



Ocker Hill Academy

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

December 2022

To be reviewed in line with Ocker Hill Academy policy Guidelines

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1.0 Policy statement of intent

At Ocker Hill Academy, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all pupils, their families and members of staff and governors. Our Academy allows students' voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

Through successful implementation of this policy, we aim to:

- Promote a positive mental health and emotional well-being in all staff and pupils.
- Promote equal opportunities for pupils/staff with SEMH difficulties.
- Ensure early identification of all pupils with SEMH difficulties and ensure they are appropriately support to prevent further harm.
- We will work with the LA in ensuring early identification of pupils needs, greater choices in pupil/parent support and collaboration between education and healthcare providers when required.
- Increase awareness and understanding of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff and parents to understand how and when to access support when required.

At Ocker Hill Academy we will aim to follow 5 indicators of wellbeing:

- Safe – to feel protected
- Healthy – physical and mental health and wellbeing
- Achieving – being supported
- Nurtured – having help when needed and a safe place
- Respected – being able to make decisions

2.0 Key staff members

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

- Designated Safeguarding Lead:
Mark Goodwin
- Senior Mental Health Lead:
Hannah Bevan
- SENCO:
Joe Farmer
- Assistant SENCO:
Sarah Cook
- Pastoral:
Sally Parkes

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of student, in the first instance they should speak to the Safeguarding Lead.

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the Academy's child protection procedures should be followed according to the Safeguarding Policy.

If the child presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard children in the Academy.

3.0 Individual Care Plans

When a pupil has been identified as having cause for concern, has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue, or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, it is recommended that an Individual Care Plan should be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.

Suggested elements of this plan include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role of the Academy and specific staff

4.0 Teaching about mental health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHRE curriculum.

We will follow our Academy curriculum map for PSHRE to plan and deliver lessons on mental health and wellbeing within the PSHRE curriculum throughout the academy year. We will use lessons to have open discussions to provide pupils who do develop difficulties strategies to keep themselves healthy, happy and safe.

We will use local services to promote Mental Health and wellbeing throughout the year by taking part in anti-bullying and children's mental health week providing a health mind ethos in the Academy.

We will teach the children how to support others that are in need of a helping hand at times. See section 10: Peer support mentors.

5.0 Signposting

We will 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) and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites, twitter), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure pupils/carers/staff understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why should they access it

6.0 Sources or support at the Academy and in the local community

Academy Based Support:

- Pastoral – 1:1 session with pastoral team – support for children who are struggling with SEMH – if a staff member has a concern or feels this would be beneficial to speak with the Safeguarding Lead.
- Learning support for those with SEN – LSP class support given – teacher to communicate effectively with parents if they feel children need the extra support.
- Interventions: Staff to speak to SENCO/ Principal with any concerns of any children that may need extra interventions/support in class.
- Parent/carer support – Academy Food bank and pre-loved clothing available in the Academy during Academy opening times.

Local Support:

- CAMHS – Black Country Minds Sandwell - 0121 612 6620
- Sandwell Healthy Minds - 0121 612 6650
- Childline – 0800 1111
- Just Youth – 0121 569 2899
- Shout – text support service - 85258
- Murray Hall Community Trust Tipton - 01902 826513
- Mind – A charity campaigning for everyone www.mind.org.uk
- Young Minds – www.youngminds.org.uk/parent/

Any further information needed on the local services above to speak to Safeguarding Lead or Senior Mental Health Lead.

7.0 Vulnerable Groups

The Academy will work closely with local services such as CAHMS, school nurses and local Sandwell services mentioned in the Policy. Staff identify that there is a greater level of risk of experiencing mental health in children such as: young carers, those experiencing DV in their household and those with SEN.

Some pupils are particularly vulnerable to SEMH difficulties. These 'vulnerable groups' are more likely to experience a range of adverse circumstances that increase the risk of mental health problems.

Vulnerable groups include the following:

- Pupils who have experienced abuse, neglect, exploitation or other adverse contextual circumstances
- Children in need
- LAC
- PLAC
- Socio-economically disadvantaged pupils, including those in receipt of, or previously in receipt of, free school meals and the pupil premium

These circumstances can have a far-reaching impact on behaviour and emotional states. Staff are trained to consider this when looking at early identification of children with SEMH concerns.

