



The Champion School

Submitted to the Governing body for approval	May 2019
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Date of next Review	May 2021
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Approved and Adopted by the Governors of The Champion School

Chair of Governors:

Date:

Mental Health Policy

Policy Statement

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 Organisation).

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health by developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health procedures. By doing this we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

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
- 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 staff suffering mental health issues
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

Lead members of staff:

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

Designated Safeguarding Leads	A Lapena, K Williams, R Pearn, R Johnson
Welfare Officer	T Kennett
Head of PSHE	A Lapena

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the safeguarding lead, in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm, the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead or the head teacher. If the student presents a medical emergency, the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the Safeguarding leads.

Teaching about Mental Health

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 developmental PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching 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.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it. We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as staff rooms, common rooms, corridors and year group notice boards 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 it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student 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 communicate their concerns with a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

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
- 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

Managing disclosures

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, therefore, 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 should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?' All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the student's confidential file in line with normal Safeguarding practice. This information should be shared with a Designated Safeguarding Lead, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on then we should discuss with the student:

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

We should never share information about a student without first telling them. Ideally we would receive their consent, although 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 a Designated Safeguarding Lead should follow immediately.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the safeguarding lead. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student. It ensures continuity of care in our absence and provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the student and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents must always be informed when disclosures regarding a student's emotional or mental health and wellbeing are made unless it is deemed that the parents are a risk to the child. If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, the Designated Safeguarding Lead must be informed immediately.

Working 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
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings/ Health bulletins
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

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 with whom we will discuss:

- What 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

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.

We will hold relevant information as part of our Mental Health working group for staff to disseminate to their areas of responsibility.

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 to developing situations with one or more students.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health. Selected staff members will receive mental health first aid training through Havering Mind.

Selected Sixth Form pupils will receive mentor training through an accredited programme.

Additional Information

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

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

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

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

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

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 pre-school 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

Additional websites: <https://www.mentalhealth.gov/basics/what-is-mental-health>
<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/about-the-week/>
<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/mental-health-suicidal-thoughts-children/>
<https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/your-feelings/mental-health/>

Support for Staff (all staff who work at Campion)

At Campion we strive to build a culture of trust where school staff feel valued, can be open about their health and wellbeing and know how to access support if they need it. For all of this to happen, it is essential for the school leadership team (including governors) to model good mental health and wellbeing behaviour and practice. It is also important for head teachers and other leaders to remember to look after their own mental health and wellbeing alongside that of their staff.

A working group has been set up to promote positive mental health and wellbeing. The group of staff members will work together - alongside pupils - to promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing through a number of strategies:

- Spiritual/reflection opportunities
- Staff retreats
- Effective sign posting to supporting agencies
- Staff surveys
- 10 Stress relief tips
- Acts of Random Kindness
- Health opportunities (gym, yoga, pilates, etc.)
- One to one internal/external support
- Open up conversations - mind set - it is OK to ask for help!
- Fortnightly Wellbeing bulletins
- Staff inset on identifying and managing mental health
- Workload analysis (e.g. assessment calendar)
- Motivational strategies
- staff recognition and praise being a part of the School's culture – setting aside regular time slots in meetings to do this.
- Make reasonable adjustments
- Return to work meetings

Support for Parent/Carer

Looking After Yourself

As part of our efforts to improve mental health across the School community, we want to ensure that parents and carers are also supported. Strategies listed below are there to help you:

- If your child is having problems, don't be too hard on yourself or blame yourself. Although it can be upsetting and worrying if your child is having a bad time and it makes your relationship with them feel more stressful, you are not a bad parent. Children often take it out on those closest to them, so you might be feeling the effect of their very powerful emotions.
- If you had a difficult time growing up yourself, or have had emotional problems or mental health problems, it can be very worrying to think that the same thing might happen to your child. However, the love and care you show them and the fact that you are trying to help will protect against this. Getting help for them and perhaps for yourself too can give them the best chance of feeling better.
- If things are getting you down, it's important to recognise this. Talk to someone you trust and see what they think. Many people go on struggling with very difficult situations because they feel they should be able to cope and don't deserve any help.
- Friends and family can often help - don't be afraid to ask them to have your child for a bit if you need some time out to sort out your own stuff. You can repay them when things get better for you!
- It's easy to say take some time for yourself but in reality this may not feel possible. You might be too busy, exhausted or hard up for exercise or hobbies; but even a night in with a friend, a DVD box set or your favourite dinner can help.
- Go to your GP if things are really getting on top of you. Asking for some support from your doctor or a referral to a counselling service is a sign of strength. You can't help your child if you are not being supported yourself. Some people worry their parenting will be judged and their children will be taken away if they admit they are struggling to cope. This should only happen if a child is being abused or neglected. The role of professionals is to support you to look after your child as well as you can.

Useful resources/support avenues:

NSPCC:

NSPCC- If you think a child is in immediate danger
Don't delay – call the police on 999,
or call us on **0808 800 5000** straight away

CHILDLINE:

CONTACTING CHILDLINE

You can talk to us about anything. No problem is too big or too small.

Call us free on **0800 1111** or get in touch online. However, you choose to contact us, you're in control. It's confidential and you don't have to give your name if you don't want to.

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/supporting-a-member-of-staff-with-mental-health-difficulties/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/your-stories/staff-at-schools-need-more-mental-health-support/#.XFgp0Vz7TIU>

<https://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/resources-for-schools/supporting-staff-wellbeing-in-schools/>

<https://www.healthline.com/health/10-ways-to-relieve-stress#1>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/mental-health-helplines/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/mental-health-suicidal-thoughts-children/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-survival-guide/#looking-after-yourself>

<https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/nhs-services/mental-health-services/how-to-access-mental-health-services/>

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/mental-health/adults/>

<https://www.mind.org.uk/information-support/guides-to-support-and-services/crisis-services/day-services/#.XFgix1z7TIU>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/mental-health-suicidal-thoughts-children/>

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/child-protection-system/parental-mental-health/>