response is actually a negative response

Despite the fact that a pupil has confided in you, and may even have expressed a desire to get on top of their illness, that doesn't mean they'll readily accept help. The illness may ensure they resist any form of help for as long as they possibly can. Don't be offended or upset if your offers of help are met with anger, indifference or insolence; it's the illness talking, not the pupil.

Never break your promises

Above all else, a pupil wants to know they can trust you. That means if they want you to keep their issues confidential and you can't then you must be honest. Explain that, whilst you can't keep it a secret, you can ensure that it is handled within the school's policy of confidentiality and that only those who need to know about it in order to help will know about the situation. You can also be honest about the fact you don't have all the answers or aren't exactly sure what will happen next. Consider yourself the pupil's ally rather than their saviour and think about which next steps you can take together, always ensuring you follow relevant policies and consult appropriate colleagues.

Appendix D Communication Charters

Communication

We believe that exceptional communication skills enhance the spiritual development, the life chances and opportunities of all in the community

Parents	Key points
General ethos	**People Really Matter!** The very best learning opportunities for our pupils An outstanding partnership with parents that is built on trust and respect *Associated Gospel value: dignity and compassion* *Associated Catholic Social Teaching: dignity of work and rights of the workers*
Relationships	We aim to develop a partnership with all of our parents. We believe in your child and will do all we can to work with you. This is something that happens continually. All staff, from the Principal down, are happy to meet you at a mutually convenient time.
Advice and guidance	We provide practical strategies to support learning at home so parents work in partnership with us in terms of their child's spiritual, social and academic development.
Communications	We tailor school communications to encourage positive communication about your child's learning throughout the year. We will not simply give you information but we aim to actively seek out information from you about your child.
Your child's learning	Your survey responses tell us that you do not always feel that you are being updated about what your child is learning in class. Therefore, as a CMAT family, we will be trialling strategies to keep you regularly informed about what your child is learning in class so you can have discussions about the subject content. Please do let us know your thoughts about the strategies/any possible suggestions.
Parents' evenings	Parents' evenings are a positive experience that build on the belief that your child can succeed. We offer practical advice for what your child needs to do to develop work/approach to school life.
Additional support	Parents know their child best. Therefore, we ask that parents contact school if there are any issues of concern and we will give additional support as necessary. We all want the best for your child.

Reports	We time reports so they are meaningful and inform you of the way forward. We will be honest about any barriers in terms of your child's progress and will offer solutions to these working in partnership with you.
Policies	We will always consider (and, where appropriate, involve) parents when drafting policies. We aim to make policies accessible and easy to understand.
Emails	We will respond to emails within **3 working days**. If a matter is **urgent**, please contact reception and we will **speak to you that day**. We ask that parents refrain from emailing staff outside the hours of 8-5 Monday to Friday.
Understanding	Any relationship is built on understanding. We are limited by law regarding our decisions on certain points such as holidays in term time. Please respect the legal frameworks we operate in.
Attendance	We will work with you to ensure that your child attends school regularly and arrives on time. This is because your child will quickly fall behind if they are not present or are late. We have busy, fun days! If there are any barriers to your child attending school, please let us know.
Praise	We appreciate any positive feedback and recognition of our actions. Please do let us know any positive feedback via email: tellus@painsley.staffs.sch.uk
Resolutions/ Complaints	Sadly, there are times when relationships can be strained. Therefore, we have an easy to follow a resolution and complaints procedure. If a parent is unhappy with any aspect of the school, please follow the policy and we will work together to resolve the issue. For general recommendations on improvements, please email: tellus@painsley.staffs.sch.uk
Phone calls	Reception staff will ensure that **parents receive a call back on the day** of an incoming call. If this cannot be the case, parents will be called to inform them when the call will be made. If the matter is urgent, a senior member of staff will either take the call immediately or contact you on the same day.
Induction	All pupils and their families are entitled to a full induction programme consisting of at least an initial meeting and a tour of the school along with sessions in school to ensure you feel fully supported and are happy with your child's education.
Pupil wellbeing	If you notice any changes in your child at home, please let us know. We will not tolerate any form of bullying at school and will work with you to ensure your child is not in any harm. Sometimes, a child behaves differently at home compared to school so it is important you contact us. We care very much about your child. We will also regularly signpost you to services that the Local Authority offers.
Staff wellbeing	Staff work very hard to support your child. We ask, in a spirit of positive relationships with our Catholic school, that staff are treated with respect at all times, and we will do the same with you.

