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Phoenix Park Academy



Positive Mental Health Policy



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Positive Mental Health Policy

Phoenix Park Academy & Sevenhills Academy

December 2018

Policy Statement

“Being mentally healthy is also about having the strength to overcome the difficulties and challenges we can all face at times in our lives – to have confidence and self-esteem, to be able to take decisions and to believe in ourselves.” (www.rethink.org).

At our academies, we aim to both promote positive mental health for everyone, including both staff and students, as well as recognising and responding to mental ill health. This is delivered by using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

Scope

This document describes the academy’s approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our medical policy in cases where a student’s mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and well-being in all staff and students;
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues;
- Train staff to be able to identify early warning signs of mental ill health and signpost to heads of centres;
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their families and peers, as well as staff supporting them.

Lead Members of Staff

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

- David Mills: SENCO & Executive Vice Principal (Phoenix Park Academy & Sevenhills Academy)
- Rachel Patchett: Safeguarding Lead/Parent Support Advisor (Phoenix Park Academy & Sevenhills Academy)
- Jo Indian: Head of Centre (Phoenix House)
- Phil Burns: Head of Centre (Park House)
- Jenny Smith: Head of Centre (Sevenhills)
- Ash Lucas: Care Team Leader (Phoenix Park Academy & Sevenhills Academy)
- Theresa Matthews: Care Team (Sevenhills Academy)
- Sara Brooks: Teacher (Sevenhills Academy)
- Tina Wilkinson: Teacher (Phoenix Park Academy)

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the Head of Centre in the first instance. If the student is in danger of immediate harm then safeguarding procedures should be



followed. 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 Young Minds Matter/CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Head of Centre.

Positive Handling Plans

All students at Phoenix Park Academy have a positive handling plan. This will include any information around diagnosed or suspected mental health diagnoses. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This includes:

- Details of a young person's condition;
- Special requirements and precautions;
- Interventions that work and do not work;
- Medication and any side effects;
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency;
- The role which staff and the academy can play.

All staff that will, or could potentially, work with the student, should have access to their positive handling plan.

Teaching about Mental Health

As a part of the Government guidance, as published in the "Transforming children and young people's mental health provision" 2017, the school will deliver lessons to all students around mental health and well-being in order to provide students with the skills and awareness to support their own mental health.

Lessons will be targeted and needs-led, and will follow the PSHE Association Guidance (see Appendix A). Students will be made aware of where they can access mental health support both in and out of school. More bespoke of specific lessons will depend on the needs of the particular group.

All lessons will be taught in a safe and sensitive manner to increase positive outcomes.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within the academy, local community and online. Information around what mental health services are available in Northeast Lincolnshire can be found in the Mental Health Directory (see Appendix D).

Sources of support will be advertised in communal areas, such as corridors and reception, and staff will regularly highlight sources of support to students within the curriculum.

Warning Signs

Our academy staff are in a position where they are likely to become aware of warning signs which indicate poor mental health. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Head of Centre who will then act appropriately.

Possible warning signs may include, but are not limited to:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental;
- Changes in eating habits;
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn;
- Changes in activity and mood;



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- Persistently tired or complaints about sleep;
- Lowering of academic achievement;
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide;
- Abusing drugs or alcohol;
- Frequent outbursts of anger;
- Excessive fears or worries;
- Seeing or hearing things that aren't there;
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope;
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather;
- Reluctance to remove long sleeves;
- Secretive behaviour;
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly;
- Lateness or absence;
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause;
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.

However, if a staff member notices any significant change in behaviour of a student, this too should be seen as a possible warning sign and passed on to the Head of Centre.

Managing disclosures

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure, which is detailed fully in the safeguarding policy. The member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff should listen, rather than give advice.

All disclosures should be recorded on CPOMS and aim to use the student's own words where possible. This information should be labelled as 'SEMH' on CPOMS and this will ensure that the information is shared with the Head of Centre and the Safeguarding Lead. They will support and advise about next steps and feedback to colleagues if the disclosure is escalated.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with both staff and students in regards to the issue of confidentiality and treat any mental health disclosures, in the same way that we do any safeguarding issue. Students should know:

- Who we are going to talk to;
- What we are going to tell them;
- Why we need to tell them;
- Any resources which may be beneficial to share with parents/carers.

We should never share information about a student without first telling them. Ideally we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and /or a parent. If a student is at risk or is in danger of harm, no promises of confidentiality should be made and a referral to the Head of Centre and/or Safeguarding Lead should follow immediately.

