

Mental Health Policy (Pupils)

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Introduction

Shaw Education Trust and our academies are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all pupils, their families, members of staff and local academy councillors. Good mental health and wellbeing helps children and young people to:

- Develop into a happy, well-rounded citizen
- attend school regularly
- fully engage in learning
- fulfil their potential and lead a fulfilling life

Our academy contributes to wellbeing by providing:

- a safe, calm and supportive learning environment
- early targeted support for learners who need help
- opportunities for pupil voice

This policy is for all adults, including parents/carers, outlining our approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing and should be read alongside our 'Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy' (see especially section 22 within that policy).

This policy has been equality impact assessed and we believe is in line with the Equality Act 2010. It does not have an adverse effect on race, gender or disability equality.

Aims

Our academy aims and principles align with those promoted by DfE, namely:

- an ethos and environment that promotes respect, and values diversity
- leadership and management that supports and champions efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing
- staff development to support their own wellbeing and, that of pupils and learners
- curriculum teaching and learning to promote resilience and support social and emotional learning
- enabling student voice to influence decisions
- identifying the need for and monitoring the impact of interventions
- targeted support and appropriate referral
- working closely with parents and carers

Key staff members within our Academy

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

SLT: to ensure a positive approach to mental health is encouraged across the academy, and a process is in place to identify and support pupils in need.

Mental Health Lead: to determine and implement the processes which identify and support pupils in need, including external support.

Designated Safeguarding Lead: To ensure all relevant incidents are recorded and information is shared with relevant colleagues both regarding individual pupils and mental health data.

PSHE/RSC Lead: to ensure that mental health and well-being are integral aspects of the PSHE Curriculum (or equivalent), and relevant to the academy cohort's needs.

Other staff with specific responsibilities to support MH work, e.g. Pastoral Leads, Attendance leads, SEND staff, and MH Trained staff: to support relevant pupils in their care, including those most in need through use of personal plans.

All staff: to be vigilant of all behaviours which may indicate that a pupil is in need of support and refer as appropriate to the relevant colleague.

All staff will have regular training around mental health issues and identified staff will have further in-depth training to suit their role.

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the academy's safeguarding procedures will be followed.

If the pupil presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our pupils need to keep themselves, and others, physically and mentally healthy and safe, are included as part of our PSHE/RSC curriculum and other relevant support programmes.

We ensure that mental health is a key component in the relevant curriculum areas and has been designed using the very best resources. More importantly, the content and method of delivery are tailored to meet the needs of our academy.

More broadly, the overall culture of our academy promotes positive relationships and is 'people-centred'.

Assessment & Provision

Across our academy, we aim to ensure that our provision meets our needs, both through internal and external intervention. In broad terms the table below summarises how we see each level of need across our mental health work, in terms of basic descriptor of 'assessment', and subsequently, matching 'provision'. Please note that both aspects are more detailed than this, but this will give the reader some sense of our approach.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. However, our staff are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing an emotional or mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Level of Need	Assessment of Mental Health	Provision offered/available
1	Pupil exhibits a 'normal' range of emotions, displaying expected levels of resilience to life issues.	Pupil is supported by whole-school processes within the pastoral system. This is deemed sufficient for this pupil.
2	Pupil exhibits a 'normal' range of emotions on most occasions, but emotion / mood peaks and / or troughs are observed.	Pupil may receive some additional identified support possibly either via pastoral system and/or trained internal MH trained staff.
3	Pupil exhibits a regular inability to cope with issues thus causing impact on school life.	Pupil will receive additional identified support via trained staff in-school and possibly also have external support, e.g. external counsellor.
4	Pupil has a diagnosed mental health concern, such as anxiety or depression.	Pupil will be receiving external support, e.g. CAMHS, and school will support pupil in line with the external intervention.

Warning Signs

Signs can be varied and similar to signs of any number of issues, but can generally include:

- inability to cope with daily tasks
- social withdrawal
- dramatic changes in eating/sleeping habits
- feeling anxious
- substance misuse
- thoughts or actions around self-harm

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs will alert relevant colleagues, and we will refer to external services if appropriate.

Where a disclosure is made to staff, our safeguarding procedures, including confidentiality rules, will apply as stated in our Safeguarding Policy.

