Mental health and wellbeing principles

June 2024

Diverse Academies

Contents

'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 make a contribution to her or his community.'

Credit: World Health Organisation

1   Principles statement

This statement applies to all Diverse Academies stakeholders including children in our academies, employees, governors, trustees, and volunteers.

In the context of the post COVID-19 pandemic and the continuing economic pressures faced by families, the need to deliver effective support for the rise in mental health referrals of children and staff is taken very seriously by our trust.

To this end, we continue to follow the key principles outlined in the framework devised by Children's Integrated Commissioning Hub (ICH) and Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire safeguarding partnerships and mental health services. In creating these principles, detailed attention continues to be given to the following key elements of best practice, as outlined in the DfE documents ['Supporting mental health in schools – pen portraits of provision', May 2018](); ['Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools', February 2024]()

We commit to establish an effective pre-emptive and relevant curriculum that covers mental health related issues.

This principles statement, and academy best-practice appendices, should be read in conjunction with our [attendance](), [safeguarding and child protection](), [behaviour](), [equality]() and [SEND]() policies.

2   Vision, mission, and values

We are committed to creating a positive culture of mental health, where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Underpinning these mental health principles are our commitments to empowerment, respect, and care for all and our trust vision: To inspire. To raise aspirations. To create brighter tomorrows

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3   Purpose and intent

We recognise that poor mental health, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious long-term consequences for social, emotional, and mental wellbeing in adult life. The purpose of this policy is to establish principles and practice that ensure each pupil is uniquely valued and that the mental health of all pupils is prioritised. We aim to achieve and maintain an effective approach to mental health across our academies, through both preventative and pre-emptive strategies.

4   Roles and responsibilities

The Trust is committed to ensuring that our academies establish an effective pre-emptive and relevant curriculum that covers mental health related issues.

In creating a positive mental health culture in our academies:

- **all our staff**, through their safeguarding duty, recognise and refer children displaying mental health conditions to the respective MH Leader and Designated Safeguarding Lead
- all local systems adopted for managing and recording mental health conditions and disclosures are centred on meeting the emotional needs of the child, leading to a positive climate for learning and a respectful, secure culture for all children. We follow the escalation process outlined in Appendix A.
- we effectively manage mental health and provide support for all pupils including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those in receipt of Pupil Premium and / or free school meals (FSM), those who have a protected characteristic, those who are in the care system and those who are a Young Carer through recognising the importance of inclusivity, proactive safeguarding, and graduated responses
- we work closely with parents and carers in meeting the needs of their child
- we work closely with, seek advice from and escalate concerns to a variety of appropriate external agencies and charities, outlined in section 4.4 and Appendix B.
- when applying these principles, under paragraph 7 of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, we ensure that arrangements are made to always safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.

4.1   Trustees and academy committees

The trustees and local academy committees will be collectively responsible for ensuring that mental health arrangements are fully embedded and understood within each academy and operate alongside the safeguarding policy and protocols. They will ensure that the academy:

- has an appointed designated Mental Health Lead responsible for oversight of the strategic direction of Mental Health within the setting
- designates an individual member of the Local Academy Committee to oversee mental health issues to liaise directly with the SDL, safeguarding and / or lead for personal development
- has effective policies and procedures in line with statutory guidance on safeguarding
- monitor compliance with current guidance

4.2   Principals (with the support of the executive principal)

- appoint a designated academy mental health lead (MHL) – the gatekeeper and first point of contact for all pupil based mental health practice and protocols
- ensure there is a mechanism for identifying mental health need across each academy – usually a triage between designated safeguarding staff, the wider pastoral team and (when available) a dedicated counsellor
- ensure there is a mechanism for identifying mental health need and curriculum coverage across each academy – My Concern linked to the professional development programme – under the direction of the respective SDLs, safeguarding and professional development
- adhere to our trust principles on mental health and produce a local offer in each academy
- incorporate effective, pre-emptive mental health education and provision in the curriculum using for example G.R.E.A.T. project materials and resources at primary level to support children experiencing / witnessing domestic abuse – updated to link in with and reflect on the guidance in KCSIE
- adhere to and understand the specific guidance in KCSIE
- engage with parents/carers and other stakeholders in supporting children and young people's mental health
- ensure that a regular, meaningful and targeted pupil voice is carried out, analysed and helps to shape the direction of the respective academy mental health offer / RSE curriculum
- ensure there are whole academy approaches to mental health in conjunction with the Safeguarding SDG (Strategic Development Group), the Personal Development SDG and the regular sharing of information between respective strategic development leaders (safeguarding, personal development, and curriculum)