SEND

The Academy recognises it is well-placed to identify SEND at an early stage and works with partner agencies to address these needs. The Academy's full SEND identification and support procedures are available in the SEND Policy.

Where pupils have certain types of SEND, there is an increased likelihood of mental health problems. Early intervention to address the underlying causes of disruptive behaviour includes an assessment of whether appropriate support is in place to address the pupil's SEND.

The Academy recognises that not all pupils with mental health difficulties have SEND.

The graduated response is used to determine the correct level of support to offer (this is used as good practice throughout the Academy, regardless of whether or not a pupil has SEND).

All staff understand their responsibilities to pupils with SEND, including pupils with persistent mental health difficulties.

The SENCO ensures that staff understand how the Academy identifies and meets pupils' needs, provides advice and support as needed, and liaises with external SEND professionals as necessary.

8.0 Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student 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 alert Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately according to the Academy concerns policy.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

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| ▪ Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental | ▪ Abusing drugs or alcohol |
| ▪ Changes in eating / sleeping habits | ▪ Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope |
| ▪ Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn | ▪ Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather |
| ▪ Changes in activity and mood | ▪ Secretive behaviour |
| ▪ Lowering of academic achievement | ▪ Skipping PE or getting changed secretly |
| ▪ Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide | |

- Lateness to, or absence from the Academy
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

9.0 Whole Academy approach

9.1 Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents about a Wellbeing concern for their child there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place?
- Who should be present – students, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agree are added to the pupil's record and an Individual Care Plan created if appropriate.

9.2 Supporting parents

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

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems.
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters, twitter).
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners.
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This includes help offered by our Academy in providing our own food bank and pre-loved clothing (available at all opening times in the Academy).

10.0 Peer Support Mentors

At times, pupils can feel they are suffering with feelings of sadness that they can't always explain to an adult. In the Academy we provide the opportunity to have that trusted friend in each class that the pupils can talk to when appropriate.

At Ocker Hill Academy we have 1 peer mentor peer class in each year group to offer that listening ear. The peer mentors meet with the Senior Mental Health Lead to discuss ideas that can be introduced into the Academy to help and support pupils have a happy academy life.

Peer mentors are aware that any information they are told by pupils will need to be communicated with a teacher or member of support staff. Pupils are aware that if they have a concern, they should go to a member of staff within the Academy to discuss.

The Senior Mental Health Lead will conduct regular meetings with the Peer Support Mentors to get a pupil voice on what they would like to see implemented in the Academy.

11.0 Training

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

The Senior Mental Health Lead will have had official training, that they can then distribute relevant information to other members of staff as required.

Training opportunities will be provided for all teaching staff in CPD sessions led by the Senior Mental Health Lead.

Where appropriate members of staff will be required to attend online training on updates to Mental Health and Wellbeing for CPD.

The Senior Mental Health Lead will update staff members when there is a change to the policy.

12.0 Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing

All staff in Ocker Hill Academy are supported to have a clear work life balance. Staff are given opportunity to ask SLT when required for support or guidance. Staff opinions and ideas are taken into consideration when implementing new plans within the Academy.

If staff feel they need extra support they should speak to the Principal. CPD sessions will be provided to promote Mental Health and wellbeing for staff. The Academy aims to be able to provide early identification in staff members so that effective protocols can be put into place to support staff further.

Some staff wellbeing days and celebrations should take place to promote appreciation.

Staff will be given relevant outside information for services that are available if they should require further guidance or help.

Local Support:

- Mind – A charity campaigning for everyone www.mind.org.uk
- CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably) Support for men of any age www.thecalmzone.net 0800 585858
- Samaritans www.samaritans.org 116 123 (24/7 helpline)
- Murray Hall Community Trust Tipton - 01902 826513

Any further services that are needed by staff that are not mentioned above, please speak to the Mental Health Lead or relevant member of staff.

13.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is December 2024.

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of Hannah Bevan – Senior Mental Health Lead.

December 2022