



ASPIRATIONS



Oriel Academy West London
an Aspirations Academy

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING POLICY

APPROVED	Autumn	2021
REVIEW	Autumn	2022



INTRODUCTION

Why mental health and wellbeing is important

At Oriel Academy West London, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community; pupils, staff, parents and carers, and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. All children go through ups and downs through their school career/life and some face significant life events. About 1 in 10 children aged 5 to 16 have a diagnosable mental health need and these can have an enormous impact on their quality of life, relationships and academic achievement. In many cases it is life-limiting.

The Department for Education (DfE, 2018) recognises that: "in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy". Schools can be a place for children and young people to experience a nurturing and supportive environment that has the potential to develop self-esteem and give positive experiences for overcoming adversity and building resilience. For some, school will be a place of respite from difficult home lives and offer positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting pupils wellbeing and can help engender a sense of belonging and community.

Our role in school is to ensure that they are able to manage times of change and stress, be resilient, are supported to reach their potential and access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that pupils learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and where they can go if they need help and support.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and be a school where:

- All pupils are valued Pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- Pupils feel able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued
- Bullying is not tolerated

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

PURPOSE OF THIS POLICY

This 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 and their peers and parents/carers

Oriel use the World Health Organisation's (WHO, 2014) definition of mental health and wellbeing " 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".

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all children/young people to:

- feel confident in themselves
- be able to express a range of emotions appropriately
- be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others
- cope with the stresses of everyday life
- manage times of stress and be able to deal with change
- learn and achieve

The development of this policy was led by our Mental Health lead and mental healthworking party in consultation with pupils, staff, parents and carers and local mental health professionals (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Educational Psychologists. We used the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust example policy as the basis of our policy, it forms part of the Trust's ongoing work to improve recognition of and support for mental health issues

We organised opportunities for stakeholders to provide their views:

- Through Joint Practice Development, children were given the opportunity to trial and comment upon mental health support and provision.
- Parents and carers were invited to provide their views on mental health provision and support through surveys and parent information sessions
- Staff discussed the draft policy with key staff

In developing this policy we have taken account of:

- Children and Young People's mental health: state of the nation 2016
- Education, Education, Education, Mental health 2016 (secondary)
- Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing Public Health England 2015
- Preparing to teach about mental health PSHE Association 2015
- Mental Health and Behaviour in schools DfE 2018
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions DfE 2014
- Charlie Waller Memorial Trust 2018

LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy links to our policies on safeguarding, supporting pupils with medical conditions, anti-bullying, Wellness (PSHCE) and SEND strategy. It also links to our SEND Information Report. Links with the Behaviour Policy are especially important because behaviour, whether it is disruptive, withdrawn, anxious, depressed or otherwise, may be related to an unmet mental health need.

A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH TO PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

We take a whole school approach to promoting positive mental health that aims to help pupils become more resilient, be happy and successful and prevent problems before they arise.

This encompasses 7 aspects

1. Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and resilience that everyone understands
2. Helping pupils to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need to
3. Helping pupils to be resilient learners
4. Teaching pupils social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
5. Early identification of pupils who have mental health needs and planning support to meet their needs, including working with specialist services
6. Effectively working with parents and carers
7. Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and resilience

We also recognise the role that stigma can play in preventing understanding and awareness of mental health issues and aim to create an open and positive culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health issues.

STAFF-THEIR ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES, INCLUDING THOSE WITH SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITY

We believe that all staff has a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that pupils with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems; such a physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying.

They also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy (see appendix 1 on risk and protective factors).

Mental Health Lead

- Leads on and works with other staff to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health
- Provides advice and support to staff and organises training and updates
- Keeps staff up to date with information about what support is available
- Liaises with the PSHE Coordinator on teaching about mental health
- Is the first point of contact and communicates with mental health services
- Leads on and makes referrals to services

We recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the school environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some children will need more intensive support at times, and there are a range of mental health professionals and organisations that provide support to pupils with mental health needs and their families.

Support includes:

Executive Principal
 Designated Safeguarding Lead & Associate Principal
 Curriculum and Learning Lead & Senior Assistant Principal
 Assistant Principal for Inclusion / SENDCo

Wellness Lead

Any member of staff concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student is expected to speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated child protection office of staff or the head teacher. 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 Mrs K Livesey, SENDCo. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided in [Appendix ***](#).

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'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.