- support whole academy and trust-wide approaches to mental health through sharing of best-practice via Principals group meetings, Trust training events and the Mental Health ONG
- invest in suitably relevant pupil-centred initiatives such as *'Healthy Lives'*, including the development of strategies to improve stress and anxiety management, nutrition, and sleep hygiene, for example; *'Take 5'* and *'Schools in Mind'*
- commit to provide academy-based staff with additional accredited training

4.3   Designated mental health lead and senior leadership

The designated mental health lead and wider senior leadership team in each academy will:

- lead on staff training and awareness – with commitment to areas such as Trauma Informed approaches
- work with the DSL to triage, and when necessary, escalate concerns following the protocols outlined in the Trust safeguarding policy
- ensure the academy's mental health offer to pupils and parents is updated and reviewed (in conjunction with the academy leadership team and SENCO) in line with the safeguarding policy review and mental health principles updates
- participate actively in the Trust Mental Health Leaders Operational Network Group (MHL ONG) and other shared planning and collaborative working
- ensure that the mental health provision / audit document is continually updated and revised to reflect current practice and provision in each academy (see Appendix C)
- identify best practice in conjunction with the Mental Health ONG and the respective leadership team in each academy, including the SENCO alongside the SDLs safeguarding and professional development and feed into respective strategic development groups
- facilitate counselling to support children, young people, and adult mental health within each academy
- use summative and formative data (through online safeguarding reporting and pastoral referral) to identify mental health need, to provide bespoke support for pupils and demonstrate impact
- work strategically to ensure mental health provision and procedures are responsive to need, up to date, pre-emptive where possible and support development work within the Trust
- ensure that agreed Trust-wide initiatives to improve mental health are carried out locally in their respective academy – for example, responding to pupil voice through influencing curriculum provision

- ensure parents have access to the services available and have information about the local offer in the respective academy – through the respective website
- liaise with the academy Human Resources Administrator to ensure that any further accredited staff training on mental health is recorded on the training tab within the SCR
- ensure their is a single point of contact with mental health services
- take opportunities to reflect on and learn from best practice in mental health provision including from within our Trust, the local authority and using national research
- access support across a range of external providers and agencies
- ensure the academy uses an evidence-based approach to intervention – using effective triage to target in-house counselling and pastoral support
- train staff to enhance the in-house provision of identification, support, and referral – for example investment in and a commitment to Poverty Proofing, Trauma Informed approaches, increasing operational capacity through mental health first aid accredited courses and ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant)
- communicate clarity over the roles, remit and responsibilities of all partners involved in supporting the mental health of children, young people and adults working within our academies
- adopt fully integrated access to support across a range of external providers and agencies
- use an evidence-based approach to intervention – using effective triage to target in-house counselling and pastoral support

4.4   Other key contacts

There are key people within the trust and local authority who have specific strategic overview of mental health provision.

Role	Name	Contact Details
Designated trustee for mental health	Louis Donald	ldonald@gov.diverse-ac.org.uk
Designated mental health lead (trust)	Patrick Knight, Strategic Development Leader, Safeguarding	pknight@diverse-ac.org.uk
Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	Notts	www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/camhs Tel: 0115 969 1300 Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Duncan Macmillan House Porchester Road Nottingham NG3 6AA

	Lincs	www.lpft.nhs.uk/young-people/lincolnshire/contact-us
		Tel: 01476 464949
		Beaconfield Resources Centre
		Beaconfield Site
		Beacon Lane
		Grantham
		NG31 9DF

5   Benefits of the principles

In adhering to the principles outlined in the statement all children will receive high quality first wave mental health provision, both pre-emptive via high quality, relevant and effective pastoral, and curriculum support, and responsive via effective triage and referral to professional services.

Over time, incidences of adverse mental health conditions reduce.

6   Training

We have a continuing commitment to providing the most up-to-date training.

Our trust (through the Diverse Association for Professional Learning) provides academy-based staff with additional accredited training.

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 all pupil's safe.

Our dedicated MS Teams 'Mental Health Leads' area hosts relevant information and resources for lead staff in mental health provision.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will continue to be offered as part of our over-arching and strategic approach, particularly around leadership, counselling, and mental health first aid.

