



# Champion EDUCATION TRUST

## MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

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A family of Schools

# MANAGING MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

## POLICY STATEMENT

*Mental health is fundamental to our collective and individual ability as humans to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living and enjoy life. On this basis, the promotion, protection and restoration of mental health can be regarded as a vital concern of individuals, communities and societies throughout the world. (World Health Organisation)*

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our school, this includes parents/carers, staff and students. We strive to meet this aim using a whole school and individual, targeted approach. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. On average 1 in 4 people will suffer with a diagnosable mental health illness in their lifetime, for some people this can occur in childhood. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for students and staff affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

## AIMS

The Policy Aims to:

- Encourage positive mental health for both students, parents/carers and staff.
- Increase the understanding of mental health issues and promote a safe environment for mental health to be discussed without stigma for all students, parents/carers, and staff.
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health.
- Offer support to staff working with young people with mental health issues.
- Ensure support is available to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers.

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. All staff within school should read this policy, this includes non-teaching staff. This policy should be read along with the student's EHCplans, in order to fully support any student who may be struggling with their mental health.

## LEAD MEMBERS OF STAFF

All staff at Lotus have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students.

Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Mrs Kenworthy (Headteacher) and Miss Owen (Deputy Headteacher and SENCO) – designated safeguarding leads.
- Mrs J Ward – Family Support Worker

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student or staff member should speak to the safeguarding lead, in the first instance.

If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the safeguarding leads. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary. Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Safeguarding lead and SENCO.

## OUR APPROACH TO SAFETY

Individual, risk assessments will be completed within the school for students causing concern or who have received a diagnosis regarding their mental health. Alongside the risk assessment, each student identified will complete a behaviour plan; this is written with the student.

This can include:

- Details of the student's condition
- Triggers and ways to support the student

- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do and who to contact should an emergency present itself in school
- The role of the school and what is expected of the staff, should a student's mental health deteriorate.
- The wishes, feelings, and requests of the student

We will ensure each student is aware of the role of the school and what may happen in an emergency.

Warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any indicators of ill mental health should raise the concern with any of the DSL's or Family Support Worker that a student's mental health may be deteriorating.

Possible warning signs 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
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope

Education about mental health within school is addressed through our timetable of activities that include; daily keyworker time, mindfulness sessions, weekly PHSE and through our Therapeutic intervention offer, to promote positive mental health at an age appropriate level. There is always an emphasis to develop the understanding, language and confidence to seek help as and when needed, for themselves or others. Students also have access to a Counsellor who visits the School once a week. The School Website has a direct link to Kooth, an online platform that supports students' wellbeing and mental health.

We will ensure that students, staff and parents/carers are aware of services and sources of support within the local community, online and within school. We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas within the school along with information to encourage positive mental well-being.

If a student decides to share concerns regarding their own mental health or the mental health of a friend to a member of staff, it is the responsibility of that member of staff to ensure that they address the student with a calm, supportive and non-judgmental approach. Staff should listen to the student rather than advise, and our utmost priority at this time should be the physical and emotional safety of the student, opposed to asking Why?

All disclosures are to be recorded and written up and stored on CPOMs, to ensure the information is stored safely and confidentially.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on then we should discuss with the student: Whom we are going to talk to, what we are going to tell them and why we need to tell them. All disclosures must be shared with a Designated Safeguarding Lead, this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support.

Parents/carers must always be informed when disclosures regarding a student's emotional or mental health and wellbeing are made. We should always give students the option of us informing parents/carers for them or with them. When disclosing to a parent we should consider for each individual case if it is preferable to meet face to face with the parent/carer and who should be present at this meeting. It can be shocking and upsetting for parents/carers to learn of their child's issues, if they are not already aware of them and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accommodating of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect. We should always identify further sources of information and support and be clear with the parent as to what support can be offered by the school. We should always provide clear means of communicating with school as further questions may be had by the parent/carer. Consider booking in a follow up meeting to ensure information between home and school is kept up to date. Finish each meeting with agreed actions and always record the meeting minutes on to CPOMs.

## **PEER SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS**

In cases of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep other students safe, we will consider for each individual case if any of the students' friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by a staff member.

## **PARENT/CARER WELLBEING**

At Lotus, our aim is to be able to support the whole family and as such we have a dedicated Family support worker, Mrs Ward. If a parent/carer is worried about their own mental health or well-being they can contact Mrs Ward or any member of the school staff, who will pass their details on to Mrs Ward. Mrs Ward will be able to offer guidance and support and signpost parents/carers to organisations that can help.

## **STAFF WELLBEING**

We take staff well-being very seriously and have an 'open door' policy at Lotus. Staff should always feel they have someone to talk to. Every Friday during directed time staff are given the opportunity be able to reflect on issues that may have arisen and talk to each other about any concerns. As a school we are part of an employee assistance programme which offers free and confidential advice and support on a range of issues, to all members of staff. Information about this can be found in the Staffroom or given to them by Mrs Kenworthy. As a school we recognise that the well-being of the staff is just as important as the well-being of the students. Training opportunities for staff concerning issues surrounding mental health and Resilience will be delivered as part of our CPD programme.

Further information that helps support staff well-being is provided in our Staff handbook.