Kirkbie Kendal School Academy Trust

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Change Record		
Version	Date	Description
1.1	SLT Jun 21, Curriculum 6.12.21	Major wording changes, designated staff updates, updates to local guidance and addition of staff wellbeing section. Not updated in Jun 20 due to CV-19
1.2	SLT 01.02.23 Curriculum 08.02.23	No changes
1.3		
1.4		

"Kirkbie Kendal School promotes the safeguarding and welfare of children in its care; all policies support the Child Protection Policy."

Kirkbie Kendal School Academy Trust

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Contents

1.0   Policy statement

Our school aim is to educate students so that they are 'well rounded young people equipped with the skills, knowledge and qualifications for life in the 21st Century.' This involves being physically and mentally healthy. Mental health and psychological wellbeing are fundamental to broader health and wellbeing.

For students to be provided with the best experience it is important that the staff are trained appropriately and that their mental health and well-being are considered. The school strengthens mental wellbeing through curricular and extracurricular activities in its daily interactions.

In order to help our students succeed, we have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy. There are a variety of things that we can do, for all students and for those students who require additional support. . Where additional support is required beyond what can be provided in school students, parents/carers will be signposted or referred directly to external agencies. Examples being GPs, CAMHS, voluntary organisations and local service providers.

Staff and student wellbeing are supported by:

● 	clear policies on behaviour and bullying, and all aspects of 'school-life';
● 	all students having at least one adult they feel they can talk to;
● 	positive classroom management;
● 	students and staff having the sense of belonging to KKS;
● 	the promotion of positive peer influences;
● 	fostering good student-teacher, teacher-teacher and student-student relationships;
● 	the day to day interactions with students and teachers supporting wellbeing;
● 	the supportive role played by the pastoral team and outside agencies.
● 	empowering students to take responsibility for their own mental health and wellbeing with support from school
● 	pastoral spaces meet the physical, emotional, social and intellectual needs of our students

2.0   Scope

This policy is a guide for all staff and governors outlining our approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.   It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies most notably:
● 	Child Protection Policy.
● 	Absence and Wellbeing Procedure.
● 	Online Safety Policy and Procedures.

3.0   School Aims linked to mental wellbeing

● 	Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
● 	Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
● 	Enable staff through training to identify students who require additional support with their wellbeing informing the Head of Year and follow school procedures.

- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

4.0   Staff Wellbeing

The practical steps we take to manage staff wellbeing include the following:
- Encouraging regular meetings of the staff wellbeing group to enable staff wellbeing to be discussed openly.
- Implementation of a staff wellbeing survey.
- Maintaining open lines of internal communication with staff e.g. staff briefings, line management meetings, department meetings.
- Designating a space in school for a staff room and staff workroom.
- Actively encouraging staff activities that create a sense of community e.g. book club, spinning, badminton, end of term socials.

We will ensure that staff are aware of the external support and services available to them, and how they can access these services through our communication channels (email, staff wellbeing group, staff wellbeing notice board etc.).

5.0   Key staff members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental well-being of students, however key members of staff have specific roles:

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- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Deputy Safeguarding Leads
- safeguarding team
- Heads of Year.

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student, in the first instance they should speak to the relevant Head of Year and follow school procedures.

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures MUST be followed.

6.0   Individual Responses

When a student has been identified as being a cause for concern then the following occurs:

- The school maintains a confidential RAG rated 'vulnerable' student register and the student is added to this.
- The student's needs are discussed by the appropriate members of the pastoral team
- Parents/carers are informed of the concern (subject to safeguarding).
- Referral to outside agencies is made as appropriate.

7.0 Teaching about mental health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our broad curriculum offer and notably within Life Skills, ICT and PE. Additional information is also provided through form time activities and assemblies.

School will follow the guidance issued by the Df, RSE guidelines and keep an audit of our provision.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing students who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting students to support any of their friends who are facing challenges. See Section 14 for Supporting Peers.

8.0 Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards, common rooms, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, website), we will share and display selected relevant information about local and national support services and events. The school maintains a mental health pack in the Pastoral Team leaders (PTL) room.

The aim of this is to ensure students 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.

9.0 Sources or support at school and in the local community

The main support at KKS is arranged through the school's pastoral system.

Students can talk to any trusted adult who will listen and know how to refer the student for the most appropriate support as required. The important factor is who knows the student and/or who the student feels able to talk to. This support is accessed directly by the student asking the member of staff or initiated by a member of staff if they perceive that a student would benefit from talking to someone. For many students they tell us that they would talk to their form tutor or Head of Year.

Students with SEND often have a particular link to one of the learning support team and speak with them. A number of our Disadvantaged students prefer to talk with the pastoral support and attendance officer.

The Pastoral Team Room (known as the PTL room) is staffed by our Pastoral support team and they are also adults that many students trust and may come and speak to if they have a problem.

A range of local support organisations and groups are used in school to support students or are signposted to parents and students. Links and where to find them can be found on the website www.kksa.co.uk – go to Parents & Students/Wellbeing .

10.0   Warning Signs

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 alert the school safeguarding team.

Possible warning signs or invitations 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 secretively.
- Lateness to, or absence from school.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.

11.0   Targeted support

We recognise some students are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with other agencies in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We support timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those students most at risk (or already showing signs) of:
  - o Social, emotional, and behavioural problems.

- Working closely with CAMHS and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;
  - o Identifying and assessing, in line with the Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT), students who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems.
  - o Discussing options for tackling these problems with the student and their parents/carers.
  - o Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as referring to specialist services, including CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with by the appropriate agency.
  - o Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality.
  - o Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and,
  - o The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

12.0   Managing disclosures

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be referred to the safeguarding team and then recorded using CPOMS on the student's personal file, including:
- Date.
- Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made.
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation.
- Agreed next steps.

This information will be shared with the safeguarding team.

13.0   Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the student. Ordinarily students are informed that confidentiality cannot be guaranteed at the earliest opportunity within a disclosure. Where possible staff will tell them:
- Who we are going to tell.
- What we are going to tell them.
- Why we need to tell them.
- When we're going to tell them.

Ideally, consent should be gained from the student first. However, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as students up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

Parents/carers must always be informed, but students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, a timescale of 24 hours is recommended to share this information before the school makes contact with the parents/carers.

If a student gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents/carers should not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

14.0   Whole school approach

14.1   Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents/carers there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.
- Who should be present – students, staff, parents etc?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent/carer, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents/carers to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents/carers have further questions or concerns. Arranging a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agreed are added to the student's record and an Individual Care Plan created if appropriate.

14.2   Supporting parents/carers

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters et.).
- Offering support to help parents/carers through professional dialogue with the most appropriate member of school staff.

15.0   Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case-by-case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided 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 needs 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.

16.0   Training

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 students safe. At least one nominated member of staff will receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent.

The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

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 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.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the pastoral team, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Related Policies:

Mental health & emotional wellbeing permeates throughout the school and, therefore, there are many related policies including the Child Protection Policy, Behaviour for Learning Policy, Anti Bullying Policy and Staff Absence and Wellbeing Policy.

THIS DOCUMENT IS AVAILABLE IN THE FOLLOWING FORMATS: **PAPER**
                                                                  ENLARGED PRINT
                                                                  EMAIL