SPENCER
ACADEMIES TRUST

Policy and Guidance for Mental Health and Wellbeing
September 2019

LONG FIELD

The Local Governing Body of Long Field Academy were notified of this policy and accompanying guidance September 2019

It will be reviewed should statutory guidance require changes

Policy Intent:

Why mental health and wellbeing is important?

At Long Field Academy, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. All children go through ups and downs during their school career and some face significant life events. In 2017, about 1 in 10 children aged 5 to 16 have a diagnosable mental health need and these can have an enormous impact on quality of life, relationships and academic achievement. In many cases it is life-limiting.

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy". Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting children's wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- All children are valued.
- Children have a sense of belonging and feel safe.
- Children 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.
- In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

Purpose of the policy

This policy sets out:
- How we promote positive mental health.
- How we prevent mental health problems.
- How we identify and support children with mental health needs.
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent or address mental health problems
- Key information about some common mental health problems.
- Where parents, staff and children can get further advice and support.

Definition of mental health and wellbeing

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing:

" A state of well-being 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".

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:

- Feel confident in themselves.
- Be able to express a range of emotions appropriately.
- Be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others.
- Cope with the stresses of everyday life.
- Manage times of stress and be able to deal with change.
- Learn and achieve.

Links to other policies

This policy links to our policies on Safeguarding, Medical Needs, Anti-Bullying, , SEND and Equalities. Links with the School's Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need. We also followed guidelines set out by the DFE (2014) Mental Health and Behaviour in schools document.

A whole school approach to promoting positive mental health

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help children become more resilient, happy and successful and to prevent problems before they arise.
This encompasses seven aspects:

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience, and which everyone understands.
2. Helping children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it.
3. Helping children to be resilient learners.
4. Teaching children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
5. Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services.
6. Effectively working with parents and carers.
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues. We therefore aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of these issues.

Staff roles and responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.
All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

Our Pastoral Lead for Social, Emotional & Mental Health Needs (Mrs Lisa Newby) leads and works with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.

Head of House and House Tutors promote the teaching about mental health through our Bites sessions.

The inclusion and Pastoral team along with House Tutors provide advice and support to children and parents.

The Pastoral Lead (Mrs Lisa Newby) is the first point of contact with mental health services, and makes individual referrals to them.

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the School environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to children with mental health needs and their families.

Other sources of relevant support include:

- Our own Senior Leadership Team
- Our own Inclusion Team
- Our Safeguarding/Child Protection Leads (Mrs Sharon Maloney, Mrs Lisa Newby, Mr Simon Fretwell)
- Head of Houses
- House Tutors
- Pastoral support staff employed to manage mental health needs of particular children
- Our SENDCO (Mrs Lisa Atterbury) who helps staff understand their responsibilities to children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), including children whose mental health problems mean they need special educational provision.
- Our School Nurse (Mrs Zoe Blackett)
- Our Counsellor and her therapy dog (Laura Seward and Ruby)

We believe the School has a key role in promoting children positive mental health and helping to prevent mental health problems. Our School has developed a range of strategies and approaches including:

- Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health.
- Peer mediation and Peer mentoring – children working together to solve problems and
- planned sessions where identified adults mentor a designated child
- Lunchtime clubs to achieve a sense of community and friendships
- House point scheme to promote positive behaviours
- Weekly WISPA nominations
- Positive phone calls home
- Active Socail Media site to promote a sense a community
- Mental health teaching programmes at House Time through PSHCE Bites we teach the knowledge and social and emotional skills that will help children to be more resilient, understand about mental health and be less affected by the stigma of mental health

Disclosures by children and confidentiality

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to children who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of our children is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff make it clear to children that the

concern will be shared with the Mental Health Lead or the Safeguarding Lead and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.
All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil's confidential file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps.

Assessment, Interventions and Support

All concerns are reported to the Mental Health Lead and recorded. We then implement our assessment system, which is based on levels of need to ensure that children get the support they need, either from within the School or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating.

The level of need is based on discussions at the regular Inclusion meetings/panel with key members of staff highlighted by any member of staff or peer.
Evidence-based Intervention are put in place to support the individual need of the child.
For example:

Low need general support from our inclusion team
Signposting for students eg. Clubs and self-help programs
Monitoring with a member of staff.
School Nurse referral
School Counsellor referral
CAMHS referral
1:1 family support with external agencies
SEND referral
Educational Psychologist assessment

We have a duty of care to support children and will seek advice from medical staff and mental health professionals on the best way to support children. We will carry out a risk assessment and produce individual support plans based upon individual need.

In some case a students's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders. We have access to a range of specialist services and during the support will have regular contact with the service to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the children' Individual Care Plan.

School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Pastoral Lead or the SENDCO following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers.

Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the pupil and parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs.

Involving parents and carers

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting children who do have mental health needs. We ask parents to inform us of any mental health needs their child has and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child's mental health and wellbeing, It is very helpful if parents and carers can share information with the School so that we can better support their child from the outset. All information will be treated in confidence.

To support parents and carers:

We provide information and websites on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes and have produced leaflets for parents on mental health and resilience, which can be requested from our Inclusion team. The information includes who parents can talk to if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child and where parents can access support for themselves.

We include the mental health topics that are taught in the PSHCE curriculum section, on the School website

We are aware that parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health problem and we will be sensitive and supportive. We also aim to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available.

When a concern has been raised, the School will:
- Contact parents and carers and meet with them (In almost all cases, parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as where child protection issues are identified.)
- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- Be available for follow up calls.
- Make a record of the meeting.
- Agree next steps.
- Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child.
- Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and Interventions provided.

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and children may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves. We give children the option of informing their parents and carers about their mental health needs for themselves or of accompanying and supporting them to do so.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern is the children, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

Where to get information and support

For support on specific mental health needs
Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk OCD UK www.ocduk.org
Depression Alliance www.depressoinalliance.org
Eating Disorders www.b-eat.co.uk and www.inourhands.com
National Self-Harm Network www.nshn.co.uk
www.selfharm.co.uk
Suicidal thoughts Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org
For general information and support
www.youngminds.org.uk champions young people's mental health and wellbeing
www.mind.org.uk advice and support on mental health problems
www.minded.org.uk (e-learning)
www.time-to-change.org.uk tackles the stigma of mental health
www.rethink.org challenges attitudes towards mental health