Staff are expected to contribute to their CPD via BlueSky and feed into, when appropriate, the appraisal process. Additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes an identified trust and/or academy need.

The trust continues to offer online non-statutory National College modules on 'adverse childhood experiences', 'dealing with bereavement & loss', 'mental wellbeing in children & young people', 'online safety' and 'child neglect' to ALL staff.

Access to local mental health services in Nottinghamshire and / or Lincolnshire.

Additional awareness training is offered for example, via Equation (domestic abuse) and our working relationship with the Nottinghamshire Tackling Emerging Threats to Children (TETC) Team.

The Trust is committed to continuing to provide suitable and timely professional development and awareness opportunities on mental health in the context of post-COVID-19.

We have a MAT-wide approach to mental health, auditing current provision and projected future needs under the overall direction of the respective SDLs for safeguarding and personal development.

The result of this process informs respective academy mental health and well-being best-practice documents (see appendix C).

7 Review

The mental health principles review will be carried out on a biannual basis. This will reflect any changes in the national guidance and in consultation with respective academy mental health leaders.

Appendix A How mental health provision will be addressed across the Trust

Level of mental health provision	Examples	For
Green – Universal *pre-emptive* A whole school cultural approach promoting a preventative mental health culture constantly considers **"how must that particular pupil feel?".** Where staff identify pupils whose mental health is affecting their mood or conduct they use reasonable and available resources and strategies to mitigate. Approaches are typically focused on interventions but may also include consequences with positive framing to develop accountability, ensuring that the school environment is safe, enjoyable and purposeful for all. It is the expectation that there is a whole school cultural approach that is based on culture of kindness so that children feel safe talking about their feelings. There are clear expectations of care and help from peers without any stigma around mental health or discrimination towards the child. A whole school strategic approach that includes lessons, activities, and general mentoring to promote positive mental health by: • ensuring pupils feel cared for and feel a sense of belonging. • ensuring pupils feel a sense of purpose, sense of achievement and desire to improve. • teach pupils about respectful relationships, emotional wellbeing, mental health through a high quality and age appropriate RHSE curriculum.	Wellbeing lessons and/or drop-down days	All pupils
Amber – Targeted support – *pre-emptive and responsive* Where pupils have sustained symptoms of mood or conduct or where there is concern that the issues cannot be managed within the typical universal offer of pastoral and academic mentoring pupils. The Strategic Mental Health Lead and Designated Safeguarding Team triage and refer to Trained staff with the skills and confidence to step in, offer first aid and guide pupils towards the support they need. This can speed up a young person's recovery, stop issues from developing into a crisis, and ultimately save lives.	Mental health first aider	Pupils who need one to one support with their mental health and wellbeing
Red – Critical support – *responsive / referral* Where pupils have symptoms of mood or conduct that highlight a serious risk of harm the Strategic Mental Health	Access to a counselling service	Pupils who need specialist support with

Lead and Designated Safeguarding Team triage and will refer to qualified staff if available. Qualified counselling staff (should the academy have provision) may support pupils by providing a psychological counselling, assessment, and intervention service. They may refer to outside agency support. Designated staff in other academies without a dedicated counsellor, work collaboratively with principals, teachers, learning and support teams, parents and carers, and other agencies and will make referrals for specialist support such as the CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) / MHST (mental health support team) where deemed necessary.		their wellbeing and mental health

Appendix B Contact points/directory for mental health services

https://www.nottalone.org.uk/?a=tp

www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/camhs

www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/camhs-crisis-team

www.annafreud.org (mental health charity and pioneer)

www.kooth.com (confidential online portal for 11-25-year-olds)

www.freedbeeches.org.uk (eating disorders in young people service)

www.youngminds.org.uk (young people's mental health service)

www.papyrus-uk.org (prevention of young suicide)

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/115467/childrens-society-cse-and-csa-service (children's society / safe time support – sexual abuse)

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/fanotts/health-and-wellbeing/emotional-wellbeing

www.lpft.nhs.uk/young-people/lincolnshire/young-people/i-need-more-help/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-cahms

Appendix C Academy mental health and wellbeing best practice

This is a generic example of a working document for MHL to track actions and provision around a respective academy mental health offer – *it is purely for guidance and is not exhaustive in terms of content*

