

INSPIRING FUTURES

Macmillan  
Academy

# **MENTAL HEALTH POLICY**

## **POLICY DETAILS**

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## **POLICY REVISION AND APPROVAL HISTORY**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

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).

At Macmillan Academy, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all pupils, their families and members of staff and Trustees / Governors. The aim of the academy is to encourage all stakeholders to pursue mentally and physically healthy lives.

Our open culture allows pupil voices to be heard, using effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

The academy promotes a rich and diverse curriculum aimed at providing a broad range of varied experiences for our students. There is a wide ranging enrichment offer to support individual talents and aspirations. The aim is to build positive character traits and resilience and confidence in all students.

This policy is a guide to all staff outlining the academy's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

## **2. POLICY AIMS:**

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and pupils.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to pupils with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst all staff – all staff are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing.

### **3. KEY STAFF MEMBERS**

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

- Personal Tutors - Year 7 to 13
- Designated Safeguarding Team
- SENDCO
- Mental Health Lead
- Intervention Team
- Careers Practitioner
- PSHE co-ordinators

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil, in the first instance they should speak to the relevant personal tutor who may escalate the concern to their Head of Year. If there is a concern that the pupil is high risk or in danger of immediate harm the Academy's safeguarding procedures are followed. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

### **4. WHAT IS MEANT BY 'MENTAL HEALTH DIFFICULTY'?**

A mental health difficulty is one in which a person is distracted or unable to engage with ordinary life due to upsetting, disturbing thoughts and/or feelings. These problems may distort or negatively impact a person's view of the world and produce a variety of symptoms and behaviour likely to cause distress and concern.

### **5. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Under The Equality Act (2010) a person with a mental health difficulty is covered if their condition leads to an adverse impact on their ability to carry out their normal day-to-day activities. This will include students with conditions such as depression, bipolar disorder, self-harm and eating disorders. The Act also covers those who have had a mental illness or difficulty in the past, even if they have recovered, and those whose condition meets the definition but is successfully controlled by treatment (for example psychiatric medication such as anti-depressants) or therapy.

Under The Equality Act, it is unlawful to discriminate against students with a diagnosed mental health condition, and 'reasonable adjustments' may need to be made to ensure they can access education. The general principle of 'reasonable adjustments' is that wherever possible, schools should make practical adjustments to enable a student to continue their education. Mental health problems are often variable and students may only need adjustments for a limited period of time whilst they receive treatment or until they are better able to function.

Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), all information regarding students with mental health difficulties is regarded as sensitive and personal information. Any and all information about student mental health is shared on a 'need to know' basis, and is align with defined procedures on sharing of information about students.

Duty of Care - All staff need to be aware of the concept of the 'Duty of Care'. This is a legal obligation which requires us to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of all our students, staff and visitors. If a school knows that a student is experiencing mental health difficulties, the student should be advised to seek appropriate help and reasonable measures to support them need to be in place. This is particularly important in regard to passing on personal information where mental health difficulties occur.

## **6. IDENTIFICATION OF PUPILS NEEDING SUPPORT**

When a pupil has been identified as having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, necessary staff are notified and given the relevant information needed to support the pupils.

Parents / carers are encouraged to share this information with the academy to help us to support students who are experiencing a mental health difficulty.

## **7. 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 Personal Development curriculum and our

peer mentoring (Head Starters) programme. We will follow the statutory DFE guidance for RSHE (Relationships, Sex and Health Education), to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively. Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote pupils' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of pupils' own emotions as well as those of other people. Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing pupils who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting pupils to support any of their friends who are facing challenges. We will also use the lessons to signpost students to relevant sources of support.

## **8. SIGNPOSTING**

We ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them and how they can access these services.

Within the academy (noticeboards, classroom displays (SSB), toilets, etc) and through our communication channels (social media / websites), we share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure pupils understand:

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

## **9. SOURCES OF SUPPORT AT SCHOOL AND IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY**

### **9.1 SCHOOL BASED SUPPORT:**

- Student support base (a quiet space for students experiencing a mental health difficulty)
- Learning support base (for students with a SEND need)
- 6 week wellbeing and self-esteem courses run by the intervention team
- Peer mentoring (Head Starters) – Suitable for pupils in Year 7 and Year 8
- 1 to 1 support – Suitable for all pupils as required through our Emotional Wellbeing Practitioner
- The academy works with students and parents to signpost local organisations/more specialist support, for example: The Bungalow Project, Hart Gables and The Junction.

### **9.2 LOCAL SUPPORT**

In our local area there are a range of organisations and groups offering support. These are contained in the appendix to this policy as well as a list of national (online) resources that are available to support young people and their families.

## **10. WARNING SIGNS**

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil 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 in the first instance speak to the relevant personal tutor who may escalate the concern to their Head of Year. If there is a concern that the pupil is high risk or in danger of immediate harm the Academy's safeguarding procedures are followed.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / 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
- Extremes of behaviour (out of character)
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to, or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

## **11. TARGETED SUPPORT**

We work closely with external agencies in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children. We ensure timely and effective identification of pupils who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working with CAMHS and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;
- Providing interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs;
- Ensuring young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with in a timely fashion
- Providing young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns.
- Providing young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

## **12. MANAGING DISCLOSURES**

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. All disclosures should be reported immediately to the safeguarding team. The disclosure is stored securely on CPOMS. Where the Peer Mentoring Programme is in place, any disclosures made will also map with this process – the peer mentors are aware of who to report disclosures to.



