

Mental health and wellbeing principles

March 2024

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‘Mental health is a state of wellbeing 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.’

Credit: World Health Organisation

1 Principles statement

This statement applies to all Diverse Academies stakeholders including children in our academies, employees, governors, trustees and volunteers.

In the context of the post COVID-19 pandemic and the continuing economic pressures faced by families, the need to deliver effective support for the rise in mental health referrals of children and staff is taken very seriously by our trust.

To this end, we continue to follow the key principles outlined in the framework devised by Children’s Integrated Commissioning Hub (ICH), Nottinghamshire LA, and revised guidance from the DfE publication [promoting and supporting mental health and well-being in schools, July 2022](#).

We ensure each academy is committed to providing:

- clarity over the roles, remit and responsibilities of all partners involved in supporting the mental health of children, young people and adults working within our academies
- an agreed point of contact with mental health services
- structures to support shared planning and collaborative working
- common approaches to baselining children and young people to provide comparative outcomes measures across academies
- reflection on and learning from best practice in mental health provision including from within our trust, the local authority and using national research
- a fully integrated access to support across a range of external providers and agencies
- an evidence-based approach to intervention – using effective triage to target in-house counselling and pastoral support
- staff training to enhance the in-house provision of identification, support, and referral – for example investment in and a commitment to Poverty Proofing, and ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) trained staff
- leadership of mental health training via a strategic Mental Health Lead and mental health first aid accredited courses
- an effective pre-emptive and relevant curriculum that covers mental health related issues – through respective academy Relationship and Sex Education and Personal Development programmes. Further detail is found in local appendices/best practices.

In creating these principles, detailed attention continues to be given to the following key elements of best practice, as outlined in the DfE documents [supporting mental health in schools and colleges – pen portraits of provision, May 2018](#), [promoting and supporting mental health and well-being in schools, July 2022](#) and [teaching about mental wellbeing, June 2021](#).

2 Vision, mission, and values

We are committed to creating a positive culture of mental health, where all pupils feel valued and welcome. Underpinning these mental health principles are our commitments to empowerment, respect, and care for all.

Our trust mission is to ensure that all members of our community enjoy a positive, safe, and enriching experience set within the specific context and ethos of each of our academies. We expect pupils and all stakeholders to contribute positively to the common good of our whole trust community.

We aim to achieve and maintain an effective approach to mental health across our academies, through both preventative and pre-emptive strategies. We do this through a commitment to fulfilling the trust vision: To inspire. To raise aspirations. To create brighter tomorrows.

3 Purpose and intent

All local systems adopted in our academies for managing and recording mental health conditions and disclosures, including those incidents involving child-on-child sexual harassment and abuse, anxiety and suicidal intent / thoughts are centred on meeting the emotional needs of the child, leading to a positive Climate for Learning and a respectful, secure culture for all children. We follow the escalation process outlined in Appendix A.

We recognise that poor mental health, especially if left unaddressed, can have a devastating effect on individuals; it can create a barrier to learning and have serious long-term consequences for social, emotional, and mental wellbeing in adult life. Each person is uniquely valued, with each academy community ensuring they remain a welcoming place for all.

This principles statement, and academy best-practice appendices, should be read in conjunction with our [attendance](#), [safeguarding and child protection](#), [behaviour](#), [equality](#) and [SEND](#) policies.

In creating a positive mental health culture in our academies:

- our staff recognise and refer children displaying mental health conditions to the respective MH Leader and Designated Safeguarding Lead

- our respective MH Leaders lead on staff training and awareness – with commitment to areas such as Trauma Informed approaches
- we effectively manage mental health and provide support for all pupils including those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those in receipt of Pupil Premium and / or free school meals (FSM), those who have a protected characteristic, those who are in the care system and those who are a Young Carer through recognising the importance of inclusivity, proactive safeguarding, and graduated responses
- we work closely with parents and carers in meeting the needs of their child
- we work closely with, seek advice from and escalate concerns to a variety of appropriate external agencies and charities, outlined in section 4.4 and Appendix B.
- when applying these principles, under paragraph 7 of Schedule 1 to the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2010, we ensure that arrangements are made to always safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils

4 Roles and responsibilities

4.1 Trustees and academy committees

The trustees and local academy committees will be collectively responsible for ensuring that mental health arrangements are fully embedded and understood within each academy and operate alongside the safeguarding policy and protocols:

- ensuring there is an individual member of the Local Academy Committee to oversee mental health issues within each academy
- ensuring that each academy has effective policies and procedures in line with statutory guidance on safeguarding, as well as with local authority safeguarding partnerships and CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) guidance
- monitoring each academy's compliance with current guidance
- nominate a lead trustee to liaise directly with the SDL, safeguarding and / or lead for personal development

