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At Oyster Park Primary Academy, it is our aim to ensure that all children are entitled to develop to their fullest potential academically, socially, emotionally and into healthy, well beings, enabling each child to grow in confidence and be able to fully participate in everything that goes on in the wider community with confidence. It is widely recognised that a child’s emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning, as well as their physical and social health and their mental wellbeing in adulthood. The department for Education recognises that, in order to help their pupils, succeed: schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy.

“Mental health is 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.” (World Health Organization 2014)

At Oyster Park, we aim to promote positive mental health for every child, parent/carer and staff. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at identified vulnerable pupils and families.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, five children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue, however at Oyster Park Primary Academy it is identified that many classrooms have a higher number of children than this. We recognise as a school that by developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for children affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health. See **Appendix 1** for information and additional support about mental health illnesses.

This policy describes the school’s approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing and is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and the Academy Council. It 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, the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need and the Safeguarding Policy in relation to prompt action and wider concerns of vulnerability.

Ethos

At Oyster Park Primary 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.

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 including providing opportunities to develop their own knowledge and understanding around emotional wellbeing and mental health.
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.

The seven identified principles will underpin the approaches used to support the development and integration of wellbeing strategies within Oyster Park. The policy and curriculum delivery will be tailored to promote the key aspects of promoting and protecting emotional wellbeing and mental health. It will focus on creating a socially, emotionally and physical rich environment where key relationships can thrive and children can feel secure in their learning. Staff will have access to training and signposting to approaches and resources that will support their own emotional health and wellbeing with an aim to foster team work and create solidarity.

All staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health and emotional wellbeing of our school community. Staff with a specific, relevant responsibility includes:

- Mrs Jodie-Chapman- Kemp – Headteacher
- Mrs Hilary Bodycombe – Deputy Headteacher for Inclusion Lead and Senior Mental Health Lead
- Miss C Pointing - FSW, ELSA, DSL
- Mrs G Sedgwick – FSW, DSL
- Mrs K Walker – HLTA – Staff Wellbeing representative Trust

Pupil Identification

Wellbeing measures include staff observations focusing on any changes in behaviour, attention and presentation will feed into the identification process as well as any communication from the pupils regarding their emotions and feelings. Every classroom has an emotional register which all pupils' access every day. Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a child should speak to the Inclusion Lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed. If the child 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.

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or wellbeing issues. These warning signs should **always** be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns to the Safeguarding Team via CPOMS.

Possible warning signs include: (this is not an exhaustive list)

- 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
- 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
- Noticeable changes in appearance/behaviour/attitude
- 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

Curricular and Extra-curricular Support

We support the mental health and wellbeing of all pupils through:

- A strong school ethos which empowers tolerance and respect, including respect for difference and diversity
- Developing a Growth Mindset in our school community
- Personalised Social Skills Curriculum
- High profile anti-bullying procedures and policy through corporate posters, assemblies and events
- Establishing clear rules, routines and expectations about behaviour for learning and social cohesion.
- Encouraging positive, caring and constructive relationships
- Having active listeners, including assistants and adults other than school staff to whom a child may turn
- Enhancing school and classroom layout, facilities and resources
- Recognising the background of individual pupils and their physical, social and emotional needs
- Consistent support for vulnerable children and those with SEND from trained teams of pastoral, learning support, teaching assistants and other agencies where appropriate.
- A balanced curriculum with opportunities for intellectual, physical and expressive development
- Webster Stratton approach to behaviour management rooted in the importance of positive relationships
- Opportunities for reflection and spiritual development through art, literature and the RE curriculum
- Having nurture groups for general wellbeing as well as specific mental health, such as interventions dealing with anxiety or emotions

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Mrs Bodycombe, Miss Pointing or Mrs Sedgwick.

Individual SEN support plans will identify any individual support for pupils causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil (**Learning Plan**), the parents and relevant health professionals and recorded in the section (**Individual Health Care Plan**

In relation to DFE statutory guidance 2015) having links to individual behaviour plan and risk assessments. The plan will include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency

Staff Identification

At Oyster Park Primary Academy, we recognise that our staff are our most important resource and are valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a caring, purposeful learning community. We recognise that there is a direct correlation between the wellbeing of our staff and the wellbeing of our pupils and that the culture and ethos of a school are determined by the extent to which staff work towards a shared vision. We believe that is essential that all staff feel part of a valued team, have the opportunity to express their views and are supported to manage their workload within a culture that supports a healthy work-life balance.

We support the emotional wellbeing and mental health of all staff through:

- Curricular planning time within the school week
- Whole school training events, including Safeguarding
- Access to appropriate external training
- Involving all staff in decision making and proposed change e.g. timing of the school day, frequency of reporting to parents and so on.
- Provision of non-contact time to allow for planning, delivery and evaluation of healthy school activities
- Consultation on training and support needs through regular review
- Work life balance regularly reviewed and acted upon i.e. reduction of unnecessary paperwork, admin tasks
- Encouragement of social events

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to emotional and mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe. 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 due developing situations with one or more pupils.

Working with All Parents and Carers

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional wellbeing and mental health.

