

## Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

<b>Date approved</b>	September 2023	<b>Approved by</b>	Executive Headteacher
<b>Review cycle</b>	2 year	<b>Signature</b>	
<b>Date for review</b>	September 2025	<b>Author</b>	Director of SEND

### Policy Statement

*Mental health is a state of well-being 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 Organization)*

*We all have good days and bad days, but when negative thoughts and feelings start to affect your daily life and stop you doing the things you enjoy, or your ability to feel ok, this means you probably need some support with your mental health. (Young Minds)*

At Respect Collaboration of Schools (The School), we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and students. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be considered in conjunction with the following policies:

- Supporting Children with Medical Conditions policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue,
- SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need
- Safeguarding policy
- Health and safety policy

### The Policy Aims to:

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

### Lead Members of Staff

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

- Jemma Tague – Director of Safeguarding and Attendance
- Liz Rogers and Will Broderick - Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health (DSL MH)
- Liz Rogers – Director of SEND

- Kelly Fisher, Ngaire Barker and Lucy Gascoigne - Welfare Coordinators (DSL)
- Amy Meakin- Head of PSHE

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student or other staff member should speak to a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health or Designated Safeguarding Lead. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Leads or Headteacher. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

### **Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

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

We will follow the [PSHE Association Guidance](#) to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

### **Signposting**

At School, we will ensure that staff, students 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 1.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and will highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum and on our school website. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

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

At School, we have the Additional Support Team to support referrals for Mental Health. Referrals are made by staff using an in-house referral form. Meetings are held once a fortnight; support is put in place and feedback to the referrer and young person.

### **Warning Signs**

School staff may become aware of warning signs, which indicate a student 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 Behaviour Mentors, Welfare co-ordinators(DSL) or DSLMH.

Possible warning signs 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
- Lateness to or absence from school more than normal
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

It is recognised that some students are more vulnerable to mental ill health than others, for example:

- Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)
- Children living in poverty
- Parental conflict or parental mental health difficulties
- Domestic violence
- Youth offending
- Children in care
- LGBTQ+
- Pre-existing mental health needs
- Young carers
- SEND
- Adults who live alone
- Physical health needs

At School, we understand that not all children and young people exposed to risks develop mental health problems. Resilience is the ability to cope and thrive despite facing setbacks in your life. Some children and young people are naturally more resilient than others, but it is a skill that can be taught. This [introductory video](#) from the *Harvard Center for the Developing Child* looks at what fosters resilience in children.

We also understand that children and young people are not on a level playing field when it comes to exposure to risk, and resilience is not infinitely elastic. It can be tested when children face multiple 'snowballing' stresses and risks in their lives. Certain harmful experiences in childhood (known as Adverse Childhood Experiences – ACEs) can be toxic to children's development, resulting in hidden trauma and potentially leading to later physical and mental health problems, school disengagement and risk-taking behaviours. For this reason, we understand the ability to cope and thrive is not just about children learning skills, but is also about how adults in children and young people's lives respond and how school and local community take action to offset the family and environmental factors and barriers that can undermine children's ability to flourish.

### **Working with Parents**

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 get 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
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their child through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

### **Supporting Staff**

The Governing Body and SLT acknowledge the potential impact that work has on an individual's physical and mental health. We are committed to developing an ethos and culture of co-operation, trust and support. All staff have an assigned member of staff to have professional 1:1 and wellbeing sessions to engage in discussion about factors directly relating to work, teams and issues linked to wellbeing.

The aim is to: develop a culture that is open and supportive of people, engage with staff to create constructive and effective working partnerships, both within teams and across the school, establish working arrangements whereby staff feel they can maintain an appropriate work life balance, encourage staff to take responsibility for their own health and wellbeing and encourage staff to take responsibility for their own work effectiveness as a means of reducing their own stress and that of their colleagues.

If it is identified that a staff member would benefit from support, a referral can be discussed with either their line manager, 1:1 wellbeing member of staff, DSLMH, Headteacher, Director of SEND and is confidential. Support can also be signposted to other organisations if there is a specific need. See appendix 1.

Staff have the opportunity to make an annual voluntary contribution to a Wellbeing fund to support staff and provide a small gift where appropriate.

### **Supporting Parents**

Supporting Parents is an important part of our work, we recognise that as a school, our duty is to sign post rather than offer resolutions, as we are not mental health professionals or medical professionals. We can offer guidance and suggestions for support when parents have concerns, to ensure both the voice of the child and family is heard. When requested, we will always give parents time to talk and offer suggestions for signposting support within the local area.

### **Managing disclosures**

A student 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, this information can be found in our Managing Allegations policy. Posters are distributed around our sites to show who students or staff can talk to

### **Confidentiality**

We should be honest regarding the issue of confidentiality. If we see it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on then we should discuss with the student:

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

Ideally, we would have consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent where it is seen that a child could be in danger of harm and further support may be required.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the Welfare Coordinator (DSL) must be informed immediately.