4.2 Principals (with the support of the executive principal)

- appoint a designated academy mental health lead (MHL) – the gatekeeper and first point of contact for all pupil based mental health practice and protocols
- appoint a designated mental health ambassador – the first point of contact for staff-based concerns via the human resources team

- ensure there is a mechanism for identifying mental health need across each academy – usually a triage between designated safeguarding staff, the wider pastoral team and (when available) a dedicated counsellor
- ensure there is a mechanism for identifying mental health need and curriculum coverage across each academy – My Concern linked to the professional development programme – under the direction of the respective SDLs, safeguarding and professional development
- adhere to our trust principles on mental health and produce a local offer in each academy
- incorporate effective, pre-emptive mental health education and provision in the curriculum using for example [G.R.E.A.T.](#) project materials and resources at primary level to support children experiencing / witnessing domestic abuse – updated to link in with and reflect on the guidance in KCSIE
- adhere to and understand the specific guidance in section 5 of KCSIE
- use summative and formative data (through online safeguarding reporting and pastoral referral) to identify mental health need, to provide bespoke support for pupils and demonstrate impact
- engage with parents/carers and other stakeholders in supporting children and young people’s mental health
- ensure that a regular, meaningful and targeted pupil voice is carried out, analysed and helps to shape the direction of the respective academy mental health offer / RSE curriculum
- appoint a designated staff member as a single point of contact with all mental health services
- facilitate counselling to support children, young people, and adult mental health within each academy
- ensure there are whole academy approaches to mental health in conjunction with the Safeguarding SDG (Strategic Development Group), the Personal Development SDG and the regular sharing of information between respective strategic development leaders (safeguarding, personal development, and curriculum)
- ensure whole academy and trust-wide approaches to mental health through sharing of best-practice via the Mental Health SDG - a group comprising of mental health leaders and counsellors across the MAT
- invest in suitably relevant pupil-centred initiatives such as *‘Healthy Lives’*, including the development of strategies to improve stress and anxiety management, nutrition, and sleep hygiene, *‘Take 5’* and *‘Schools in Mind’*
- commit to provide academy-based staff with additional accredited training for example through DfE funded Designated Mental Health Strategic Leader accredited national training via National College, MH First Aid, CACHE L2 on Mental Health in Young People, Poverty Proofing, ACEs, THRIVE and/or Forum Counselling CPD

4.3 Designated mental health lead and senior leadership

The designated mental health lead and wider senior leadership team in each academy will:

- make referrals and escalate concerns in conjunction with the respective academy designated safeguarding lead following the protocols outlined in the over-arching Diverse Academies safeguarding policy
- ensure the academy's mental health offer to pupils and parents is updated and reviewed annually (in conjunction with the academy leadership team and SENCO) in line with the safeguarding policy review and mental health principles updates
- ensure that the mental health provision / audit document is continually updated and revised to reflect current practice and provision in each academy (see Appendix C)
- identify best practice in conjunction with the Mental Health SDG and respective Mental Health leadership team in each academy, including the SENCO alongside the SDLs safeguarding and professional development and feed into respective strategic development groups
- work strategically on the trust's post-COVID-19 and Cost of Living Crisis response to ensure mental health provision and procedures are responsive to need, up to date, pre-emptive where possible and support development work within the trust
- ensure that agreed trust-wide initiatives to improve mental health are carried out locally in their respective academy – for example, responding to pupil voice through dedicated curriculum provision and reflected, where relevant, in the Relationships and Sex Education curriculum offer
- ensure parents are aware of the trust mental health principles statement and the local academy best-practice appendix (appendix C exemplar in this statement); that they are given opportunities for parental engagement, that they understand how to access the services available and have information about the local offer in the respective academy – through the website
- ensure, along with the DSL and Mental Health Lead, that any further accredited staff training on mental health is recorded in the additional non-statutory SCR tab in accordance with Diverse Academies expectations

All adults working with or on behalf of children have a responsibility to promote their well-being, and each academy has their own point of contact.

4.4 Other key contacts

There are key people within the trust and local authority who have specific strategic overview of mental health provision.

Role	Name	Contact Details
Designated trustee for mental health	Louis Donald	ldonald@gov.diverse-ac.org.uk
Designated mental health lead (trust)	Patrick Knight, Strategic Development Leader, Safeguarding	pknight@diverse-ac.org.uk
Children & Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	Notts	www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/camhs Tel: 0115 969 1300 Nottinghamshire Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust Duncan Macmillan House Porchester Road Nottingham NG3 6AA
	Lincs	www.lpft.nhs.uk/young-people/lincolnshire/contact-us Tel: 01476 464949 Beaconfield Resources Centre Beaconfield Site Beacon Lane Grantham NG31 9DF

5 Benefits of the principles

In adhering to the principles outlined in the statement all children will receive high quality first wave mental health provision, both pre-emptive via high quality, relevant and effective pastoral and curriculum support, and responsive via effective triage and referral to professional services.

