

Mental Health Policy (Pupils)

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How we support well-being at Walton Hall - Emotional Health and well-being overview	

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: Academy Procedures

At Walton Hall Academy we have a strong ethos of “one size fits one”. Our culture of promoting emotional wellbeing is based on the outstanding relationships we foster within our school community. We believe that our approach has to be as diverse as our young people. As such emotional wellbeing, and mental health is central to our school and underpins all we do. If a child is not regulated or happy, their engagement in learning will be impacted upon.

To reflect this our Wellbeing team are involved and inform all areas of school life, from sitting centrally within our Senior Leadership Team to heading up our behaviour support, inclusion provision, attendance, safeguarding, pastoral support, and staff development/ training. As a school we are trained in emotion coaching, PROACT SCIPr and relational practices. All these approaches work to supporting a student holistically.

The well-being team, and the support identified below is available to all students who require it across the school. The team start working with a child when intervention referrals from teaching staff, the safeguarding or behaviour team have been received. Or their involvement may happen simply because of the student seeking out support in person or via our wellbeing email address. Support for students can be on a ad-hoc basis, or via a specific intervention period where targets are set and progress evidenced.

Interventions are tracked in school via our intervention tracker and set targets on a student’s ILP (now on Evidence for Learning). This means that any progress towards EHCP desired outcomes around social, emotional and mental health can be tracked and evidenced.

The information below identifies all ways in which we support emotional and mental well-being across school:

Wellbeing Ambassadors:

Our newly introduced Wellbeing ambassadors is a new programme carried out in collaboration with Mental Health Support Team (MHST) This will be embedded over the coming academic year. We are undertaking the recruitment of volunteer students that will be trained by the Mental Health Support team over a six-week period to become Wellbeing Ambassadors for the school. Their role will include supporting and signposting other students who may be struggling emotionally to access further help/support in school, also meeting half termly with the wellbeing team to help inform how wellbeing support is offered and accessed in school ensuring student voice is central to this.

Oasis:

The Oasis Centre is our inclusion provision which is headed by Steph Wideman with the support of Julie Greatbatch. Between them they have many year's experience working within SEND schools, their training includes: Higher level Teaching assistant, Well-being champion apprenticeship, Young Peoples Mental health first aid, Proact SCIPr, drawing and talking, NSPCC Problematic sexual behaviour and Decider Life skills. The team offer inclusion support which spans the whole school. With a focus on early intervention, they support students who for many reasons are struggling to access learning. They begin by working with the class team and the young person to identify the barriers to learning. Then through bespoke, flexible support they work creatively with the student to address the issues. Some of the approaches that are offered are:

- Pastoral nurture time
- Targeted 1-1 support in class/unstructured time
- Bespoke timetables that are considerate of students strengths, and/or sensory needs
- Small group or 1-1 learning/ booster work. This maybe delivered within the students class or in a smaller group environment, providing sessions focused on boosting academic competency, understanding and attainment, while building the students confidence and resilience within the curriculum area of focus.

They also provide emotional wellbeing sessions across all 3 key stages. Again, focused on inclusion these look to address barriers related to emotional or social difficulties. The team runs various sessions to address these difficulties which are delivered in both small group or 1-1 sessions, these include:

- Emotional wellbeing group interventions- including friendship/social skills, and low level Cognitive Behaviour Therapy/ Dialectical behaviour therapy through the Decider skills programme, and mindfulness sessions.
- 1-1 interventions- including mental health first aid (including safety planning), emotional wellbeing check in's as and when necessary, emotional literacy/ managing emotion sessions, problematic sexual behaviour sessions and CBT/ DBT (Decider skills).

Behaviour Support

Our behaviour support practitioner Nikki Smith works across the whole school offering both proactive and reactive support to all our staff and students. Nikki is our lead PROACT SCIPr Instructor, and is also trained in ELSA and decider life skills. The support is delivered through:

- 1-1 emotional regulation/ reflection sessions as and when required. This can be accessed either at the request of the student, staff or parent/

carers. These sessions are underpinned by ELSA and/or CBT/DBT (decider skills).