Parents/carers must always be informed when disclosures regarding a student's emotional or mental health and wellbeing are made. Students may choose to tell their parents themselves. We should always give students the option of us informing parents for them or with them.



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If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed in the first instance, instead information must be passed on to the safeguarding lead immediately.

Working with Parents & Carers

Before disclosing to parents we should consider the following questions:

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable wherever possible.
- Where should the meeting happen? At the academy, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the student, and other members of staff.

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should highlight further sources of information provide contact information for parents to take away. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

Including:

- Youngminds Parents Helpline: 0808 802 5544
- Gingerbread Single Parent Helpline: 0808 802 0925

Contact details should be shared for the case of further questions and the possibility of booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish the meeting with agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting.

Working with All Parents & Carers

In order to support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our academy websites, and share at parent coffee mornings;
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, if they have concerns about any Phoenix Park & Sevenhills students or would like information on how to support their child;
- Ensure the positive mental health policy is easily accessible to parents;
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular progress review days.

Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the student who is suffering and their parents/carers with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told;
- How friends can best support;
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset;
- Warning signs that their friend help (e.g. signs of relapse).

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves;
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition;
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling.



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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 in order to enable them to keep students safe through periodic staff development provided by the academies.

Staff are directed to The MindEd website (<https://www.minded.org.uk/>) which provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about any specific mental health or developmental issue. Heads of Centres are also able to ask staff if there are any training needs, which can then be booked onto staff training which may become appropriate due to developing situations with one or more students.

There will be a staff-wellbeing group running each term which staff are able to opt onto if they would like to gain more skills around mental health.

Each centre will have at least one member of staff who has completed Youth Mental Health First Aid, who can be used as a port of call for other staff members to gain information and advice from.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 2 years as a minimum. It is next due for review/update in December 2021.

Additionally, it will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis based upon current best practice and guidance. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed to David Mills, Executive Vice Principal.



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Appendix A: PSHE Guidance

https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/system/files/Mental%20health%20guidance_0.pdf

Appendix B: Further information and sources of support about common mental health issues

Prevalence of Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Issues

- 1 in 10 children and young people aged 5 - 16 suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder - that is around three children in every class.
- Between 1 in every 12 and 1 in 15 children and young people deliberately self-harm.
- There has been a big increase in the number of young people being admitted to hospital because of self-harm. Over the last ten years this figure has increased by 68%.
- 1 in 12 young people self-harm at some point in their lives, though there is evidence that this could be a lot higher. Girls are more likely to self-harm than boys.
- Suicide is the most common cause of death for boys aged between 5-19 years and the second most common for girls of this age.
- Half of all mental health problems manifest by the age of 14, with 75% by age 24.
- Over 8,000 children aged under 10 years old suffer from severe depression.
- 3.3% or about 290,000 children and young people have an anxiety disorder.

Below, we have sign-posted information and guidance about the issues most commonly seen in school-aged children. The links will take you to the most relevant page of the website.

Support on all of these issues can be accessed via Young Minds (www.youngminds.org.uk), Mind (www.mind.org.uk) and (for e-learning opportunities) Minded (www.minded.org.uk).

Depression

We all feel low or down at times but if your negative emotions last a long time or feel very severe, you may have depression. Depression is a mood disorder where you feel very down all the time. Depression can happen as a reaction to something like abuse, bullying or family breakdown, but it can also run in families. Depression often develops alongside anxiety.

Depression is **one of the most common types of mental illness**. Although it's hard to feel optimistic when you're depressed, there is lots of support available to help you feel better. (<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/depression/>)

Online support

- Sane – www.sane.org.uk
- Mind – www.mind.org.uk
- Youngminds – www.youngminds.org.uk



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Self-harm

The phrase 'self-harm' is used to describe a wide range of behaviours. Self-harm is often understood to be a physical response to an emotional pain of some kind, and can be very addictive. Some of the things people do are quite well known, such as cutting, burning or pinching, but there are many, many ways to hurt yourself, including abusing drugs and alcohol or having an eating disorder. Sometimes, it's more important to focus on how someone is feeling rather than what they do to themselves. Quite often, people find that more helpful.

Everyone has accidents from time to time resulting in cuts and bruises - but it's the injuries that are caused on purpose that are considered to be acts of self-harm. Self-harm often happens during times of anger, distress, fear, worry, depression or low self-esteem in order to manage or control negative feelings. Self-harm can also be used as a form of self-punishment for something someone has done, thinks they have done, are told by someone else that they have done, or that they have allowed to be done to themselves (Selfharm.co.uk).