Individual Plans

When a pupil has been identified as having cause for concern, and/or has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, it is recommended that an Individual Plan should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects (if relevant)
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school and specific staff

Referrals and Working with External Providers

When our staff have 'assessed' need as best they can, they will determine if additional support and expertise is needed beyond the work of our trained staff within our academy. This may occur by advising parents to visit their GP or making a referral ourselves. Our staff work closely with external services, such as the NHS funded MHST programme, in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of pupils, **but it is important to note that external services quite often make the ultimate decision on what support is provided, including CAMHS.** Even if parents and/or school may wish for more intervention,

CAMHS will make that decision based on their own assessment of need and their capacity to intervene.

Working with parents/carers

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. Therefore, we wish to work with all our parents where the mental health of a pupil needs supporting. Parents will be involved at every step ensuring that open lines of communication exist. It is important to note however, that some mental health issues faced by children are caused by home situations, including relationship with parents etc. Unfortunately, neglect and abuse at home does happen, which does affect the mental health of a child. Where our staff feel this is the case, our safeguarding procedures will be implemented, and relevant external services will be informed. The pupil's welfare will always be our main priority.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in supporting their child. Academy staff will endeavour to ensure parents have information for any agency who may be able to support them around their child's mental health.

Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case-by-case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents/carers.

Annex A: Procedures for Brookfields School

Mental health and wellbeing in the curriculum

The school will commit to promoting physical health and mental wellbeing through in-classroom teaching. In addition, teaching the basic steps pupils can take to care for themselves, teachers will put specific emphasis on the skills young people need to overcome setbacks, build resilience and succeed in the face of adversity.

The school's PSHE curriculum will include lessons on mental health and wellbeing, as well as the importance of relationships. To emphasise the benefits of spending time outdoors, pupils will engage in regular Learning outside the Classroom activities such as Educational Visits and using the school grounds.

Supporting individual pupils

All members of staff will work together to identify and monitor emotional wellbeing and mental health concerns. Open communication between members of staff will help to create a 'first line' in supporting individual pupils and responding to disclosures. Staff will record information accurately and regularly to track concerns. This will complement the school's pastoral support work. In addition, SLT and Family Support Worker will meet regularly to discuss any ongoing concerns and make suitable arrangements as required; this includes making internal (e.g. for Thrive or ELSA) and external referrals (MHST, CAMHS).

Staff will be encouraged to look out for:

- Changes in behaviour patterns
- changes in sleeping habits
- disengagement from work or extracurricular activities
- unexpected or disproportionate reactions to ordinary situations
- aggressive or compulsive behaviour
- a drop in academic achievement
- a drop in attendance
- isolation from peers
- dysfunctionality in family life
- talking about self-harm or suicide
- changes in appetite
- changes in clothing / appearance
- any concerning observations / triggers during communication with parents e.g. face to face or through Home-School communication

If a member of staff feels it is appropriate to pass on concerns, they will explain to the pupil who they are going to talk to and what they are going to tell them (if this is appropriate). All concerns are to be recorded on CPOMS and to alert Sara Ainsworth (EH), Harry Dineley (Head of School) and Louise Green (FSW).

Providing a network of support

In addition to supporting individual pupils with mental health and wellbeing concerns, the school will commit to making sure that all pupils can access a cohesive network of pastoral and medical services if required and appropriate. These include:

- Family Support Worker (Thrive licensed practitioner plus certified play therapist)
- ELSA trained staff
- School Nursing Team
- MHST
- CAMHS
- Educational Psychologist
- Art Therapist
- Music Therapist
- Speech and Language (support in identifying pupil voice)

The school also works closely with Children's Social Care and other health professionals including Halton Health Improvement Team, who are available to pupils and families during or outside of the school day.

The headteacher will identify opportunities for staff training so that all members of staff feel confident in supporting pupils. Examples of good practice include staff undertaking Thrive training, Mental Health First Aider Training, Counselling courses and nurture-based training.

Working with families and the community

The school believes that effective mental health and wellbeing support depends on the input of parents, carers and the broader community. Through our parent surveys, family events and via social media we make sure that parents have regular opportunities to inform our approach.

We are also pleased to offer parent information/family learning on topics such as positive behaviour support, communication and stress management. Senior leaders, the Family Support Worker and class teachers are always available to meet parents to discuss any concerns.

Related policies

This policy should be read in conjunction with policies for:

- anti-bullying
- child protection and safeguarding
- online safety
- personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education.



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**Pupil &
people
centred**

**Act with
integrity**

**Be
innovative**

**Be best
in class**

**Be
accountable**