- Nikki also supports class teams to deliver half or full day reflection session's for student's as a consequence of more significant behaviour incidents (also supported by class teams staff).
- As our lead PROACT SCIPr instructor Nikki supports our class teams to unpick and understand behaviour difficulties that some of our students may exhibit. This is then used to formulate personalised support plans for those students. These are a way of capturing and sharing a spectrum of behaviour signals that indicate the individual is dysregulated, as well as highlighting their emotional triggers, and behaviour functions, while setting out proactive, active and reactive measures that are in place to address the difficulties and support the individual.
- Daily overview of class charts to identify students that are struggling with behaviour, looking for potential patterns then work with the student and class team to address issues, this may also include referring on to the wider well-being team when deemed necessary.
- Deliver PROACT SCIPr training to whole staff team, with a focus on current and relative issues with the school community.

Mental Health Lead/ school Therapist.

Donna Norton leads the well-being team within school, as the School therapist/ mental health lead. Donna is a trained and registered social worker, and has worked in frontline social work, Core CAMHS and within looked after young people services. Donna has trained to certificate level in person centred counselling skills, CBT/ DBT (decider skills), DBT for adolescents, therapeutic life story work, Child Accelerated Trauma Technique (CAAT), Nurture UK, Senior Mental Health Lead with Trauma informed schools, Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy (DDP) level one and Post Graduate certificate in Therapeutic Play Skills. Some of the direct therapeutic interventions that are currently offered in school are:

- Child Focused Therapeutic sessions, the specific intervention are guided by the emotional and cognitive needs of the young person. These can include: Talking therapy, no directive creative/ therapeutic Play, Child Accelerated Trauma Technique, CBT, DBT and therapeutic life story work .
- Mental health support, and advice to young people, families, and school staff. This includes safety planning with the young person around issues such as self-harm and suicidal thoughts, identifying and referring on to outside agencies when deemed necessary and appropriate.
- Mental health sessions safety planning, with an emotional regulation focus.

Donna offers wider wellbeing support is offered through:

- Pastoral support, as the schools designated safeguarding lead working with students, staff, families, and outside agencies to ensure the safety of our young people both inside and outside school. Also working with parents and carers when there are identified issues with attendants either due to EBSA or behavioural difficulties at home.
- Emotional support to staff, staff/ student debriefs.
- PROACT SCIPr training as an instructor within school, ensuring a trauma and mental health focus and understanding is provided through this. Embedding PACE approach across the school community.
- As part of the Senior Leadership Team, helping to ensure strategy, actions and policies across the school are informed through a trauma/ mental health lens.
- Referring on to outside agencies

Wilderness Therapy

Chris Frid, our Head of care and member of the senior leadership team is a trained Wilderness Therapist. Each week, Chris leads a session with an allocated group of students, for a period of half a term, to support student well-being and to help them navigate their teenage years. Groups are selected that have similar requirements so that sessions can be appropriately matched to need. Chris has an excellent understanding of our young people and his relationships with them are strong. All sessions take place within the forest school areas of the school grounds to enable students to be in a relaxed environment whilst exploring some challenging issues.

External support:

We also work closely with external services to ensure greater choice of support for our students and also meet the capacity demand for support. This includes:

Young Mind School Counsellor:

Walton Hall Academy funds one day a week additional support from Young Mind. Emma Elsey is a trained Psychotherapeutic Counsellor (PG Dip), who has also completed a Child Counselling Level 5 conversion course. She holds a small case load of students providing talking therapy and creative therapy depending on the preference of the student.

Mental Health Support Team:

We work alongside Staffordshire Mental Health Support Team in Schools (MHST) which is a NHS service made up of Education Mental Health Practitioners/

Children's Wellbeing Practitioners. The service provides early intervention to support to children and young peoples' mental and emotional wellbeing.

By providing:

- one-to-one and group evidence-based treatment sessions for young people experiencing mild to moderate mental health difficulties such as anxiety, panic, or low mood
- whole-school approach sessions including assemblies, workshops, or drop-ins
- training for school staff to help them support the mental health and wellbeing of the young people in their school
- parent workshops to support
- signposting to other services that may help individuals and their families

As Walton Hall is a partnership school, our families are also able to refer to this service if they wish.

Academy to insert own procedures



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**Pupil &
people
centred**

**Act with
integrity**

**Be
innovative**

**Be best
in class**

**Be
accountable**