Tiverton High School

Positive Mental Health Policy

Status	**Statutory**
Job title	**Assistant Head Student Well-being**
Nominated prime author:	**N Lane**
Policy to be implemented by:	**All Staff**
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Signature of Co-Chair of Governors:	

Positive Mental Health

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) mental health is "a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community" (WHO, 2021).

The WHO also states the following facts about mental health:

- Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders.
- Mental health is an integral part of health; indeed, there is no health without mental health.
- Mental health is determined by a range of socioeconomic, biological and environmental factors.
- Cost-effective public health and intersectoral strategies and interventions exist
- to promote, protect and restore mental health.

At Tiverton High School we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our student and staff body. We pursue this aim by using universal, targeted and specialist approaches. Therefore, all students will receive our universal provision, and those more vulnerable who require more than this will receive targeted and / or specialist provisions. This policy helps support the consistency of approach and equality of provision for our students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to ill health. Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) reports that one in ten young people experience a mental health issue at any one time (MHFA, 2021). By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health. We also recognise the link between physical activity and positive mental health and wellbeing, and we encourage our students at Tiverton High School to be active and make the most of provisions both within school & the local community to support positive mental health.

Who is this policy for?

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff and governors. This policy has been written alongside our SEND Policy & Equality Policy (all of which can be found on our website.

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health for the whole school body
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health, their peers and parents/carers

Policy Standards

1. Lead members of staff

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

- Deputy Headteacher
- Assistant Headteacher
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Heads of Year
- Assistant Heads of Year
- SENDCo & members of the SEND team

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health and/ or wellbeing of a student should speak to the student in the same way they would support students with any kind of concern. If the student does share information, it is important to notify the student that this information may need to be passed on to the Safeguarding Team. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal 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.

2. Supportive documentation
It is helpful to document the support given to students with mental health difficulties and also students who have parents / carers with mental health difficulties. There are a number of documents that could be used depending on the nature of students' mental health difficulties, including:

Access to Pupil Passports: Used to summarise students' needs and supportive strategies that can enable their access to the curriculum; Risk assessments. Used to manage any risks associated with students' mental health difficulties, including risks to themselves and others;

Individual Healthcare Plans – Used to support students with more complex mental health difficulties that overlap with, or are linked to, a diagnosable medical condition that may require medication. Any supportive documentation should be drawn up involving the student, parents/ carers and relevant health professionals, and should centre on the role that the school can play in supporting students' mental health difficulties

3. Teaching about Mental Health & Wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum. This curriculum encompasses relationship and sex education (RSE), personal, health and social education (PHSE) and citizenship. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the age and specific needs of the cohort being taught but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the PSHE Statutory Guidance (2021) and other relevant guidance/ advice (see Appendix 1) to ensure that we teach students about mental health and wellbeing, and

how it can fluctuate between both positive and negative. Where possible we try to positive mental health into curriculum or enrichment time. We also ensure staff understand how important resilience is and provide opportunities to develop this.

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined in Appendix 1.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as corridors, display boards, dining room, assembly hall, Library and toilets, and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

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

4. Warning signs

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

Possible warning signs 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
- 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
- Truanting PE or getting changed secretively
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

*A number of these raise safeguarding issues so should always be followed up by the safeguarding route

5. 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. If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non judgemental.

Staff are clear to students that the concern will be shared with the Safeguarding Team and recorded in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil. All disclosures are recorded and held on the student's confidential file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps. All disclosures will be managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

6. Working with parents / carers

Tiverton High School always works in partnership with parents/carers. Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional 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, e.g. Think you know, MindEd, NSPCC, Young minds, Childline
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our Positive Mental Health Policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in their PSHE curriculum and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents/carers to learn of their child's difficulties and many may respond with anger or fear, or become upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent/carer time to reflect. We will always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents/carers can also be helpful too e.g. helplines and forums as listed in Appendix 2. We will always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions.

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the student, other members of staff
- What are the aims of the meeting?

7. Support for 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. Social and emotional support may be offered to children impacted by a friend's problem and/or behaviours. Advice and

help is also gained from Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) agencies and external providers.

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 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 may need 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

8. Training

As a minimum, at least two staff will complete the Mental Health First Aid course with a relevant provider to be 'Mental Health First Aiders'. All staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health difficulties as part of their regular safeguarding training in order to enable them to keep the students safe. Further training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional continuous professional development (CPD) will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more students.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the Deputy Head/Assistant Head who has the CPD as their portfolio area, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team (SLT).

9. Monitoring & review

Monitoring of mental health issues and policy implementation will be carried out via:

- CPD sessions delivered to staff relating to mental health
- PSHE curriculum topics relating to mental health
- Annual report on the number of safeguarding logs
- Implementation of the diagnostic & coaching via the School Mental Health Award with Leeds Beckett University.
- Student and staff half termly survey.
- Staff wellbeing forum.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis

References

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) *Youth: would you know how to help?* Available at: Youth ·
MHFA England

PHSE Association (2021) *Guidance on teaching about mental health and emotional
wellbeing.* Available at: Mental health (pshe-association.org.uk)

World Health Organisation (2021) *Mental health: strengthening our response.* Available at:
Mental health (who.int)

Appendix 1: Guidance & advice documents
- [Mental health and emotional wellbeing teacher guidance (pshe-association.org.uk)](#)
- [Mental health and behaviour in schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)
- [Keeping children safe in education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)
- [Future in mind - Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing (publishing.service.gov.uk)](#)
- [Overview | Social and emotional wellbeing in secondary education | Guidance | NICE](#)
- [Addressing Trauma and Adversity | Mental Health Resources | YoungMinds](#)
- [Project information | Social, emotional and mental wellbeing in primary and secondary education | Guidance | NICE](#)
- [http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2](#)
- [http://www.inourhands.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Preparing-to-teach-about-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing-PSHE-Association-March-2015-FINAL.pdf](#)
- [Education staff wellbeing charter - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)](#)

Appendix 2: Support available both in school & local context

Resource	How is it accessed / used?
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Working alongside the Pastoral & Safeguarding team and all staff and pupils when a need is highlighted
(PHSE) Curriculum	Delivered throughout tutor time to raise awareness and promote emotional health & wellbeing to all students
E-safety awareness (led by Designated Safeguarding Lead)	Regular updates given to pupils and sent out to parents & staff
Visual display of support for all	Posters, business cards, flyers around the school to raise awareness of support agencies
Individual healthcare plans, Pupil Passports, risk assessments Pastoral & SEND support agencies at THS	Staff training on identification and management of needs. Staff made aware of reasonable adjustments required for known health & SEND conditions Heads of Department & Heads of Year can access our support systems via a referral.

Home - Mind

YoungMinds | Mental Health Charity For Children And Young People | YoungMinds

MindEd Hub

https://www.selfharm.co.uk

The NSHN Forum

Self Harm

For further information on further targeted & specialist support, please find this link from Babcock LDP:

https://www.babcockldp.co.uk/babcock_l_d_p/Educational-Psychology/Downloads/The-Emotional-Health-and-Wellbeing-Pathway.pdf