



THE
BRIAN CLARKE
CHURCH OF ENGLAND ACADEMY

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

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1. Policy Statement

We want all our students to be everything they can be and everything they are meant to be – to be able to live life in all its fullness (John 10.10).

At Brian Clarke we put our faith and our hopes into bringing up our young people so that they become everything they can be and everything they are meant to be so they can 'let their light shine'. This is our vision, our mission, and our purpose. It sits at the heart of every decision we make.

We want all of our young people to experience success - whatever that looks like for them. But, more importantly we want them to become happy and healthy young people and adults equipped to navigate life's challenges.

Our aim is to ensure all of our young people feel connected with learning and with school so that they are motivated and inspired to do well. Through our relationships, we create a safe place for them to speak up if they need to so that every member of the school community has a voice. We empower young people to be able to recognise where there is difficulty, adversity or wrong going and give them the tools to speak up about it.

2. Objectives of the Policy

- Provide guidance to staff on the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across all communities in the school
- Inform students and parents about the support that they can expect from the school in respect of supporting mental health and wellbeing

This policy should be read in conjunction with our:

- SEND Policy
- SRE Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Curriculum Policy

3. Aims of the School's Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school
- Create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion
- Foster a positive atmosphere in school, where students feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly
- Celebrate all of the ways students achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom
- Allow students to participate in forming our approach to mental health by promoting student voice
- Give students the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Spread awareness of the varieties of ways mental health issues can manifest
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Provide support to staff working with students with mental health issues
- Provide support and access to resources to students experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them

4. Raising Awareness

We seek to raise awareness of mental health amongst students and staff instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of warning signs, and they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing. All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a student's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in mood or energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

5. Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing

Through our academic curriculum, pastoral curriculum and systems of pastoral support we ensure students are able to develop social and emotional skills which promote positive mental well-being and mental health, in school and throughout life. Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and be a school where:

- all students are valued
- students have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- students feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- positive mental health is promoted and valued
- bullying is not tolerated

We encourage students to identify 'their person': someone they feel comfortable speaking to. For many, this will be their Form Tutor- someone they see twice a day, every day. The Safeguarding Leads are also very visible across the school.

Through our curriculums, we educate our young people about key issues and challenging factors to enable them to keep safe. Our Wellbeing curriculum covers all of the statutory content outlined in the RSE Statutory Framework. It covers the 5 strands of wellbeing: Families, Respectful Relationships, Intimate and Sexual Relationships, Online and Media and Being Safe and Healthy. We explore strategies for leading healthy lifestyles and those which promote positive mental health and wellbeing, resilience and mental toughness. Through the new mandatory health education curriculum, students are also taught:

- how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns, including common types of mental ill health
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Where and how to seek support
- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Keep themselves safe
- Who should they speak to in school if they're worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing

It is regularly reviewed by the Headteacher, Deputy headteacher and Heads of Year so that it is not only compliant but also meets the needs of our students and local context.

Through our wider opportunities, students put the strategies for leading healthy lifestyles into practise. The school has a wide range of Extra and co-curricular which encourage students to stay active and be mindful. Opportunities such as DofE and trips develop their character and test their resilience.

6. The Graduated Response

We use a Graduated Response to promoting positive mental health. Our approach is also informed by Anna Freud's 5 step mental health and wellbeing and self-assessment framework to evaluate and develop provision within school, including staff training.

7. Universal Provision

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all students, we create a positive atmosphere around mental health where there is an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with students in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging students to disclose when they think their mental health is deteriorating

The school offers support to all students by:

- Daily access and pastoral support from their Form Tutor
- Pastoral Support from Heads of Year and Pastoral Officer
- Wellbeing Curriculum
- Pastoral Curriculum
- Character Development Projects: Leadership Award, Community Awards and DofE Award
- Circle Time and Form Reflection
- Assemblies on mental health and wellbeing and character development
- Meet and greet on the school gate and morning line ups
- SMSC- Mental Health Awareness Week
- Rewards policy and rewards system celebrating individual achievements
- Celebration Assemblies
- Leadership Opportunities
- Co-curricular and extracurricular opportunities
- Fellowship
- Student Council