Oriel Academy will follow the [PSHE Association Guidance](#)¹ to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. Based on recent government legislation, it states that health education will be made a mandatory part of the curriculum by 2020 to help tackle the rise in mental health issues with children.

The statutory guidance for health education covers physical health, mental health and emotional wellbeing. It recognises that physical health and mental health are interlinked, that good physical health contributes to good mental health, and vice versa. It promotes pupils' wellbeing through an understanding of their own and others' emotions and the development of healthy coping strategies. It also contributes to safeguarding, providing pupils with knowledge, understanding and strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as equipping them to support others who are facing challenges. Finally, talking openly about mental health issues is an effective means of breaking down any associated stigma. The emphasis should always be on developing pupils' knowledge, understanding, skills, language and confidence to seek support, as needed, for themselves or others. They should understand when to seek help, what help is available, and the likely outcome of seeking support (Cited by PSHE Association on Mental Health, March 2019).

At Oriel Academy, our Wellness (PSHCE) curriculum is broken down into three topics: Relationship, Health and Well-being and Living in the Wider World. Our Relationships Education scheme of work, encourages children to develop their social and emotional skills by planning and teaching lessons which will help to improve their confidence, resilience, as well as helping them to deal with their emotions better. The Health aspect of the topic teaches children about leading a healthy lifestyle, staying safe, as well as how to deal with certain situations when difficulties arise. Additionally, the Well-being aspect of the curriculum promotes the importance of children reflecting on their own mental wellbeing. Every term, the children take part in a Well-being Day which encourages pupils' to understand their own and others' emotions and the development of healthy coping strategies. Lastly, the Living in the Wider World topic teaches children the importance of diversity in society and helps to prepare children for adulthood. Throughout the year, children will regularly have the opportunity to talk openly with their peers during CircleTime sessions, this is something that is supported by all staff members. Any issues that may arise, can be placed in the pupil voice box, which is allocated in every classroom, this helps encourage to the children to talk openly amongst their peers in a safe place whilst remaining anonymous.

The content of the lessons are determined by the needs of the cohort, but it enables pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, awareness and resilience that are needed for their own wellbeing but also preparing them for the future. Guidelines from the PSHE association ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner. All staff members take safeguarding very seriously and have a duty of care to our students, if there are any concerns, staff members should report their concern to the a Designated Safeguard.

¹ [Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing](#)

Our school has developed a range of strategies and approaches including;

Pupil-led activities

- Campaigns and assemblies to raise awareness of mental health
- Mindfulness
- Playground Squad

Transition programmes

- Transition Programme to secondary schools which includes all Year 6 pupils having a staff mentor to support a smooth transition to secondary school
- Transition programmes between key stages at all levels to reduce anxiety and promote smooth transitions.
- Additional transition activities for vulnerable children or children with SEND.

Class activities

- Class Charters
- Rights Respecting ethos throughout the school
- Mindfulness sessions for pupils
- Wellness (PSHCE) sessions in class

Whole school

- Mental Health Parent Information Sessions
- Pastoral Care support
- Displays and information around the school about positive mental health and where to go for help and support both within the school and outside the school

Small group activities

- Bright Minds, Bright Moods
- Blob Tree activities
- Take Ten
- Art Therapy
- Play Therapy

Primary pupils learn

Key Stage 2

- What positively and negatively affects their mental and emotional health (including the media)
- Positive and healthy coping strategies
- About good and not so good feelings
- To describe the range and intensity of their feelings to others
- To recognise and respond appropriately to a wide range of feelings in others
- To recognise that they may experience conflicting emotions and when they might need to listen to their emotions or overcome them
- About resilience
- How to motivate themselves and bounce back if they fail at something
- How to empathise and be supportive of others

- About change, including transitions (between Key Stages and schools), loss, separation, divorce and bereavement
- About the consequences of discrimination, teasing, bullying and aggressive behaviours (including online bullying, prejudice-based language), how to respond and ask for help
- About the importance of talking to someone and how to get help

SIGNPOSTING

We will ensure that staff, students and parents 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 ***.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as common rooms 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 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 our Mental Health and Emotional Well-being Lead.

Possible warning signs may include:

- Isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity or mood or eating/sleeping habits
- Lowering academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Secretive behaviour
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Not wanting to do PE or get changed for PE
- Wearing long sleeves in hot weather
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- 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

Staff are aware that mental health needs such as anxiety might appear as non-compliant, disruptive or aggressive behaviour which could include problems with attention or hyperactivity. This may be related to home problems, difficulties with learning, peer relationships or development. If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the school's child protection procedures are followed, support and guidance can be taken from the Safe Guarding Policy or Safe Guarding Leads.