Over time, incidences of adverse mental health conditions are reduced.

6 Training

We have a continuing commitment to providing the most up-to-date training.

Our trust (through the Diverse Association for Professional Learning) provides academy-based staff with additional accredited training.

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 all pupil's safe.

Our dedicated MS Teams 'Mental Health Leads' area hosts relevant information and resources for lead staff in mental health provision.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will continue to be offered as part of our over-arching and strategic approach, particularly around leadership, counselling, and mental health first aid.

Staff are expected to contribute to their CPD via BlueSky and feed into, when appropriate, the appraisal process. Additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes an identified trust and/or academy need.

The trust continues to offer online National College modules on 'adverse childhood experiences', 'dealing with bereavement & loss', 'mental wellbeing in children & young people', 'online safety' and 'child neglect' to ALL staff.

Access to local mental health services in Nottinghamshire via [NottAlone](#).

Additional awareness training is offered for example, via Equation (domestic abuse) and our working relationship with the Nottinghamshire Tackling Emerging Threats to Children (TETC) Team.

The trust is committed to providing suitable and timely professional development and awareness opportunities on mental health in the context of post-COVID-19.

We have a MAT-wide approach to mental health, auditing current provision and projected future needs under the overall direction of the respective SDLs for safeguarding and personal development.

The result of this process informs respective academy mental health and well-being best-practice documents (see appendix C).

7 Review

The mental health principles review will be carried out each spring term by the strategic development leaders, safeguarding and personal development in consultation with respective academy mental health leaders.

Appendix A How mental health provision will be addressed across the Trust

Level of mental health provision	Examples	For
<p>Green – Universal <i>pre-emptive</i></p> <p>Ensuring there is a whole school approach to mental health helps with this because it removes the stigma around mental health and encourages children to talk about their feelings.</p>	<p>Wellbeing lessons and/or drop-down days</p>	<p>All pupils</p>
<p>Amber – Targeted support – <i>pre-emptive and responsive</i></p> <p>Trained staff with the skills and confidence to step in, offer first aid and guide pupils towards the support they need. This can speed up a young person’s recovery, stop issues from developing into a crisis, and ultimately save lives.</p>	<p>Mental health first aider</p>	<p>Pupils who need one to one support with their mental health and wellbeing</p>
<p>Red – Critical support – <i>responsive / referral</i></p> <p>School counselling staff support pupils by providing a psychological counselling, assessment, and intervention service. They work collaboratively with principals, teachers, learning and support teams, parents and carers, and other agencies to support learning and wellbeing outcomes for pupils.</p>	<p>Access to a counselling service</p>	<p>Pupils who need specialist support with their wellbeing and mental health</p>

Appendix B Contact points/directory for mental health services

<https://www.nottalone.org.uk/?a=tp>

www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/camhs

www.nottinghamshirehealthcare.nhs.uk/camhs-crisis-team

www.annafreud.org (mental health charity and pioneer)

www.kooth.com (confidential online portal for 11-25-year-olds)

www.freedbeeches.org.uk (eating disorders in young people service)

www.youngminds.org.uk (young people's mental health service)

www.papyrus-uk.org (prevention of young suicide)

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/media/115467/childrens-society-cse-and-csa-service (children's society / safe time support – sexual abuse)

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/fanotts/health-and-wellbeing/emotional-wellbeing

www.lpft.nhs.uk/young-people/lincolnshire/young-people/i-need-more-help/child-and-adolescent-mental-health-services-cahms

Appendix C Academy mental health and wellbeing best practice

This is a generic example of a working document for MHL to track actions and provision around a respective academy mental health offer – *it is purely for guidance and is not exhaustive in terms of content*

	Strategies in place	Notes/staff	Timeline
1. Designated mental health lead	Continued emphasis on staff rewarding pupils with merits from the PBFL policy. Postcards home, positive re-enforcement	Designated mental health lead working with inclusion team and MIND. Staff training session held in Summer HT 6 by MIND representative. SLT training on INSET day with EH	
2. Identifying mental health need	Pupils with need/ support identified by staff and pastoral team during weekly inclusion meetings and house meetings mental health topics covered in life skills curriculum at KS3 and KS4. Mental health is covered through safeguarding yearly audit.	Pupils identified working with Head of House (HoH). Also, referrals to TETC team or MIND staff	
3. Plan mission statement or policy for mental health	MHL and inclusion team to work closely together to put together a policy with the trust SDL and place around academy site and on the website. Year 11 peer mentor scheme.	Mental health statement/ offer to be created and share with all stakeholders and placed on website 36 Year 11 peer mentors trained in July. Assigned year 7 and 8 pupils who they meet each week to support transition and other SEMH issues.	

