

Portland Spencer Academy

Mental Health and Wellbeing

The Local Governing Body of Portland Spencer Academy adopted this policy statement in January 2020

It will be reviewed no later than January 2023

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1. Named staff

Named mental health lead: Stacey Parkes

Mental Health First Aider: Stacey Parkes, Teagan McCutcheon

PSHE Co ordinator: Sarah Pidduck

1. Introduction

At Portland Spencer Academy, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. 'Half of all mental health conditions are established before the age of 14 and early intervention could prevent problems escalating and have major societal benefits.' (Transforming Children and Young People's Health Provision, DfE 2017) The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that, "...in order to help their children succeed, schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy". Schools are a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that children:

- Feel confident in themselves
- Are able to express a range of emotions appropriately
- Are able to make and maintain positive relationships with others
- Can cope with the stresses of everyday life
- Manage times of stress and be able to deal with change
- Are supported to reach their potential to learn and achieve
- Know what affects their mental health and what they can do to maintain positive mental health
- Understand how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues
- Know where they can go if they need help and support

Our aim is to sustain a mentally healthy environment and to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems for our whole school community.

For pupils this includes:

- Being surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours, interactions and ways of relating at all times
- Ensuring they feel valued as unique individuals
- Creating a sense of belonging to enable them to feel safe
- Ensuring there are opportunities to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- Being taught strategies to support positive mental health
- Not tolerating any instances of bullying or discriminatory behaviour and ensuring any instances are dealt with swiftly and effectively
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements
- Having opportunities to participate in decision making to develop a sense of self-worth and responsibility
- Having access to appropriate support that meets their needs

For staff this includes:

- Having their individual needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way
- Accessing strategies and provision that supports their mental health
- Ensuring recognition of work-life balance
- Having their mental health and well-being reviewed regularly
- Feeling valued and having opportunities to contribute to decision making processes
- Celebrating and recognising success
- Ensuring roles and responsibilities can be carried out effectively
- Being provided with opportunities for CPD
- Having their unique talents and skills recognised and providing opportunities for development
- Having access to proactive strategies and systems to support them at times of emotional needs in both the short term and the long term

For parents/carers this includes:

- Recognising the significant contribution they make to children and young people's mental health
- Feeling included in their partnership with schools and agencies
- Being signposted to appropriate agencies for support
- Being clear about their roles and expectations in working in partnership with schools
- Having their opinions sought, valued and responded to

3. Purpose of the policy

The implementation of the policy for promoting positive mental health in schools:

- Will give schools a cohesive and co-ordinated approach to mental health
- Should underpin all policies and practices currently used in schools
- Will raise awareness as to how the whole school community can look after their own mental health and that of others
- Will help to de-stigmatise mental health
- Will support people and provide opportunities that enable everyone to reach their potential
- Will strengthen relationships and provide opportunities for different ways of working
- Will provide foundations for life-long learning
- Will promote and strengthen resilience throughout the whole school community and empower everyone to face life's challenges

4. A whole school approach to promoting positive mental health

At Portland Spencer Academy we truly believe in working together for success for each and every child. We ASPIRE in everything we do by providing a curriculum that inspires, builds curiosity and challenges all to fulfil their potential. Our curriculum promotes positive mental health through ensuring that learning is tailored to the needs of individuals, scaffolding and supporting children in order to ensure they achieve and succeed. We embrace children's uniqueness providing a platform for them to celebrate what makes them special. Weekly PSHE lessons are taught which promote mental health and wellbeing through positive behaviour, resilience and achievement. These are supported by daily mindfulness (including yoga, zen colouring and peer massage) and in weekly assemblies which explore British Values and celebrate our cultural diversity.

In addition, further support is available for children through our extended nurture provision, ELSA sessions and counselling service. Our nurture provision and ELSA sessions provide targeted work to support children in managing their emotions and promoting positive mental health through. Our extensive program includes: Sports nurture, Forest school, Emotional Understanding, Art imaging and cooking. In addition, our school counselling service provides counselling support for pupils, their families and staff.

5. Early Identification

Our identification system involves a range of processes. We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent escalation and provide them with support. We do this in a variety of ways including:

- SDQ (Social Difficulty Questionnaires)
- Analysing behaviour, including exclusions
- Analysing attendance to identify trends
- Using Leuven scales to identify children who need support
- Staff reporting concerns (eg changes in behaviour) about individual children to the relevant lead persons
- Worry monsters in each class for children to raise concerns
- Weekly RAG meetings in year groups
- Weekly TAC meetings for particular children
- Weekly Cause for Concern meetings for the whole school
- Parent meeting on admission to the school
- Gathering information from a previous school and other professionals on admission to the school
- Home visits for children starting nursery
- Open door policy for parents and carers to raise concerns to any member of staff

Any member of staff concerned about a pupil will take this seriously and raise this with a DSL in school.

These signs might include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits
- Falling academic achievement
- Talking about or displaying signs of self-harm or suicidal behaviours
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Secretive behaviour
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

Staff are aware that mental health needs, such as anxiety, might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development. If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the school's safeguarding procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency then the school's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

6. Staff CPD and training

At Portland there is a Mental Health and Wellbeing Champion whose role it is to ensure that wellbeing and the promotion of positive mental health is a thread which permeates all areas of school life. As part of this role they:

- Lead and work with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing
- Provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates
- Are the first point of contact with mental health services, and make individual referrals to them

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional difficulties can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to children with mental health needs and their families.

Sources of relevant support in school include:

- Senior Leadership Team
- SENDCo
- School Counselling Service
- Our Safeguarding/Child Protection Lead
- Nurture team

Further training is provided for all staff where appropriate eg Mental Health and Wellbeing Awareness.

References:

- Children and Young People's Mental Health: State of the Nation 2016.
- Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing, Public Health England 2015.
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools, DfE 2014.
- Equality Act 2010
- Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision 2018
- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education Statutory guidance

This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following policies:

SEND Policy and Procedures

Inclusion Policy

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Behaviour and Anti-bullying Policy

Attendance Management Policy (Staff)

Attendance Policy (pupils)

Equality and Diversity Policy

Child Looked After Policy

Useful Links

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>
Websites
- Young Minds: <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
- Childline: <http://www.childline.org.uk>
- Mind: <http://www.mind.org.uk/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/camhs-information-for-parents-and-carers/>
- NHS: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/>
- Mental Health Foundation: <http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/>
- <https://www.schoolwellbeing.co.uk/pages/web-links--2>