In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website and school newsletter.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who they can talk to, and how to get the support they need if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental policy easily accessible to parents.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular review meetings.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in Social Skills lessons and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.
- Provide opportunities for parents to develop their knowledge and understanding through events such as workshops run by external professionals.
- Provide support for parents to access support for their and/or their child's emotional wellbeing and mental health including providing access to a phone, providing a private space and signposting to support.

Monitoring and Evaluating

The emotional wellbeing and mental health policy is on the school website and hard copies are available to parents and carers from the school office.

The policy is monitored and reviewed annually by the Inclusion Lead in consultation with external professionals, school staff, pupils and parents.

Appendix 1: 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%.
- More than half of all adults with mental health problems were diagnosed in childhood. Less than half were treated appropriately at the time.
- Nearly 80,000 children and young people suffer from severe depression.
- The number of young people aged 15-16 with depression nearly doubled between the 1980s and the 2000s.
- 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.
- 72% of children in care have behavioural or emotional problems - these are some of the most vulnerable people in our society.

Self-harm

Self-harm describes any behaviour where a young person causes harm to themselves in order to cope with thoughts, feelings or experiences they are not able to manage in any other way. It most frequently takes the form of cutting, burning or non-lethal overdoses in adolescents, while younger children and young people with special needs are more likely to pick or scratch at wounds, pull out their hair or bang or bruise themselves.

Online support SelfHarm.co.uk: www.selfharm.co.uk National Self-Harm Network: www.nshn.co.uk

Books

- Pooky Knightsmith (2015) *Self-Harm and Eating Disorders in Schools: A Guide to Whole School Support and Practical Strategies*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Keith Hawton and Karen Rodham (2006) *By Their Own Young Hand: Deliberate Self-harm and Suicidal Ideas in Adolescents*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Carol Fitzpatrick (2012) *A Short Introduction to Understanding and Supporting Children and Young People Who Self-Harm*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Depression

Ups and downs are a normal part of life for all of us, but for someone who is suffering from depression these ups and downs may be more extreme. Feelings of failure, hopelessness, numbness or sadness may invade their day-to-day life over an extended period of weeks or months, and have a significant impact on their behaviour and ability and motivation to engage in day-to-day activities.

Online support

Depression Alliance: www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression

Books

- Christopher Dowrick and Susan Martin (2015) *Can I Tell you about Depression?: A guide for friends, family and professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Anxiety, panic attacks and phobias

Anxiety can take many forms in children and young people, and it is something that each of us experiences at low levels as part of normal life. When thoughts of anxiety, fear or panic are repeatedly present over several weeks or months and/or they are beginning to impact on a young person's ability to access or enjoy day-to-day life, intervention is needed.

Online support

Anxiety UK: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Books

- Lucy Willetts and Polly Waite (2014) *Can I Tell you about Anxiety?: A guide for friends, family and professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Carol Fitzpatrick (2015) *A Short Introduction to Helping Young People Manage Anxiety*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers

Obsessions and compulsions

Obsessions describe intrusive thoughts or feelings that enter our minds which are disturbing or upsetting; compulsions are the behaviours we carry out in order to manage those thoughts or feelings. For example, a young person may be constantly worried that their house will burn down if they don't turn off all switches before leaving the house. They may respond to these thoughts by repeatedly checking switches, perhaps returning home several times to do so. Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) can take many forms – it is not just about cleaning and checking.

Online support

OCD UK: www.ocduk.org/ocd

Books

- Amita Jassi and Sarah Hull (2013) *Can I Tell you about OCD?: A guide for friends, family and professionals*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Susan Connors (2011) *The Tourette Syndrome & OCD Checklist: A practical reference for parents and teachers*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass

Suicidal feelings

Young people may experience complicated thoughts and feelings about wanting to end their own lives. Some young people never act on these feelings though they may openly discuss and explore them, while other young people die suddenly from suicide apparently out of the blue.

Online support

- Prevention of young suicide UK – POPYRUS: 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/

Books

- Keith Hawton and Karen Rodham (2006) *By Their Own Young Hand: Deliberate Self-harm and Suicidal Ideas in Adolescents*. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Terri A. Erbacher, Jonathan B. Singer and Scott Poland (2015) *Suicide in Schools: A Practitioner's Guide to Multi-level Prevention, Assessment, Intervention, and Postvention*. New York: Routledge

Eating problems

Food, weight and shape may be used as a way of coping with, or communicating about, difficult thoughts, feelings and behaviours that a young person experiences day to day. Some young people develop eating disorders such as anorexia (where food intake is restricted), binge eating disorder and bulimia nervosa (a cycle of bingeing and purging). Other young people, particularly those of primary or preschool age, may develop problematic behaviours around food including refusing to eat in certain situations or with certain people. This can be a way of communicating messages the child does not have the words to convey.

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

Books

- Bryan Lask and Lucy Watson (2014) Can I tell you about Eating Disorders? A Guide for Friends, Family and Professionals. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Pooky Knightsmith (2015) Self-Harm and Eating Disorders in Schools: A Guide to Whole School Support and Practical Strategies. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
- Pooky Knightsmith (2012) Eating Disorders Pocketbook. Teachers' Pocketbooks