Positive behaviour	We strive for a consistent approach to behaviour between parents and the school, for example, by sharing expectations with parents. Working in partnership provides for a much better understanding between us and benefits your child.
Invites to school	We warmly welcome you to visit school throughout the year including the opportunity to visit lessons and understand the strategies we use to maximise learning.
Changes to circumstances at home	We understand the pressures of life including relationship breakdowns, financial difficulties and other challenges we face. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you need any support or just a friendly person to talk to!
Surveys	We will carry out an annual survey in order to understand how parents feel about communication with the school and follow up any areas in partnership with parents.
Parishes	We will work with you and the parish so that your child has the opportunity to embrace the word of God.

Communication

We believe that exceptional communication skills enhance the spiritual development, the life chances and opportunities of all in the community

Staff	Key points
General ethos	**People Really Matter!** CPD for all staff to ensure they become the best version of themselves The very best learning opportunities for our pupils *Associated Gospel value: dignity and compassion* *Associated Catholic Social Teaching: dignity of work and rights of the workers* **Leadership (Board/LGBs/Executive Leaders/Principals/Subject Leads/Pastoral Leads/SBMs)** **Leaders who are relentlessly positive** Strong courageous leadership habits within every leader; be bold, be brave! *Associated Gospel value: sacrifice and service* *Associated Catholic Social Teaching: stewardship of God's creation/dignity of work* **Workplace Culture** Work in an environment in which people feel safe, seen, heard and respected A culture of talking straight, demonstrating respect, confronting reality, clarify expectations, keep commitments Have high expectations of everybody and value them at all times *Associated Gospel values: tolerance and peace/mercy and forgiveness* *Associated Catholic Social Teaching: rights and responsibilities/dignity of the human person*
Calendar	Issued early July for the following academic year with the opportunity for staff feedback. Very few (if any) additions to be made to the calendar during the year as this causes additional burdens on staff
Annual survey	To be completed in January with the findings reported by the CEO and relevant actions added to the communication IP
Coaching	Coaching is a fun, non-judgemental process that involves guiding coachees, through how/what questions, to maximise the impact of the PAINSLEY model. CMAT executive leaders, Principals and senior leaders will conduct weekly coaching sessions. Staff to be involved in the coaching process (with peers and across subjects/CMAT schools) on at least a monthly basis. This will allow for deep and impactful professional development. Staff will have discretion over how to arrange the time without having a negative impact on workload. For example, the use of leadership and management time/non-contact time; the 2 days' CPD entitlement; INSET time; department time etc

