

MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING POLICY

Statement of Practice



LEES BROOK
COMMUNITY
SCHOOL

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Introduction

Lees Brook Community School puts its learners at the heart of everything it does. It is a school that cares for all the people within it and we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all learners, their families and members of staff and governors.

We understand that everyone has differing life experiences and that sometimes we may need extra help and support to get through some of life's challenges. We understand that everyone has mental health and supporting and promoting positive mental health is everyone's responsibility.

Statement of Practice

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

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1.0 Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff, including teachers, governors, and non-teaching staff. It outlines our approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read and understood alongside our other relevant school policies.

2.0 Policy Aims

The aim of this policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health of our staff and learners. At our school we always aim to:

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and learners.
- Help children to understand their emotions and experiences better.
- Ensure our learners feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in learners.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to learners with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst learners and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Celebrating each learner for who they are and making every learner feel valued and respected.

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community.
- Supporting staff with their mental health.

3.0 Key staff members

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

- Keziah Smith - Mental Health Lead
- Sarah Hadwin - Designated Safeguarding Lead
- James Hatton - SENDCO
- Sam Davies – Senior Education Welfare Officer
- Hayley Stubbs – Inclusion Officer
- Katy Hatton – Citizenship and PSHE Lead
- Liz Wright – Resident School Nurse

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a young person, in the first instance they should contact Keziah Smith, Mental Health Lead. If unavailable, any concerns should be passed on to Sarah Hadwin, Safeguarding Lead. If there is a concern that the learner is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection and safeguarding procedures should be followed and take priority. If the child presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant medical procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

4.0 Teaching about mental health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our learners need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our Citizenship and PSHE curriculum as well as within form tutor sessions and whole school events and personal development themes.

We will follow the guidance issued by the PSHE Association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively.

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing>

Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote learners' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of learners' own emotions as well as those of other people.

Additionally, we will use such lessons and other planned opportunities as a vehicle for providing learners who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting learners to support any of their friends who are facing challenges.

5.0 Signposting

We will ensure that staff, learners and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services. This is often via the school Mental Health Lead who as well as working directly with young people within the school, also signposts staff, parents and young people to external services that may be relevant to them. Within school, there is also information shared through the use of notice boards or other communication channels, such as form time, school website and parent newsletters.

The aim of this is to ensure learners, parents and staff understand:

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

6.0 Sources of support at school and in the community

Within school we have direct support available for learners who may need it. This includes both individual and group therapy sessions with the Mental Health Lead who is a registered Art Psychotherapist. This may be short term support for those that may benefit from signposting or learning some techniques to help better support themselves or better understand how they may be feeling, or longer term support, if appropriate, for those who may have a diagnosed or emerging mental health condition. This support is usually accessed via referral to the Mental Health Lead, either via school staff, a parent/carer or the learner themselves. All staff and learners are aware of the referral process.

All learners also have access in school to a variety of adults who provide support at different times as appropriate. This may include form teachers, Heads of Year, Learning Behaviour Managers, and members of the Inclusion and Safeguarding team. Learners are aware of how to get in contact with these adults within school if needed. Support would be dependent on the situation and learners' needs.

Support for young people is also accessible external to school. This includes support from an individual's GP who should always be the first point of call for anyone worried about their or their young person's mental health. This may result in potential referral to specialist support from Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) or Building Sound Minds. There are also a number of local and national organisations which provide emotional wellbeing and mental health support both directly and indirectly via information and psychoeducation. This includes 'Kooth' who provide online counselling for young people (www.kooth.com); Young Minds, who provide a crisis messenger service (text YM to 85258) and Childline who provide a free helpline accessible to all young people (0800 1111). Further signposting will take place as appropriate in line with section 5.0.

Adults within school can also access support from the Mental Health Lead if they feel appropriate. This may be of a more informal or psycho-educational nature, or longer term targeted support as is needed. Adults can also access mental health support via external services such as self-referral to Trent PTS (www.trentpts.co.uk) or visiting their GP.

7.0 Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a learner 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 follow safeguarding procedures.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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 which seems unusual
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- 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

Staff will also be well placed to identify any additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact a child's mental health and wellbeing, such as bereavement and health difficulties.

8.0 Managing disclosures

If a learner chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. It often takes a young person multiple attempts to share difficult information with an adult and so information should be treated with great respect.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially in line with the internal safeguarding procedures (My Concerns).

9.0 Confidentiality

If a member of staff thinks it is necessary to pass on concerns about a learner following safeguarding procedures, then this will first be discussed with the learner. They will be told:

- Who the staff member is going to tell.
- What the staff member is going to disclose.
- Why it is necessary for somebody else to be told.
- When the contact will be.

However, it may not always be possible to gain the learner's consent first, such as in the case of learners who are at immediate risk. Protecting a learner's safety is our main priority so we would share disclosures if we judged a child to be at risk.

10.0 Whole school approach

We take a whole school approach towards the mental health of our learners. This means working with parents and carers and with other agencies and partners, where necessary.

Working with Parents and Carers

We aim to support parents and carers as much as possible. To support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing that we have in our school.
- Share and allow parents to access further support.
- Ensure that parents are aware of who to talk to if they have any concerns about their child.
- Give parents' guidance about how they can support their young person's positive mental health.
- Ensure this policy is easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in Citizenship and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

Working with other Agencies and Partners

As part of our whole school approach, we will also work with other agencies to support our learners' emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with:

- The school nurse
- Paediatricians

- CAMHS
- A young person's GP or other medical staff
- External therapists or counselling services
- Family support workers.
- Behavioural support workers.

11.0 Supporting Peers

We understand that, when a learner is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their peers. In response to this, we will consider, on a case by case basis, any peers that may need additional support. This may include face to face support within school, or signposting to external services or information as is appropriate.

12.0 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 learners safe.

We will also share relevant information to staff who wish to learn more about mental health as it becomes available. Staff can also access consultation with the Mental Health Lead to discuss any young people or mental health queries they may have. The MindEd learning portal is also accessible and provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

We will consider additional training opportunities for staff and we will support additional CPD throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with learners.

13.0 Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every six months. This is so that it remains up to date, useful, and relevant. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local and national policy changes.

Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.