



King's Lynn Academy

Policy:

Mental Health Policy

Author:

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Introduction:

A school mental health policy explains and sets out the school's commitment to its students' mental health. It should outline how the school will support its students, its ongoing commitment to staff training, and how it will work with the wider community to promote student wellbeing. It should include and have regard for Statutory guidance including 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' 2024 (KCSIE) and 'Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education' 2021. This policy is written in conjunction with the Safeguarding Policy and procedures of the academy. [download.asp \(eastern-mat.co.uk\)](http://eastern-mat.co.uk/download.asp)

The Government's Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision Green Paper (Department of Health, Department of Education 2018) included a focus on early intervention and prevention and the central role of schools. A key theme is that there will be incentives for every school or college to identify a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health to oversee the approach to mental health and well-being.

Young Minds charity reports that **one in five young adults**, and **one in ten children have** a diagnosable mental health disorder. That translates to roughly **three children in every classroom**.

Mental health issues can affect a student's emotional wellbeing as well as their educational attainment. Developing a Mental Health Policy is a first starting point in establishing a whole school approach that not only addresses student mental health but also shows students and their parents that the school is committed to the wellbeing and mental health of the students. Additionally, it signals to students that the school is understanding of mental health issues and encourages them to come forward with their difficulties. A mentally healthy school is one that has a whole-school approach to the topic of mental health and sees the mental health of its students, staff, and parents as everybody's responsibility.

Key Principles:

At King's Lynn Academy we are committed to promoting a positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body, their families and governors. We pursue this aim using universal, whole school approaches and specialised targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students 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. We know that everyone experiences life challenges that make us vulnerable, and at times anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

This policy describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies. The policy acknowledges the academy's responsibilities pertaining to:

- Students with SEN
- The safeguarding procedures of the academy

Key Aims:

- Promote positive mental health and well-being in our school community, including pupils, parents, staff and governors
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health and wellbeing issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide the right support to students 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.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

Staff Responsibilities:

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff with a specific relevant remit include:

- Elanor Goldup – Vice Principal (Student Welfare) & Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Charis Griffiths-Pugh – Assistant Principal (SEND and Attendance) & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Brian Reeve-Hayes - Mental Health Lead
- Lorraine Roberts – Behaviour Manager & Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Debbie Germaney – Pastoral Manager & Designated Safeguarding Lead

School staff could become aware of changes in behaviour which may indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues.

These changes may include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or 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
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the Safeguarding team the first instance. If there is a concern that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the school's child protection procedures should be followed and the concern logged on CPOMS. 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 emergency services if necessary.

On occasion, a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service) may be appropriate, this will be led and managed by Brian Reeve-Hayes and the Pastoral Team with support from the Mental Health Support Team . Guidance about referring to CYPMHS is provided in Appendix A

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, an Individual Care Plan may be drawn up. The development of the plan should involve the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.

Whole Academy Approach:

Students are taught about managing their own mental health during their personal development alongside a wide range of mental health support which is published on the KLA website so that resources can be accessed when the academy is not open.

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy safe are included as part of our RSHE curriculum and embedded throughout our school learning community in line with the [Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education and Health Education guidance \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/67111/relationships-education-guidance.pdf)

Managing Disclosures:

At times, a pupil may choose to tell a staff member concerns that they have about their own emotions or well-being. All staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

All staff should respond in a calm, supportive and non-judgemental way.

Staff should listen rather than advise and their first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded on a CPOMS and flagged as 'Mental Health'. This concern will be acted upon by the DSL team who will offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality:

Staff must be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. They should never promise the child that they will keep information to themselves, and should inform the pupil who they are going to talk to, what they are going to tell them and why it is important that they pass these concerns on.

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the student. We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

When we're going to tell them Ideally, consent should be gained from the student first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as students up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

Working with Parents:

Parents will usually be informed if a child makes a disclosure and staff need to be sensitive when sharing this with parents/carers. It can be upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and staff should give the parent/ carer time to reflect. A brief record of the meeting should be kept in line with school policy. Staff should always highlight further sources of information where possible to offer support to the parent

However, if a child gives reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents may not be informed and the Safeguarding Team should be informed immediately so that a referral can be made.

We recognise the family plays an important 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 that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child's mental health and wellbeing
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.)
- Make the school policy easily accessible to parents and carers
- Keep parents informed about the topics that children are learning about in school.

Staff 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 Mental Health Lead will be trained as a Mental health First Aid trainer so that staff can receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent. We will publish relevant information to staff who wish to learn more about mental health and this policy will be provided to all staff as part of their induction. Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate.

Staff Wellbeing is assessed and addressed in the following ways:

- A workplace risk assessment
- Health a safety Executive stress management competency indicator tool
- Annual Eastern Multi-Academy Trust wellbeing surveys
- Early Career Teachers do not cover lessons unless there are no there are no other options
- Most lessons are covered by Cover Supervisors or members of the academy's leadership team
- Most core subjects have bought in curriculum and resources
- All faculties have time for co-planning to reduce the amount of time spent by individuals

Appendix A: Guidance about CYPMHS referral

If the referral is urgent it should be initiated by phone so that CYPMHS can advise of best next steps

Before making the referral, have a clear outcome in mind, what do you want CYPMHS to do? You might be looking for advice, strategies, support or a diagnosis for instance.

You must also be able to provide evidence to CYPMHS about what intervention and support has been offered to the pupil by the school and the impact of this. CYPMHS will always ask ‘What have you tried?’ so be prepared to supply relevant evidence, reports and records.

General considerations

- Have you met with the parent(s)/carer(s) and the referred child/children?
- Has the referral to CYPMHS been discussed with a parent / carer and the referred pupil?
- Has a parent / carer given consent for the referral? If not, is the child able to give consent for themselves?
- What are the parent/carer pupil’s attitudes to the referral?

Basic information

- Is there a child protection plan in place?
- Is the child looked after?
- name and date of birth of referred child/children
- address and telephone number
- who has parental responsibility?
- surnames if different to child’s
- GP details
- What is the ethnicity of the pupil / family.
- Will an interpreter be needed?
- Are there other agencies involved?

Reason for referral

- What are the specific difficulties that you want CYPMHS to address?
- How long has this been a problem and why is the family seeking help now?
- Is the problem situation-specific or more generalised?
- Your understanding of the problem/issues involved.

Further helpful information

- Who else is living at home and details of separated parents if appropriate?
- Name of school
- Who else has been or is professionally involved and in what capacity?
- Has there been any previous contact with our department?
- Has there been any previous contact with social services?
- Details of any known protective factors
- Any relevant history i.e. family, life events and/or developmental factors
- Are there any recent changes in the pupil’s or family’s life?
- Are there any known risks, to self, to others or to professionals?
- Is there a history of developmental delay e.g. speech and language delay
- Are there any symptoms of ADHD/ASD and if so have you talked to the Educational

psychologist?