CPD entitlement	An additional 2 days off timetable per year to focus on an area of personal interest
INSET	At least 1 day of the 5 to be decided by individual departments/staff
Line management	All leaders to have a line management meeting per fortnight (senior leaders/core subjects a meeting per week)
Appraisal	Following feedback from staff, formal observations will be **removed** from the appraisal process. We will instead focus on coaching, which is a supportive, positive and collectively challenging process as we try to achieve our aim of exceptional communication in all aspects of our role/team/school/CMAT. All staff to have a brief monthly meeting with the appraiser to discuss progress and wellbeing.
Weekly briefings	To update staff on events (this is for information giving only).
Policies	Prior to the introduction of policies that will impact workload, staff are consulted over the contents and practical implications. Staff have access to all policies and have a formal channel communicated by the school to comment on any areas that are not working Staff to have particular awareness of the Communications Policy; Dealing with Persistent or Vexatious Complainants; Flexible Working policy; Appraisal; Grievance; Whistleblowing; Health and Safety; Safeguarding (and related); Sickness Absence; Time Off policy; Workload and Wellbeing Statement.
Research ticket	Staff are entitled to subscribe to a professional association/other relevant body to further their professional development (to be authorised by the relevant line manager).
Staff CPD meetings	Department/staff meetings to be focused on CPD on at least 15 occasions during the year.
Reducing bureaucracy	Each school to ask staff for ideas on reducing bureaucracy. These will be presented to the CMAT Executive team.
Behaviour management	Staff are entitled for same day feedback from senior staff on the outcomes of any issues regarding behaviour management incidents.
Relationships	Communication to and from stakeholders reveals respect, self-regulation and good manners. Staff are supported by senior staff in any incident where this is not the case. In the general areas of the school, adults model body language and tone that supports the positive ethos of the school. There is an emphasis on teamwork and supporting each other as one CMAT family.

	Building exceptional relationships between school and parents is key to a child's success. The CMAT will trial strategies to continue to build such relations. A focus will be on informing parents what their child is learning at school as surveys reveal that this is an area that parents express the least satisfaction. Parents are expected to treat staff with respect and courtesy at all times. If you would like to talk to a member of the Executive team (Steve Bell, Jo Bradbury, Cathy Horton, Gill Wretham), please email them directly to arrange a meeting or email tellus@painsley.staffs.sch.uk. It is lovely to hear positive comments about your school/colleagues as well as any issues that require resolution. We are here for you!
Emails	No emails will be sent outside of the hours of 8-7 Monday-Thursday and 8-5 on Fridays. Parents will understand that the response time is 3 days. Where appropriate, staff will acknowledge emails received from leaders, other staff, parents and other stakeholders. Please see the table on page 4 for details.
Phone calls	Reception staff will ensure that parents receive a call back **on the day** of an incoming call. If this cannot be the case, parents will be called to inform them when the call will be made. If the matter is urgent, a senior member of staff to take the call immediately.
Induction	All staff are entitled to a full induction programme consisting of at least 2 full days plus half-termly meetings to check they are being fully supported and are happy in their role.
Reducing curriculum workload	The CMAT schools to share best practice in order to reduce the workload demands on individual staff within individual schools. Commercially available evidenced-based packages to be used where appropriate (for example, Power Maths. Red Write Inc etc).
Parents' evenings	Parents' evenings to last no more than 2 hours (excluding breaks) and be at a time that allows staff to go home and relax prior to returning to work the next day. Any issues in which a member of staff is made to feel uncomfortable during the evening will be addressed by senior staff prior to the member of staff leaving school so that they feel supported.
Wellbeing	Staff are offered free confidential counselling. Even if few members of staff take it up, the knowledge that it's there helps to provide a safety net. There is a trained Senior Mental Health Lead in each school Conduct 'return to work' conversations following an absence. This can help to uncover any issues as soon as they emerge. Staff are encouraged to socialise with each other and have fun!

Examples of email content	Email or No Email	Action
Lost Property	No email	Send student to check in the lost property area in the student office
Issues relating to teaching and learning (deadlines, approaching, CPD meetings etc.)	One email a week	Weekly bulletin emailed out centrally
Issues about students not being sat together	No email	Issued on weekly bulletin from briefing
Email requests for drivers needed for trips	Email	To all staff
Students out on trips	Email	To teachers of particular students via MIS
Moderation/exam details	Email	To teachers only
Sports Club and fixtures	Email	To teachers of particular students
SEND top tips	Email	Email to teachers and TAs periodically
Injured student, leaving lessons early	Email	Daily bulletin that includes: briefing notes, sports fixtures/clubs, students injured, students on report and events taking place in week. Emailed to all staff.
Students and mentors	Email	Email to teachers

