



MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

Policy Details

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Contents

Section	Page Number
Introduction Policy Aims	3
Key Staff Members Defining Mental Health Duty of Care	4
Legal Considerations	5
Identifying Pupils Needing Support	5-6
Teaching About Mental Health	6
Signposting for Pupils and Parents	6-7
Sources of Support at School and Locally	7
Warning Signs	7-8
Targeted Support	8
Managing Disclosures Staff	9

Introduction

Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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 contribute to her or his community (World Health Organisation.)

At Archibald Primary School, we are committed to promoting and supporting the positive mental health and emotional well-being of our whole school community (children, staff, governors, parents and carers) through our supportive and caring ethos. We endeavor to guarantee that our school community are heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected (directly and indirectly) by mental health and emotional well-being matters. At Archibald Primary School, we recognise that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support.

This policy is a guide to all staff outlining the school's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

Policy Aims:

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and pupils.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Support people and provide opportunities that enable everyone to reach their potential.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to pupils with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques to help empower everyone to face life's challenges.
- Raise awareness amongst the whole school community as to how they can look after their own mental health and that of others – all staff are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing.

Key Staff Members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of all pupils. However, key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Designated Safeguarding Team
- SENDCO
- Mental Health Lead
- School Mentors
- PSHE subject leader.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil, in the first instance they should speak to the relevant team leader/designated safeguarding lead who may escalate the concern.

If there is a concern that the pupil is high risk or in danger of immediate harm the school's safeguarding procedures are followed. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Defining Mental Health

Mental health includes emotional, psychological, social and mental well-being. Mental health problems are difficult experiences that affect a person by making it harder for them to get on with their life.

Mental health difficulties can cause a person to be distracted or unable to engage with ordinary life due to painful, upsetting, disturbing thoughts and/or feelings. These difficulties can include problems such as; periods of sadness, hopelessness and fear. The difficulties may also distort or negatively impact a person's view of the world and produce a variety of symptoms and behaviours that are likely to cause distress and concern. According to MIND, 1 in 4 people in the UK will experience a mental health problem each year.

Duty of Care

All staff need to be aware of the concept of the 'Duty of Care'. This is a legal obligation which requires us to take reasonable steps to ensure the safety and well-being of all our students, staff and visitors. If a school knows that a student is experiencing mental health difficulties, the student should be advised to seek appropriate help and reasonable measures to support them, need to be in place. This is particularly important in regard to passing on personal information where mental health difficulties occur.

Legal Considerations

Under the Equality Act (2010) a person with a mental health difficulty is covered if their condition leads to an adverse impact on their ability to carry out their normal day-to-day activities. This will include students with conditions such as depression, bipolar disorder, self-harm and eating disorders. The Act also covers those who have had a mental illness or difficulty in the past, even if they have recovered, and those whose condition meets the definition but is successfully controlled by treatment (for example psychiatric medication such as anti-depressants) or therapy.

Under the Equality Act, it is unlawful to discriminate against students with a diagnosed mental health condition, and 'reasonable adjustments' may need to be made to ensure they can access education. The general principle of 'reasonable adjustments' is that wherever possible, schools should make practical adjustments to enable a student to continue their education. Mental health problems are often variable and students may only need adjustments for a limited period of time whilst they receive treatment or until they are better able to function.

Under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), all information regarding students with mental health difficulties is regarded as sensitive and personal information. Any and all information about student mental health is shared on a 'need to know' basis, and is in line with defined procedures on sharing of information about students.

Identifying Pupils Needing Support

All staff will be vigilant in identifying and monitoring a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health. School staff will also be aware of warning signs that may indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health and/or emotional well-being issues, including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical signs
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstance changes
- Recent bereavement
- Health signs.

All warning signs will always be taken seriously and these warning signs should be communicated to the designated staff, as discussed above. Warning signs may also include:

- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood

- Talking 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.

Teaching About Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our pupils need to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum and our peer mentoring (Head Starters) programme. We will follow statutory guidance to prepare us to teach about mental and emotional health safely, sensitively and respectfully. Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote pupils' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of pupils' own emotions as well as those of other people. We will also use the lessons to signpost students to relevant sources of support.

Signposting for Pupils and Parents

We ensure that staff, pupils and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them and how they can access these services within the academy (noticeboards, classroom displays, toilets, etc.) and through our communication channels (social media/websites/Seesaw). The aim of this is to ensure pupils understand:

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

We recognise that family also plays a vital role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to online support alongside our Pastoral team support.

- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in Personal Development/PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.
- Updating parents on upcoming events and local activity opportunities to support in children's inside and outside of school.

Sources of Support at School and Locally

- Mentor room and calm space
- Nurture group
- When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we offer a Head Starters (peer mentoring) service where pupils have somebody to talk to.
- 1 to 1 support – Suitable for all pupils as required through our Mentor programme
- The academy works with students and parents to signpost local organisations/more specialist support, for example: The Bungalow Project, Inside Out, Headstart and The Junction
- Worry boxes
- Classroom calm corners
- Care team meetings
- Use of Zones of Regulations
- Huddle meetings with Inside Out - Inside Out will also support the school through whole school approaches such as assemblies and workshops
- Mental health as part of the PSHE scheme of work.