If there is a medical emergency then the school's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

MANAGING DISCLOSURES AND CONFIDENTIALITY

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgemental to pupils who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of pupils is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff are clear to pupils that the concern will be shared with the Mental Health Lead and recorded in order to provide appropriate support to the pupil.

All disclosures are recorded and held on the pupil'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 should be recorded in writing and held on the student's confidential file. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the mental health lead who will provide store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps. [See appendix *** for guidance about making a referral to CAMHS.](#)

Assessment, Interventions and Support

Need	Evidence-based Intervention	Monitoring
The level of need is based on discussions at the regular Inclusion meetings/panel with key members of staff	and Support – the kinds of intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents and pupils For example	

Highest need	<p>CAMHS-assessment, 1:1 or family support or treatment, consultation with school staff and other agencies Pastoral Care Leader support-1:1 support External agency support such as CAMHS that provides 1:1 support and group work Other interventions e.g. art therapy If the school, professionals and/or parents conclude that a statutory education, health and care assessment is required, we refer to the SEND policy and SEN School Information Report.</p>	<p>All pupils needing targeted individualised support will have an individual My Plan drawn up setting out</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The needs of the pupils • How the pupil will be supported • Actions to provide that support • Any special requirements <p>Pupils and parents/carers will be involved in the plan. The plan and interventions are monitored, reviewed and evaluated to assess the impact e.g. through a pre and post SDQ and if needed a different kind of support can be provided.</p>
Some need	<p>Access to in school nurture group, family support worker, school nurse, art therapy, educational psychologist, 1:1 intervention, small group intervention, skills for life/wellbeing programmes, circle of friends</p>	<p>A My Plan is overseen by the Mental Health Lead</p>
Low need	General support E.g. class teacher/TA, year lead, mentor	

All concerns are reported to the Mental Health Lead and recorded. We then implement our assessment system which is based on levels of need to ensure that pupils get the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service. Our aim is to put in place interventions as early as possible to prevent problems escalating

Pupils are informed that the mental health lead is available when a pupil is dissatisfied with the level of care and support.

Working with specialist services to get swift access to the right specialist support and treatment

In some case a pupil's mental health needs require support from a specialist service. These might include anxiety, depression, self-harm and eating disorders.

We have access to a range of specialist services and during the support will have regular contact with the service to review the support and consider next steps, as part of monitoring the pupils' My Plan. School referrals to a specialist service will be made by the Mental Health Lead following the assessment process and in consultation with the pupil and his/her parents and carers.

Referrals will only go ahead with the consent of the pupil and parent/carer and when it is the most appropriate support for the pupil's specific needs

Specialist Service	Referral process
Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)	Accessed through school, GP or self-referral
Behaviour Support	Accessed through the Mental Health Lead
Educational Psychologist	Accessed through the Mental Health Lead

SEND and mental health Persistent mental health problems may lead to pupils having significantly greater difficulty in learning, than the majority of those of the same age. In some cases the child may benefit from being identified as having a special educational need (SEN)

WORKING WITH ALL PARENTS

Promoting mental health

We recognise the important role parents and carers have in promoting and supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their children, and in particular supporting their children with mental health needs.

On first entry to the school, our parent's meeting includes a discussion on the importance of positive mental health for learning. We ask parents to inform us of any mental health needs their child has and any issues that they think might have an impact on their child's mental health and wellbeing, based on a list of risk factors pertaining to the child or family (see [Appendix***](#)).

It is very helpful if parents and carers can share information with the school so that we can better support their child.

To support parents and carers:

- We organise a range of activities such as workshops on protective and risk factors, mindfulness, yoga and our CAMHS link and school nurse offer parent sessions
- We provide information and websites on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes and have produced leaflets for parents on mental health and resilience, which can be accessed on the school website. The information

includes who parents can talk to if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child and where parents can access support for themselves

- We include the mental health topics that are taught in the PSHE curriculum, on the school website

SUPPORTING PARENTS AND CARERS WITH MENTAL HEALTH NEEDS

We are aware that parents and carers react in different ways to knowing their child has a mental health problem and we will be sensitive and supportive. We also help to reassure by explaining that mental health problems are common, that the school has experience of working with similar issues and that help and advice are available.