### **13.WORKING WITH PARENTS/CARERS**

Signposting parents to sources of information and support is helpful in these instances. Meetings are held (when necessary and appropriate) and lines of communication are kept open, should the parent/carer have further questions or concerns.

### **14.SUPPORTING PARENTS**

We recognise that family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems (website).
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website).
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in Personal Development / PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

### **15.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 offer a Head Starters (peer mentoring) service where pupils have somebody to talk to – pupils can self-refer to this intervention.

### **16.STAFF**

We will carry out an annual staff wellbeing survey to support in the identification of mental health issues for staff working at the academy and plan interventions accordingly.

We acknowledge that staff who are working closely with distressed students exhibiting mental health problems such as: self-harm, eating disorders and depression can themselves be placed under emotional strain. Support will be provided to all staff who request it through external agencies or through discussion with any middle or senior leader in the school.

The academy will provide a range of training in dealing with students with mental health problems. The training will be undertaken during directed time but may also be requested on a voluntary basis. The CPD calendar will be updated accordingly.

Staff will receive regular updates as and when necessary of individual pupil needs. We share relevant information for staff who wish to learn more about mental health.

## **Appendix**

### **Local Mental Health Services**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Key Contact / Contact Details</b>	<b>Support</b>
Head Start	01642 727579	Mild Workshops for students Head Starters Training
Kooth	www.kooth.com	Mild Helpline support for individual students / parents
Hart Gables	01642 675509	Mild to moderate Various Support for those who identify as LGBTQF+
The Junction	01642 756000	Mild to moderate Emotional and wellbeing support including one to one sessions and therapeutic group work
Middlesbrough and Stockton MIND	01642 257033	Mild to moderate One to one session and group work Reach Team
Insight Healthcare (Impact)	01642 573924	Mild to moderate Counselling for over 16s
Bungalow Partnership	01642 595363	Moderate Emotional wellbeing support aimed at improving mental health, emotional regulation and resilience.
Middlesbrough CAMHS	Rosewood Centre 0300 013 2000 (Option 2)	Severe Various support including 1 to 1 therapy
Evergreen Centre	West Lane Hospital 01642 529674	Severe Specialist eating disorders inpatient service
Newberry Centre	West Lane Hospital 01642 529673	Severe Specialist inpatient service for severe mental health problems
Arch	01642 822331	Specialist counselling for sexual abuse (under 17)

## **National Mental Health Support (Resources)**

BEAT's Youthline offers support to children and young people with an eating disorder.

ChildLine is the UK's free, confidential helpline for children and young people. They offer advice and support, by phone and online, 24 hours a day. Teachers can signpost to ChildLine.

Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH) offers advice and support online and through their freephone Helpline for children experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or harassment.

MindEd a free educational resource from Health Education England on children and young people's mental health.

Papyrus (Prevention of Young Suicide) provides advice and support for professionals supporting young people who feel like they want to take their own life, through online support and resources.

Samaritans are an organisation you can ring at any time of the day or night.

Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families provides support to schools, colleges and education professionals through online advice, guidance and resources.

Schools in Mind is a free network for education professionals which shares practical, academic and clinical expertise about mental health and wellbeing in schools and FE colleges.

Charlie Waller Trust offers advice, guidance and resources for schools and education professionals to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Every Mind Matters Guidance on learning in a safe environment useful guidance for teachers on delivering learning in a safe environment including protecting vulnerable students and providing effective responses to sensitive questions.

PHE School Zone mental wellbeing top tips provides advice for teachers on supporting parents and carers with the mental wellbeing of their children, including the importance of routine and normalising discussions around mental wellbeing.

Now and Beyond the UK's first multidisciplinary directory for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing providers. Includes information about locally available services.

YoungMinds is a toolbox for leaders and front-line workers across the children's mental health system.

The Childhood Bereavement Network includes support, advice and resources on supporting a bereaved child or young person.

Anti-Bullying Alliance are a unique coalition of organisations and individuals, working together to achieve our vision to stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

Kidscape has advice and practical tips to support adults working with children on dealing with bullying and cyberbullying.

Teen Sleep Hub offers advice, support and tips on achieving a good night's sleep. They have information and resources for secondary schools.

Barnardo's Education Community is an online resource to help support teachers, lecturers and staff working in the education sector. A 'one stop shop' where educators can go for trauma-informed resources, support and advice about how to help children and young people cope with any issues they are experiencing.

The SEND Gateway is a good source of information for professionals, containing resources on responding appropriately to children and young people with SEND with emotional wellbeing needs.

The Proud Trust deliver training opportunities for teachers and other youth professionals and create LGBT+ resources for schools, colleges and other youth settings.



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