Warning Signs

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 in the first instance speak to the relevant team leader and update using the CPOMs system, which may escalate the concern to the designated safeguarding leads. If there is a concern that the pupil is high risk or in danger of immediate harm the school's safeguarding procedures are followed.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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
- Extremes of behaviour (out of character)
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to, or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.

Targeted Support

We work closely with external agencies in supporting the emotional and mental health/wellbeing needs of school-aged children. We ensure timely and effective identification of pupils who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services:

Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems:

- Working with CAMHS and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral
- Working alongside our Inside Out practitioner to ensure target support is available for pupils displaying low level/early warning signs along with whole school foci
- Providing interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs
- Ensuring young people have access to mentor care and support, as well as specialist services, including CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with in a timely fashion
- Nurture Group with the SEND coordinator as their classroom teacher. A focus being placed on teaching a specialist PSHE curriculum that is personalised and bespoke to pupil's individual needs
- Providing young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns, including the use of Worry boxes and Mentor focus groups
- Providing young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

Managing Disclosures

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, all disclosures should be reported immediately to the safeguarding team. The disclosure is stored securely on CPOMS.

Please see the Archibald Safeguarding and PSHE policies for further information regarding disclosures.

Staff

We acknowledge that staff who are working closely with distressed students exhibiting mental health problems such as: self-harm, eating disorders and depression can themselves be placed under emotional strain. Support will be provided to all staff who request it through external agencies or through discussion with any middle or senior leader in the school.

The staff well-being team will endeavor to support staff through a range of well-being boosting opportunities such as; well-being wall, staff shout out board, well-being tips, half termly coffee and cake events. Staff are also sign posted to available help lines, discounts on gym memberships etc.

The academy will provide a range of training in dealing with students with mental health problems. The training will be undertaken during directed time but may also be requested on a voluntary basis. The CPD calendar will be updated accordingly.

Staff will receive regular updates as and when necessary of individual pupil needs. We share relevant information for staff who wish to learn more about mental health.

Appendices

Service	Key Contact / Contact Details	Support
Head Start	01642 727579	Mild Workshops for students Head Starters Training
Kooth	www.kooth.com	Mild Helpline support for individual students / parents
Hart Gables	01642 675509	Mild to moderate Various Support for those who identify as LGBTQF+
The Junction	01642 756000	Mild to moderate Emotional and wellbeing support including one to one sessions and therapeutic group work
Middlesbrough and Stockton MIND	01642 257033	Mild to moderate One to one session and group work Reach Team
Insight Healthcare (Impact)	01642 573924	Mild to moderate Counselling for over 16s
Bungalow Partnership	01642 595363	Moderate Emotional wellbeing support aimed at improving mental health, emotional regulation and resilience.
Middlesbrough CAMHS	Rosewood Centre 0300 013 2000 (Option 2)	Severe Various support including 1 to 1 therapy
Evergreen Centre	West Lane Hospital 01642 529674	Severe Specialist eating disorders inpatient service
Newberry Centre	West Lane Hospital 01642 529673	Severe Specialist inpatient service for severe mental health problems
Arch	01642 822331	Specialist counselling for sexual abuse (under 17)

National Mental Health Support (Resources)

BEAT's Youth line offers support to children and young people with an eating disorder.

ChildLine is the UK's free, confidential helpline for children and young people. Teachers can signpost to ChildLine.

Educational Action Challenging Homophobia (EACH) offers advice and support online and through their freephone Helpline for children experiencing homophobic, biphobic or transphobic bullying or harassment.

MindEd a free educational resource from Health Education England on children and young people's mental health.

Papyrus (Prevention of Young Suicide) provides advice and support for professionals supporting young people who feel like they want to take their own life, through online support and resources.

Samaritans are an organisation you can ring at any time of the day or night.

Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families provides support to schools, colleges and education professionals through online advice, guidance and resources.

Schools in Mind is a free network for education professionals which shares practical, academic and clinical expertise about mental health and wellbeing in schools.

Charlie Waller Trust offers advice, guidance and resources for schools and education professionals to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.

Every Mind Matters offer guidance on learning and delivering learning in a safe environment including protecting vulnerable students and providing effective responses to sensitive questions.

PHE School Zone mental wellbeing top tips provides advice for teachers on supporting parents and carers with the mental wellbeing of their children, including the importance of routine and normalising discussions around mental wellbeing.

Now and Beyond the UK's first multidisciplinary directory for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing providers. Includes information about locally available services.

YoungMinds is a toolbox for leaders and front-line workers across the children's mental health system.

The Childhood Bereavement Network includes support, advice and resources on supporting a bereaved child or young person.

Anti-Bullying Alliance are a unique coalition of organisations and individuals, working together to achieve the vision to stop bullying and create safer environments in which children and young people can live, grow, play and learn.

Kidscape has advice and practical tips to support adults working with children on dealing with bullying and cyberbullying.

Barnardo's Education Community is an online resource to help support teachers, lecturers and staff working in the education sector. A 'one stop shop' where educators can go for trauma-informed resources, support and advice about how to help children and young people cope with any issues they are experiencing.

The SEND Gateway is a good source of information for professionals, containing resources on responding appropriately to children and young people with SEND with emotional wellbeing needs.

The Proud Trust deliver training opportunities for teachers and other youth professionals and create LGBT+ resources for schools, colleges and other youth settings.

InsideOut Mental Health Support Team dedicated to working together and utilising unique skills to provide comprehensive support for young people.



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