Communication

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Pupils	Key points
General ethos	**People Really Matter!** The very best learning opportunities for our pupils An outstanding partnership with parents that is built on trust and respect *Associated Gospel value: dignity and compassion* ***Associated Catholic Social Teaching: dignity of work and rights of the workers***
Relationships	We aim to develop a great relationship with you so that you achieve the very best version of yourself. We believe in you and care for you and will do all we can to help you grow and mature as children of God. You will have someone you can talk to in school and we will make sure that you feel supported.
Advice and guidance	We will guide you through lessons so that you fully understand the learning process. We provide homework to support learning at home so you can build on what you have learned in school. We will ensure you receive advice and guidance regarding careers and offer general support for you as you mature.
Communications	We will positively communicate with you about your learning throughout the year. We will not simply give you information but we aim to actively seek out information from you. We will do this by really listening to you!
Your learning	We will make your lessons interesting and fun so you are enthusiastic and curious learners. We want you to be fully involved in all lessons and enjoy your learning.
Additional support	We all want the best for you and understand that you may need additional help either all of the time or some of the time. It is important to us that you feel supported and you must tell us if you don't. Alternatively, ask your parents to contact us if that is easier for you or ask a friend to talk to us. We can't help if we don't know!
Reports	We time reports so they are meaningful and inform you of the way forward. We will be honest about any barriers in terms of your progress and will offer solutions to these working in partnership with you.
Policies	We will always consider (and, where appropriate, involve) you when drafting policies. We aim to make policies accessible and easy to understand so that you receive a safe and outstanding education.

Understanding	Any relationship is built on understanding. We ask you to self-regulate by following the policies of the school. We can then focus on you as a person rather than having to focus on matters such as uniform. We will also listen carefully so that we understand if anything is bothering you. We will then do all we can to help.
Attendance	We will work with you to ensure that you attend school regularly and arrive on time. This is because you will quickly fall behind if you are not present or are late. We have busy, fun days! If there are any barriers to you attending school, please let us know so we can understand how we can help you.
Listening to you	We will always try our best to listen to your views and treat you with respect. However, there are times when you may feel as if staff are not listening to you. If this is the case, talk to another member of staff who you trust. If this does not work, talk to the Principal. Members of the CMAT Executive team (Mr Bell, CEO; Mrs Bradbury, Chief Operating Officer; Mrs Horton and Mrs Wretham, Deputy CEOs) also visit your schools and you can ask to talk to them too. You can also contact the Executive team via tellus@painsley.staffs.sch.uk. It would be lovely to hear positive things about your experiences/teachers/support staff. You can also raise any concerns with us but we ask you to use the school communications first. Finally, your parents can use the easy to follow complaints procedure that is available on the website. We will work together to resolve any problem.
Praise	We appreciate any positive feedback and recognition of our actions. Please do let us know what you like/enjoy about school.
Induction	You and your families are entitled to a full induction programme consisting of at least an initial meeting and a tour of the school along with sessions in school to ensure you feel fully supported and are happy with your education.
Pupil wellbeing	If you notice any changes in a friend or classmate's behaviour, please let us know. We will not tolerate any form of bullying at school and will work to ensure all pupils are safe and not in any harm. We care very much about you.
Staff wellbeing	Staff work very hard to support you. We ask, in a spirit of a positive relationship within our Catholic school, that staff are treated with respect at all times, and we will do the same with you.
Positive behaviour	We strive for a consistent approach to behaviour, for example, by sharing expectations with you and your parents. Working in partnership provides for a much better understanding between us and benefits you. We will always explain why rules exist and not just tell you what they are.
Changes to circumstances at home	We understand the pressures of life. Please do not hesitate to talk to us if you need any support or just a friendly person to talk to!
Surveys	We will carry out an annual survey in order to understand how you feel about communication in school and follow up any areas in partnership with you and parents.
Parishes	We will work with you and the parish to ensure you embrace the word of God.