	Strategies in place	Notes/staff	Timeline
1. Designated mental health lead	Continued emphasis on staff rewarding pupils with merits from the PBFL policy. Postcards home, positive re-enforcement	Designated mental health lead working with inclusion team and MIND. Staff training session held in Summer HT 6 by MIND representative. SLT training on INSET day with EH	
2. Identifying mental health need	Pupils with need/ support identified by staff and pastoral team during weekly inclusion meetings and house meetings mental health topics covered in life skills curriculum at KS3 and KS4. Mental health is covered through safeguarding yearly audit.	Pupils identified working with Head of House (HoH). Also, referrals to TETC team or MIND staff	
3. Plan mission statement or policy for mental health	MHL and inclusion team to work closely together to put together a policy with the trust SDL and place around academy site and on the website. Year 11 peer mentor scheme.	Mental health statement/ offer to be created and share with all stakeholders and placed on website 36 Year 11 peer mentors trained in July. Assigned year 7 and 8 pupils who they meet each week to support transition and other SEMH issues.	

4.	Incorporating mental health into the curriculum	Weekly lessons at KS3 and 4 covers mental health awareness, as well as a bespoke life weeks programme with workshops scheduled throughout the academic year.	HoHs have started to focus on delivery during VT sessions. Posters already on display on house notice boards.	
		TETC team are working with MHL in embedding tutorials with pupils who have asked for support regarding MH issues.	MHL has forged links with Kooth. Posters around the site advertising the site and how pupils can utilise the site.	
		LGBTQ group already established and has lots of members and support. Pride event last July at ELA was well supported.	LGBTQ group will also lead another assembly on diversity within our community. They all wear flag pin badges on a daily basis, and the noticeboard has lots of information for pupils to read.	
		Also using school health advice and appointment line telephone numbers as sources for pupils, parents/carers.		
		Assemblies from internal and external staff. MHL started promoting MH in assemblies before HT.		
5.	Using universal data and measurement to identify need	Attendance, rewards, and behaviour data is analysed once a week by MHL/HoH/AO – shared with pupils by their tutor during VT time – intervention/support put in place for pupils not meeting expectations.	Data dashboard is monitored by MHL lead and AO once a week and disseminated to HoH

Critical cohorts for attendance and behaviour are created and reviewed once a half term – monitored every week (HoH/AO) | |

	SEND outcomes are tracked separately in consultation with the Inclusion team by SENDCo – intervention/support put in place My Concern dashboard data analysed by DSL and HoH periodically during the week – intervention/support put in place from inclusion team meeting each week	SENDCo feeds back at weekly inclusion team meetings- involving HoH and VT tutors with updated information. My Concern is reviewed and analysed once a week at least by DSL and shared with core SG team. Feedback from weekly inclusion team meeting is used to support intervention and vulnerable pupils on individual support plans if needed.	
6. Engaging parents and carers in supporting children's mental health	Topic at parent focus group meetings held throughout the year. Mental health focus to be placed on the academy website. Access to a counselling service offering 1:1 session with pupils Social media promoting events in school e.g., mental health awareness day etc.	MHL hosting these meetings with parent focus group throughout the year MHL to liaise with principal to place information on academy website. Access to a counselling service 5 days a week. Also available out of school hours via e-mail (this includes academy holidays) Working with peer mentors and inclusion group - especially for mental health awareness week	

7.	Having a single point of contact with external mental health services	The academy uses the following external agencies all of which are available to parents and pupil on the website Kooth counselling MIND School Health - Notts / Lincs CAMHs	Contacts will be placed clearly on the academy website Contacts are included in each mental health newsletter each term	
8.	Offering counselling to support pupils' mental health	Previously mentioned in box numbers 2 and 3 Support from FT pupil councillor Year 11 peer mentors Year 12 academic mentors	Access to a counselling service available 5 days per week and out of hours via e-mail. Year 11 mentors work with vulnerable year 7 and 8 pupils. Also run a drop-in session at lunchtimes and also have an e-mail address	
9.	Taking a whole school approach to mental health	Part of AIP through curriculum and safeguarding provision / identified priorities Peer mentors to work with years 7 and 8 pupils Linked to VT tutor programme within the SMSC curriculum (subject lessons) and the life skills programme. Staff awareness training delivered	Peer mentors implemented in September and are now embedded and developed within the academy HoH and MHL to set yearly overview for tutor programme to include mental health focus	

Appendix D National best practice in mental health

'Supporting mental health in schools and colleges – pen portraits of provision' May 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/705083/Supporting_Mental-Health_pen_portraits.pdf