## **Appendix 1 Signposting Support:**

### **Student Support**

Where a young person is in need of support for emotional wellbeing or mental health, a School Additional Support referral form can be filled in and sent to Director of SEND who will present this at the bi-weekly Additional Support team meetings. Feedback via Cpoms, email or directly to the referrer will indicate outcomes. There will be times where a student is already having an intervention such as CAMHs and this would not be an appropriate pathway, although some of the services work alongside CAMHs. This can be fielded by the professionals involved.

Should there be an emergency, emergency services should be called.

### **School staff Self Help**

#### **To help support your wellbeing you can:**

- stay in contact with people – talk to colleagues or friends about how you're feeling
- have a routine so you plan what you'll be doing each day
- keep active and exercise even if this is confined to your own home
- make time for activities you enjoy
- reflect on what helps you feel more positive and focus on these
- look after your body: eat healthily, drink plenty and schedule rest times
- request check in time with your 1:1 or line manager

#### **To help support colleagues you can:**

- check in with team members regularly
- encourage colleagues to maintain a positive work/life balance
- encourage new ways of working and use a range of technologies so you are not always looking at a screen – switch things up with a telephone call or video call so you can see someone face to face.
- take a moment to consider other colleagues situation or feelings

### **Talk to your line manager**

You can request a 1:1 meeting outside any scheduled times. It is a good idea to talk to your line manager or 1:1 about your situation and how you are doing. They can help you work through problems that may have arisen because of your situation. Employers have a 'duty of care', this means they must do all they reasonably can to support your health, safety, and wellbeing. This may involve developing your own risk assessment or individual stress action plan with your line manager. You can also let your manager know what kind of contact you would like. For example, talking over the phone or through video meetings or having online meetings with your team.

### **Help and support:**

School Support		
<p>You can ask your line manager or Well being 1:1 to signpost support through the school should the need arise. This is confidential and can come from the Changing Lives team or Catharsis. Supervision can be arranged on an individual basis, dependent on your role in school.</p>		
<p>A personal risk assessment or individual stress action plan can be devised in collaboration with your line manager. These will be regularly reviewed with you.</p>		
Self-Referral		
<b>Education Support:</b>	Mental health and wellbeing support to education staff for anyone working within education, available 24/7	08000 562561 <a href="https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/helping-you/telephone-support-counselling">https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/helping-you/telephone-support-counselling</a> Twitter @EdSupportUK
<b>Qwell</b>	Need support for your own mental health? Try Qwell and access professional support	www.qwell.io
<b>Changing Lives</b>	The service is available across Derbyshire and Derby City	Phone: <b>01332 315569</b> Email: <a href="mailto:Compass   UK Charity Providing Health &amp; Wellbeing Services (compass-uk.org)uk.org">Compass   UK Charity Providing Health &amp; Wellbeing Services (compass-uk.org)uk.org</a>
<b>SHOUT</b>	SHOUT TEXT service	85258

## Appendix 2

### **The Continuum of Mental Health**

The Continuum of Mental Health is the basis of how the additional support team can support. Changing Lives supports the lower end of the scale, Vicki Cutting and Wilf support lower to mid

range and Catharsis support the upper range. School Health support medical and physical needs which can be linked to mental health at any stage.

<b>Mental Health</b>  <i>Normal fluctuations in mood</i>	<b>Emotional Distress</b>  <i>Nervous, irritable, sadness, trouble sleeping, reduced social activity</i>	<b>Mental Health Problem</b>  <i>Anxious, social withdrawal, avoidance, restless, distress, disturbed sleep</i>	<b>Mental Disorder</b>  <i>Isolation, excessive anxiety, depressed mood, absenteeism</i>
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Adopted from Centre for Mental Health.

The image above represents the Mental Health Continuum, which describes the concept of mental health from being mentally healthy and thriving to being mentally unwell. The movement up and down the continuum is influenced by internal and external factors and how they impact on our day to day lives. Everyone will move up and down the continuum, depending on their individualised situations e.g. adverse childhood experiences; risk and resilience factors and as their circumstances improves or deteriorates. The Mental Health continuum is used to help dismiss the notion that mental health is linear.

The continuum therefore helps support the recognition of any emerging mental health difficulties and improvements reinforcing a common language and helping to reduce the stigma that surrounds mental health. Everyone in a school what ever their role may be called upon to support a child in distress. The way we respond to a childs distress can influence the way they manage it. This animation explains the CARE acronymn. [\*Taking CARE to Promote Mental Health in Schools and Colleges Animation - YouTube\*](#)

*Please note, this policy has been updated to incorporate the new school structures and name changes from 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023. The author and approver of this policy refer to the previous structure and will be updated when the policy is reviewed.*