<p>4. Incorporating mental health into the curriculum</p>	<p>Weekly lessons at KS3 and 4 covers mental health awareness, as well as a bespoke life weeks programme with workshops scheduled throughout the academic year.</p> <p>TETC team are working with MHL in embedding tutorials with pupils who have asked for support regarding MH issues.</p> <p>LGBTQ group already established and has lots of members and support. Pride event last July at ELA was well supported.</p> <p>Also using school health advice and appointment line telephone numbers as sources for pupils, parents/carers.</p> <p>Assemblies from internal and external staff. MHL started promoting MH in assemblies before HT.</p>	<p>HoHs have started to focus on delivery during VT sessions. Posters already on display on house notice boards.</p> <p>MHL has forged links with Kooth. Posters around the site advertising the site and how pupils can utilise the site.</p> <p>LGBTQ group will also lead another assembly on diversity within our community. They all wear flag pin badges on a daily basis, and the noticeboard has lots of information for pupils to read.</p>	
<p>5. Using universal data and measurement to identify need</p>	<p>Attendance, rewards, and behaviour data is analysed once a week by MHL/HoH/AO – shared with pupils by their tutor during VT time – intervention/support put in place for pupils not meeting expectations.</p>	<p>Data dashboard is monitored by MHL lead and AO once a week and disseminated to HoH</p> <p>Critical cohorts for attendance and behaviour are created and reviewed once a half term – monitored every week (HoH/AO)</p>	

	<p>SEND outcomes are tracked separately in consultation with the Inclusion team by SENDCo – intervention/support put in place</p> <p>My Concern dashboard data analysed by DSL and HoH periodically during the week – intervention/support put in place from inclusion team meeting each week</p>	<p>SENDCo feeds back at weekly inclusion team meetings- involving HoH and VT tutors with updated information.</p> <p>My Concern is reviewed and analysed once a week at least by DSL and shared with core SG team. Feedback from weekly inclusion team meeting is used to support intervention and vulnerable pupils on individual support plans if needed.</p>	
<p>6. Engaging parents and carers in supporting children’s mental health</p>	<p>Topic at parent focus group meetings held throughout the year.</p> <p>Mental health focus to be placed on the academy website.</p> <p>Access to a counselling service offering 1:1 session with pupils</p> <p>Social media promoting events in school e.g., mental health awareness day etc.</p>	<p>MHL hosting these meetings with parent focus group throughout the year</p> <p>MHL to liaise with principal to place information on academy website.</p> <p>Access to a counselling service 5 days a week. Also available out of school hours via e-mail (this includes academy holidays)</p> <p>Working with peer mentors and inclusion group - especially for mental health awareness week</p>	

<p>7. Having a single point of contact with external mental health services</p>	<p>The academy uses the following external agencies all of which are available to parents and pupil on the website</p> <p>Kooth counselling MIND School Health - Notts / Lincs CAMHs</p>	<p>Contacts will be placed clearly on the academy website</p> <p>Contacts are included in each mental health newsletter each term</p>	
<p>8. Offering counselling to support pupils' mental health</p>	<p>Previously mentioned in box numbers 2 and 3</p> <p>Support from FT pupil councillor Year 11 peer mentors Year 12 academic mentors</p>	<p>Access to a counselling service available 5 days per week and out of hours via e-mail.</p> <p>Year 11 mentors work with vulnerable year 7 and 8 pupils. Also run a drop-in session at lunchtimes and also have an e-mail address</p>	
<p>9. Taking a whole school approach to mental health</p>	<p>Part of AIP through curriculum and safeguarding provision / identified priorities</p> <p>Peer mentors to work with years 7 and 8 pupils</p> <p>Linked to VT tutor programme within the SMSC curriculum (subject lessons) and the life skills programme.</p> <p>Staff awareness training delivered</p>	<p>Peer mentors implemented in September and are now embedded and developed within the academy</p> <p>HoH and MHL to set yearly overview for tutor programme to include mental health focus</p>	

Appendix D National best practice in mental health

'Supporting mental health in schools and colleges – pen portraits of provision' May 2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/705083/Supporting_Mental-Health_pen_portraits.pdf

Policy lead	Patrick Knight
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