



# Midsomer Norton Schools Partnership

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LST: TGI

## POSITIVE 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 Organization)*

At our Trust, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of staff and all students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. 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.

This document describes the Trust's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff, governors and Trustees.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions policy. In cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

### The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health 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 students suffering mental ill health, their peers and parents or 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 child protection / safeguarding officer
- Mental health leads or Headteacher
- CPD leads

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the pastoral team or Headteacher in the first instance, who will then refer as appropriate. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal safeguarding and child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated safeguarding lead. 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.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by an identified senior pastoral Lead e.g. Head of Year, Head of House, Headteacher etc.

## **Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe, are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum and, in secondary schools, tutor time programme.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're 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.

We will follow the [PSHE Association Guidance](#)<sup>1</sup> to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. We will ensure this is age appropriate.

## **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within each Trust school and in the local community. This information may be on the website or directly through contact with the school.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will aim to state:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- What is likely to happen

## **Working with All Parents**

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support for mental health issues.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who they can talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child.
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents via the Trust website.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings and through the designated mental health section in newsletter/website where appropriate.
- 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.

## **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.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our appraisal process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host optional twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or Trust wide CPD should be discussed with the CPD Lead in each Trust School, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

## **Staff Wellbeing/Mental Health**

The Trust is committed to positive Mental Health of all staff. In the first instance you may wish to discuss your wellbeing with your line manager. If you have concerns regarding a colleague who may be struggling with their mental health please pass on your concerns to the headteacher. However, the Trust also has an Employee Assistance Programme which is available for those who would like some further support and guidance on positive mental health. Please contact the Trust HR provision for further details.

<https://healthassuredeap.co.uk/>

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