



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Summer 2024

POLICY DEVELOPMENT

This policy has been formulated with consideration of the following documents:

- *Helping traumatized children learn*, Report and policy agenda (2005) (HTCL)
- *When the Adults Change, Everything Changes*, Paul Dix (2017)
- *Whole School Policy and Good Practice Development for Mental Health and Behaviour*, Dr Kevin Rowland MBE (2019)
- DfE guidance: *Behaviour guide for primary schools* (May 2020)
- DfE guidance: *Supporting wellbeing* (May 2020)
- DfE Statutory Guidance: *Physical health and mental wellbeing* (July 2019)
- DfE Statutory Guidance: *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (July 2019)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust's:

- Managing and Supporting Positive Behaviour Policy
- Relationships and Sex Education Policy
- Relationship Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Inclusion Policy
- Antibullying Policy

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AIM

The main purpose of this policy for Mental Health and Wellbeing is to ensure implementation of the Government's statutory guidance on teaching mental wellbeing. The policy will ensure that statutory requirements are fulfilled. As a Trust we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils, families and staff.

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is to be Ready, Respectful and Safe.

TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICES

'Trauma- sensitive school environments benefit all children'. (HTCL)

Our Trust is recognised as a Mentally Healthy Organisation (TISUK) and strives to ensure that all children regardless of internal and external precipitating factors can and will achieve in our settings. Staff are dedicated to maintaining 'Consistent Calm Adult' behaviour at all times (Safety Intervention CPI). When staff are aware of these precipitating factors they can tailor approaches to promote good emotional wellbeing. We know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable at times and that anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

Our schools work hard to be 'supportive, predictable and safe environments'. (HTCL) Therefore, ensuring 'that all children will be able to achieve at their highest levels despite whatever traumatic circumstances they may have endured'. (HTCL)

All staff will regulate their verbal, non-verbal and para verbal communication to ensure that they are communicating respect and being non-threatening whilst remembering their supportive stance at all times including adult to adult, peer to peer and adult to child interactions (Position, Posture and Proximity) (Safety Intervention CPI).

Empathetic listening is key to a trauma informed school and we endeavour to ensure all staff are trained in this. All children have been impacted in some way by the COVID 19 crisis. It is important that all pupils are being monitored and staff are mindful of their wellbeing. Steps for seeking support have been shared with staff.

PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

At Discovery MAT we:

- Help children to understand their emotions and feelings – emotions thermometers, modelling emotions, PSHE
- Teach children that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health
- Teach children that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations
- Teach children how to recognise and talk about emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings
- Teach children how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate
- Teach children the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness

- Teach children simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests
- Teach children that loneliness can affect them and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support
- Teach children that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing
- Teach children that it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough
- Teach children where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support)
- Help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries – emotionally available adult, worry boxes, nurture breakfast, lunch and break, 'I wish my teacher knew', meet and greet
- Help children socially to form and maintain relationships – Hut break and lunch, play leaders, PSHE
- Promote self esteem and ensure children know that they count – celebration assemblies, roles and responsibilities
- Encourage children to be confident
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks – restorative conversation, modelling emotions

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school Rules – Ready, Respectful and Safe
- Promoting pupil voice – school parliament
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements – recognition board, assemblies
- Roles and responsibilities
- HUTs
- Providing opportunities to reflect
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs
- Assessing children's needs
- Transition programmes

LEAD MEMBERS OF STAFF

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

- Alison Nettleship and Heads of School – DSL
- DDSL
- Trust Inclusion Lead

- InCo
- Pastoral Team
- HUT Staff

TEACHING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

The Trust has a holistic approach to teaching about mental health through day to day conversations and modelling.

Staff follow the DfE Statutory Guidance: *Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education* (July 2019) to ensure the statutory objectives are taught through their PSHE, PE, Computing and Relationships and Sex Education lessons.

TARGETED SUPPORT

The school will offer support through target approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Hut intervention
- Managing emotions resources – 5-point scale, social stories
- ELSA intervention
- Therapeutic activities- art, lego, relaxation and mindfulness techniques
- Virtual sessions if a child is not attending school

If staff or parents have concerns regarding a pupils SEMH this should be raised using a ‘cause for concern’ form with the INCo.

IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND WARNING SIGNS

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- BAE audit
- Outcome star
- Thrive assessment
- Emotional literacy scales

The BAE audit is completed termly identifying a range of possible difficulties including:

- Attendance
- Approach to learning
- Behaviour
- SEMH

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or

emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should also be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with

Possible warning signs could include:

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn/extrovert
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

WORKING WITH PARENTS

In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on school website
- Share and allow parents to access sources of further support
- Plan and run parent support groups
- Ensure that parents are aware of who to talk to about any concerns
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in the family home
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE
- TAM/ EHAT
- Support parents with their own mental health and wellbeing

WORKING WITH OTHER AGENCIES

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- School nurse
- Educational Psychologist
- MAST- counselling, therapist, family support workers, Kidstime
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS

STAFF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

In order to prioritise the mental health and wellbeing of children we need to promote the mental health and wellbeing of staff.

- Interview questions with regards to TI practices and wellbeing
- Regular email updates
- TIS board in all schools
- Staff recognition board
- Wellbeing days
- Relationship policy
- Workload policy
- Stress risk assessment
- Staff awards and rewards
- Counselling/teacher support phone number
- Team meetings
- Supervision sessions

TRAINING

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

All staff have had training on the statutory guidance from the DfE around Mental Health and Wellbeing.

All staff have had training on Trauma informed practices and positive behaviour management.

Five members of the Trust team are Trauma and Mental Health informed practitioners.

All SLT have attended 2 day TIS training.

One member of staff in each school has been trained to be a Mental Health Lead.

Some staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate access e.g. MAST.