

## **Positive Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy**

At Coppice Academy we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole community of students, staff, parents, and carers.

Our ethos is supportive, caring, and respectful. We understand how important positive mental health and wellbeing is to our lives. We recognise that students' mental health is a vital factor in their overall wellbeing and how it can affect their learning and achievements. Our Academy encourages students to be open and we support all students to have their voice heard.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that "in order to help their students succeed, academies have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy". Our Academy is a place for students to experience a nurturing and supportive environment. We support the students to develop their self-esteem and build resilience. We understand all students and their families go through ups and downs, and some face significant life events.

In 2017, research (Mental Health of Students and Young People in England) found that "one in eight 5- to 19-year-olds had at least one mental disorder". We know that anyone in our community may need additional emotional support to cope with life's challenges.

Our culture of nurturing students and building resilience to mental health problems means our Academy is a safe place where:

- Every child feels valued.
- Every child has a sense of belonging.
- Every child feels able to talk openly with trusted members of staff about their problems.
- Positive mental health is promoted.
- Bullying is not tolerated.

We recognise the importance of supporting positive mental health and wellbeing to the whole Academy community.

At Coppice Academy positive mental health is everybody's responsibility.

### **Policy Scope**

This Policy is a guide for all teaching and non-teaching staff. It outlines our approach and commitment to promoting and supporting positive mental health and wellbeing in the whole Academy community. It should be read and understood alongside KCSIE (2021), our Child Protection and Safeguarding, PSHE, Risk Assessment Policy for Pupil Welfare, Anti-bullying, Learning Support and Behaviour policies.

### **Purpose of the Policy**

This Policy sets out:

- How we promote and support positive mental health in the whole Academy community.
- How we identify and support students with mental health needs.
- How we prevent mental health problems.
- How we support whole families in dealing with students' mental health problems;
- How we support staff in spotting early warning signs in students and addressing mental health problems.

## **Definition of Mental Health & Wellbeing**

“A state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the natural stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”

World Health Organisation “The strength and capacity of our minds to grow and develop, to be able to overcome difficulties and challenges, and make the most of our abilities and opportunities.”

Young Minds We recognise that mental health and wellbeing is not simply the absence of mental health problems. We know building students’ confidence and self-esteem in a safe environment is vital to positive mental health and successful learning outcomes.

At our Academy we want all students to:

- Understand their emotions and experiences.
- Form and maintain friendships and relationships.
- Be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- Develop resilience and cope with setbacks.
- Manage the stresses of everyday life and be able to deal with change.
- Learn and achieve.

We maintain a mentally healthy environment for pupils and staff by:

- Promoting our Academy rules and values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community.
- Providing opportunities to develop self-worth.
- Valuing each pupil for who they are;
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- Supporting our students to have their say and participate in decision-making.
- Raising awareness amongst staff about early warning signs and symptoms of mental health issues.
- Supporting staff who are struggling with their own mental health problems.

## **Staff Roles and Responsibilities**

Senior Mental Health Lead: Mrs Diane Ahearn

Mental Health Team:

Mrs L. Critchlow Bird

Mrs S George

Ms AM French

Miss R Meakin

Mrs J Wells

All teaching and non-teaching staff have a responsibility and important role in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of students and each other. We understand some students will need additional help and we know all staff have a responsibility to look out for early warning signs to ensure students get the early intervention and support they need.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the Academy environment, or with guidance from external professionals. We have links with mental health professionals and organisations that provide support with mental health needs to students and their families.

### **CAMHS Community Team (dependent on your LA)**

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a pupil or other staff member, in the first instance they should speak to our a member of the Mental Health & Wellbeing team.

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

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

Where students have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these students' experiences can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy, and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

If a child or staff member presents a medical emergency then relevant procedures must be followed, including involving the emergency services.

### **Promoting and Supporting students' Positive Mental Health & Wellbeing**

Our Academy promotes positive mental health, and we aim to prevent mental health problems through our developed range of activities and strategies including:

- Class activities – certificates and post box.
- Transition programme – activities (including safety, citizenship and first aid) to support Year 6 students moving into the academy or Y11 students leaving the academy to go on to post 16 placements.
- Whole Academy initiatives – assemblies; Academy Council; Young Leaders; challenges to promote healthy minds , celebration lunch with the Principal; displays and information around Academy.

Through our whole-Academy PSHE programme, we teach social and emotional skills to develop the students' confidence and resilience and run SEMH/Boxall interventions to support as well as Votes for schools. We explore simple strategies for managing feelings and who to go to if they are feeling worried or upset and help the students to develop positive coping strategies and build their understanding of how to motivate themselves, be supportive of others, and the importance of talking to someone and how to get help.

## **Identifying and supporting students with Mental Health & Wellbeing needs.**

Our approach is to encourage and support students to express themselves and be listened to in a safe environment.

All staff have a responsibility to facilitate and support positive mental health. We aim to spot the early warning signs of mental health issues and to identify appropriate support for the students based on their needs. We involve parents and carers wherever possible and the students themselves in the care and support they need in Academy.

We take a whole-community approach towards the mental health of our pupils. Our aim is to support the whole family, if possible, but we recognise that we are teachers not mental health professionals. This means regular communication with parents explaining our concerns if appropriate and giving parents guidance about who they can talk to about their students' mental health problems. We involve parents and carers, advise parents to engage the services of mental health professionals if required, and work with professional partners and agencies where necessary.

## **Disclosures by students of Mental Health & Wellbeing concerns**

Our Academy recognises the importance of staff remaining calm, supportive, and non-judgemental with students who disclose a concern. Staff should make it clear to the students that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health Team to help them and get the support they need. Staff understand they need to listen, not advise.

## **Interventions and Support**

All concerns are reported to the Mental Health Team and recorded on My Concern. The Mental Health Team assesses the level of need to ensure the child gets the appropriate support from within Academy or from an external health professional. We aim to put early interventions in place wherever possible and to prevent problems escalating.

Following an assessment by the Mental Health Team.

- a plan will be put in place setting out how the pupil will be supported.
- action needed to provide that support; and
- regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of the provision and changes made where necessary.

We have access to a range of specialist services, including CAMHS/ School Nurse and our own school counsellor. We involve the students themselves and their parents or carers, and if appropriate put in place support for their friends/peers in Academy. We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy is on the Academy website and hard copies are available to parents and carers from the Academy office.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy is monitored and reviewed by the Mental Health Team. All mental health professionals and external agencies are given a copy before they begin working with our Academy.

Last updated September 2024