



Totternhoe Church of England Academy

Mental Health and Wellbeing

Procedures

Policy type	Academy procedures
Adopted by LGB	
Date ratified	
Next review date	September 2021
Person responsible	Mrs van Vuuren

VISION

An excellent, nurturing education, valuing and respecting all. Everyone enjoying and exploring life in all its abundance, sharing our unique gifts, whilst growing together in love and understanding of the Christian faith.

'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others.' 1 Peter 4:10a

Totternhoe CE Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of our children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and visitors to the school to share this commitment.

This policy is based on the Church of England Guidance
Mental Health and Wellbeing Advice for schools and SIAMS Inspectors
March 2018

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1. Procedural Statement

- 1.1 *'Mental Health is a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stress of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution her or his community.'* (World Health Organisation)

In our Academy our Christian vision shapes all we do:

An excellent, nurturing education, valuing and respecting all. Everyone enjoying and exploring life in all its abundance, sharing our unique gifts, whilst growing together in love and understanding of the Christian faith.

'Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others.' 1 Peter 4:10a
'With God's love, we seek adventure with our minds and find a home for our hearts.'

In addition, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This document describes the Academy's approaches to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. These procedures are intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with administration of medicines policy in cases where a pupil's mental health and wellbeing overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where the pupil has an identified special educational need or disability.

The procedures aim to:

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

3. Lead Members of Staff

3.1 Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Debbie Mitchelmore - Designated Safeguarding Lead Officer.
- Gail van Vuuren - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead
- Aly O'Neill - Lead First Aider
- Olivia Bates - Headteacher + CPD Lead
- Jodie Tebbutt - PSHCE Lead

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the Mental Health Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then normal safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead. If a pupil 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.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the, SENDco and DSL.

4. Individual Care Plans

4.1 It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

5. Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

5.1 The skills, knowledge and understanding need by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe area included as part of the developmental PSHCE curriculum.

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

We follow the PSHCE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

6. Signposting

6.1 We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and 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:

- the Local Authority Local Offer
https://www.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk/info/15/special_educational_needs_and_disability_-_local_offer/134/about_the_local_offer
- or by calling the Early Help Team at 0300 300 8585

We will display relevant sources in communal areas and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils with relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

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

7. Warning Signs

7.1 School 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 communicate their concerns with Gail van Vuuren, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead, and/or Debbie Mitchelmore, our Designated Safeguarding Lead.

Possible warning signs may 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 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
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

8. Managing disclosures

- 8.1 A pupil 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.

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Remember the TED strategy (**T**ell me more, **E**xplain in more detail, **D**escribe that to me).

Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on a pupil's confidential file/logged onto CPOMS. This record should include:

- Date
- Name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the Mental Health Lead, Gail van Vuuren, and/or the DSL, Debbie Mitchelmore, who will offer support and advice about the next steps.

9. Confidentiality

- 9.1 We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we see it as necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on then we should discuss this with the pupil:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share the information about a pupil without first telling them. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and /or parent. (Particularly if a pupil is in danger of harm or there is an issue of safeguarding).

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead and/or the DSL as this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share the information with.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil will be supported by a trusted staff member, 'X has something they are finding difficult to share with you, but is ready to tell you' We should always give the pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them. We will always follow up with a phone call to ensure information has been shared correctly.

If a child gives us reason to believe there may be underlying safeguarding issues, parents should not be informed initially, but the Designated Safeguarding Lead, must be informed immediately and advice from the safeguarding hub sought.

10. Working with Parents

10.1 Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we should consider the following questions (on a case-to-case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable. (Adhere to Social Distancing Guidelines.)
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you are sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record/CPOMS.

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their child'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 go 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 children through our regular information sessions
- Keep parents informed about mental health issue topics their children are learning about in PSHCE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

11. Supporting Peers

11.1 When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their peers. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing/saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend needs help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we may want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

12. Training

12.1 As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular safeguarding training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

www.minded.org.uk

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the Headteacher, CPD Coordinator, who can highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

13. Procedure Review

13.1 This procedure will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. It is due for review in September, 2022.

Additionally, this procedure will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this procedure, this should be addressed to Gail van Vuuren, our Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead. This procedure will be updated to reflect personnel changes.