Online support

SelfHarm.co.uk: www.selfharm.co.uk

National Self-Harm Network: www.nshn.co.uk

Self-Injury Support: www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk

Anxiety, panic attacks and phobias

Anxiety is a feeling of fear or panic. Feeling generally anxious sometimes is normal. Most people worry about something - money or exams - but once the difficult situation is over, you feel better and calm down.

If the problem has gone but the feeling of fear or panic stays or even gets stronger, that's when anxiety becomes a problem. (<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/anxiety/>)

Online support

Anxiety UK: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Obsessions and compulsions

People with OCD have repeating thoughts, images or feelings that are distressing. They carry out rituals or habits (compulsions) to temporarily feel better. OCD rituals can be obvious to other people (like checking door locks) or they can happen inside your head (like counting or trying to counteract negative thoughts with positive ones). OCD thoughts come in all shapes and sizes, but they often revolve around things like danger, dirt and contamination, or worries around sexuality or religion (<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/conditions/ocd/>).

Online support

OCD UK: www.ocduk.org/ocd

Suicidal feelings

Suicidal feelings are when a normal feeling of being very down and not sure where to turn become so deep and intense that the only solution seems to be to end your life. With nearly 25% of young people feeling suicidal at least once in their lives, it is very common and there are lots of ways of dealing with it and lots of people who have come out the other side. (<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/feelings-and-symptoms/suicidal-feelings/>).



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Online support

Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org

On the edge: Child Line spotlight report on suicide: www.nspcc.org.uk/preventingabuse/research-and-resources/on-the-edge-childline-spotlight/

You matter 2 us – <http://umtr2me.org/>

Eating problems and eating disorders

Eating problems can take a number of different forms from anorexia and bulimia to overeating and binge eating. They can start as a result of trauma or another mental health condition as well as wishing to achieve an unrealistic body image. They can be dangerous and can have serious health implications if your weight drops too low or rises too high. (<https://youngminds.org.uk/ucommerce/eating-problems-and-eating-disorders/c-23/p-175/>)

Online support

Beat – the eating disorders charity: www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders

Eating Difficulties in Younger Children and when to worry: www.inourhands.com/eatingdifficulties-in-younger-children

The National Centre for Eating Disorders: www.eating-disorders.org.uk

Appendix C: Guidance and advice documents

Mental health and behaviour in schools - departmental advice for school staff. Department for Education (2014) - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/508847/Mental_Health_and_Behaviour_-_advice_for_Schools_160316.pdf

Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future - departmental advice for school staff and counsellors. Department for Education (2015) - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/497825/Counselling_in_schools.pdf

Children and young people's mental health: time to deliver. The report of the commission on children and young people's mental health. Education Policy Institute (2016). <https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/time-to-deliver-web.pdf>

Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing (2015). PSHE Association. Funded by the Department for Education (2015) - https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/system/files/Mental%20health%20guidance_0.pdf



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Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school and college approach. Public Health England (2015) -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414908/Final_EHWP_draft_20_03_15.pdf

Keeping children safe in education - statutory guidance for schools and colleges. Department for Education (2014) -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550511/Keeping_children_safe_in_education.pdf

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England. Department for Education (2014) -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/638267/supporting-pupils-at-school-with-medical-conditions.pdf

Healthy child programme from 5 to 19 years old is a recommended framework of universal and progressive services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing. Department of Health (2009) -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/492086/HCP_5_to_19.pdf

Future in mind – promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing - a report produced by the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce to examine how to improve mental health services for children and young people. Department of Health (2015) -

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/414024/Childrens_Mental_Health.pdf

North East Lincolnshire Council and North East Lincolnshire clinical commissioning group. Future in mind:

transformation plan 2015-2020 - <https://www.nelincs.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/North-East-Lincolnshire-Future-in-Mind-Transformation-Plan-2015-2020.pdf>

NICE guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in primary education - <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph12>

NICE guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in secondary education - <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph20>

What works in promoting social and emotional wellbeing and responding to mental health problems in schools? Advice for schools and framework document written by Professor Katherine Weare. National Children's Bureau (2015) -

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/assets/ResourceFinder/What-works-in-promoting-social-and-emotional-wellbeing-in-schools-2015.pdf>



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Appendix D: Sources or support in the local community

Mental Health Directory of Local Services - <http://nelfsafeguardingchildrenboard.co.uk/data/uploads/future-in-mind/north-east-lincolnshire-children-young-people-mental-health-emotional-wellbeing-directory-of-services.pdf>