- Student Voice

8. Signposting

Through our various modes of communications (curriculum, newsletters, bulletins, website, social media) we ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community and how to access it.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we 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

8.1 Selected Provision

Where students require further support outside of the Universal Offer, we support them by:

- Nurture Group
- Extra-Curricular timetables
- Pastoral drop in/meet and greets
- Team 7s
- TOG Mind
- Early Break
- Provision Cards
- Low level or group mentoring
- Additional transition
- Wellbeing questionnaires (Bee Well and Internal Questionnaires)

8.2 Targeted Provision

- Referral to school Mental Health and Wellbeing lead
- Referral to CAMHS
- Mentoring
- Risk Assessments

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health, as well as increasing understanding and awareness of common mental health issues. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected by emotional health and mental wellbeing concerns.

9. Disclosures

9.1 Managing Disclosures

If a student makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the student's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the DSL / DDSL via CPOMs and in person. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the student's confidential child protection file (CPOMs).

When making a record of a disclosure, where possible, staff will include:

- The date, time and location of the disclosure
- The context in which the disclosure was made
- Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff
- Linked students to other students involved.

9.2 Confidentiality

Staff should not promise a student that they will keep a disclosure secret, instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret.

Staff should always share disclosures with at least one DSL/DDS and via CPOMs. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Before sharing information disclosed by a student with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the student and explain:

- Who they will share the information with
- What information they will share
- Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the student to share their information, but the safety of the student comes first.

Parents will be informed unless there is a child protection concern.

10. Working with Parents and Carers

We recognise that families play a key role in influencing children's emotional health and mental wellbeing, therefore it is vital that we work with parents/carers to promote positive wellbeing for them. We do this by signposting sources of support available within school and the local community: we will ensure this information contains services that are available to promote positive emotional wellbeing for all students, as well as those for children experiencing mental ill health.

This information will be delivered via Parents' Information Eve, Newsletters, the school website and specialist events such as Social Media evening.

11. Training

Training schedules will be responsive and lead by the needs of our context. This ensures that support matches the changing needs of the school as a whole and each cohort.

Annual safeguarding training will always remind staff of the importance of mental health and wellbeing and as a minimum, all staff have received training about recognising and responding to mental health. The training ensures staff:

- Have a good understanding of what students' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a student in need of help

Where there are local drives such as the Trauma Informed Schools, we will ensure staff are aware and where appropriate, have access to this.

Staff have free and unlimited access to training modules on <https://www.minded.org.uk/> an online training resource which provides free training for school staff around emotional health and mental wellbeing.

Staff are also able to request relevant training as part of their Performance Management process.

12. Staff

We encourage staff as individuals to take responsibility for their own mental, physical and emotional wellbeing and promote an open and compassionate culture in which staff are supported in order that they may seek any help and support they need.

We create opportunities for staff to come together through termly staff fellowship and through our link structure we encourage staff to develop a culture of openness and sympathetic alertness where we remain mindful of any indication of changes in staff behaviour, performance or signs of being under stress.

There are opportunities for staff voice and feedback and staff consultative provides a termly space for this.

We are understanding of the differing needs of the staff, at different points and events during their life cycles, and offer support accordingly, if and when required. Where staff need more support, they have access to the Employee Assistance Programme for counselling and staff can also refer themselves to Occupational Health. Staff can also seek support from the Trust Chaplain Mr R Ford or school Governor Rev Jean Hurlston.

We recognise that supporting a student experiencing poor mental health can be distressing for staff. To combat this, we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Open door policy for staff to speak to DSL for support
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment

13. Roles and Responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a student's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the Designated safeguarding lead (DSL) /Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads (DDSLs) in school.

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Headteacher: Mrs A Ash

- Designated Safeguarding lead and Senior Mental Health Lead (DSL): Mrs M Skillings
- HR Manager: Charlotte Bannon
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Lead: Lisa Brown