When a concern has been raised the school will:

- Contact parents and carers and meet with them

In most case parents and carers will be involved in their children's interventions, although there may be circumstances when this may not happen, such as child protection issues.

- Offer information to take away and places to seek further information
- Be available for follow up calls
- Make a record of the meeting
- Agree an individual mental health care plan together with next steps
- Discuss how the parents and carers can support their child
- Keep parents and carers up to date and fully informed of decisions about the support and interventions

Parents and carers will always be informed if their child is at risk of danger and pupils may choose to tell their parents and carers themselves. We give pupils the option of informing their parents and carers about their mental health need for themselves or go along with them.

We make every effort to support parents and carers to access services where appropriate. Our primary concern are pupils, and in the rare event that parents and carers are not accessing services we will seek advice from the Local Authority. We also provide information for parents and carers to access support for their own mental health needs.

INVOLVING PUPILS

Every year we train up a group of pupils as our health champions who lead on whole school campaigns on health and wellbeing

We seek pupil's views about our approach, curriculum and promoting whole school mental health activities.

We always seek feedback from pupils who have had support to help improve that support and the services they received.

SUPPORTING AND TRAINING STAFF

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in pupils and know what to do and where to get help (see Appendix ***). All teaching and support staff have regular training with annual updates.

Those staff with a specific responsibility have more specialised training and where possible access to supervision from mental health professionals.

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and well-being, such as yoga, mindfulness, and physical activities. Staff also have access to the Mental Health Lead to seek advice or support on mental health or wellbeing needs.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The mental health and wellbeing policy is on the school website and hard copies are available to parents and carers from the school office. All mental health professionals are given a copy before they begin working with the school as well as external agencies involved in our mental health work.

Appendix **** Protective and Risk factors (adapted from Mental Health and Behaviour DfE March 2016)

	Risk Factors	Protective Factors
In the Child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genetic influences • Specific development delay • Communication difficulties • Physical illness • Academic failure • Low self-esteem • SEND 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Being female (in younger children) • Secure attachment • Experience • Outgoing temperament as an infant • Good communication skills, sociability • Being a planner and having a belief in control • Humour • Problem solving skills and a positive attitude • Experiences of success and achievement • Faith or spirituality • Capacity to reflect
In the Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overt parental conflict including domestic violence • Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) • Inconsistent or unclear discipline • Hostile and rejecting relationships • Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs • Physical, sexual, emotional abuse or neglect • Parental psychiatric illness • Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder • Death and loss – including loss of friendship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one good parentchild relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education Supportive long term relationship or the absence of severe discord
In the School	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear policies on behaviour and bullying 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems • A whole-school approach to

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negative peer influences • Peer pressure • Poor pupil to teacher relationships 	<p>promoting good mental health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences
In the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Other significant life events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider supportive network • Good housing • High standard of living • High morale school with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying • Opportunities for valued social roles • Range of sport/leisure activities

Appendix * Specific mental health needs most commonly seen in school-aged children**

For information see Annex C Main Types of Mental Health Needs

Mental Health and Behaviour in School DfE March 2016

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/mental-health-and-behaviour-in-schools--2>

Annex C includes definitions, signs and symptoms and suggested interventions for

Anxiety (including panic attacks, phobias and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder OCD)

Depression

Eating Disorders

Substance Misuse

Self Harm

The DfE guide does not include specific information on suicidal thought

Suicidal Thoughts

Young people may experience thoughts and feelings about wanting to end their lives. Some young people never act on these feelings but may openly discuss and explore them, while other young people die suddenly from suicide without any apparent warning signs.

Appendix ** Where to get information and support**

For support on specific mental health needs

[Anxiety UK www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk) [OCD UK www.ocduk.org](http://www.ocduk.org)

[Depression Alliance www.depressoinalliance.org](http://www.depressoinalliance.org)

[Eating Disorders www.b-eat.co.uk](http://www.b-eat.co.uk) and www.inourhands.com

[National Self-Harm Network www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)

www.selfharm.co.uk

[Suicidal thoughts Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

[For general information and support](#)

www.youngminds.org.uk champions young people’s mental health and wellbeing

www.mind.org.uk advice and support on mental health problems

www.minded.org.uk (e-learning)

www.time-to-change.org.uk tackles the stigma of mental health

www.rethink.org challenges attitudes towards mental health