



PUPIL MENTAL HEALTH AND EMOTIONAL WELLBEING POLICY

2024-26

Potter Street Academy
Part of the Passmores Co-operative Learning Community

PCLC Position Statement

All PCLC schools have an approach that is based on the following key principles:

- Our unconditional positive regard ensures that every young person is highly valued and expected to achieve their potential;
- every young person has the right to be successful and has ability to achieve, no matter what their socio-economic background;
- there is no limit to achievement – intelligence can be developed;
- each student must know what to do in order to improve and how to do it, high expectations on their own are not enough;
- consistency of experience is fundamental; each school is a team and consistency makes us greater than the sum of our parts;
- employment opportunities in PCLC schools should allow all colleagues to inspire a love for learning; not simply process and record what we find.

By ensuring all of actions and decisions adhere to these principles our community members:

- are highly valued and expected to achieve their full potential, no matter what their socio-economic background;
- benefit from an inclusive ethos, excellent teaching and a broad and balanced curriculum underpinned by strong leadership, in a local school;
- are supported and encouraged to lead healthy and active lives making sensible choices, whilst respecting the views and attitudes of others.

Policy Statement

At Potter Street Academy, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

This policy was written with regard to:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that we all have a role to play in promoting positive mental health.

At our school we:

- Help children to understand their emotions and feelings and develop healthy coping strategies
- Help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- Help children to form and maintain healthy relationships
- Promote self-esteem
- Encourage children to be confident and resilient
- Help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs
- Inclusive ethos, valuing diversity

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health:
 - Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma
 - Encouraging pupils to disclose when their mental health is deteriorating
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder

Scope

This policy should be read in conjunction with our SEND policy in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies:

- Behaviour
- Anti-bullying
- PSHE
- SMSC
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions
- Intimate Care

It also sits alongside child protection procedures.

Lead Members of Staff

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school and for understanding risk factors.

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Head of School
- Designated safeguarding lead (DSL)
- SEND team
- Learning Mentor (Senior Mental Health Leads)
- SLT
- Attendance lead

Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing :

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum, whole school assemblies and events are planned throughout the year linked to national and local mental health and wellbeing initiatives.

We are proud to be a myHappymind school. It is a whole school program grounded in science and dedicated to building positive mental wellbeing. It teaches the children how to self-regulate and manage their emotions in stressful times, allowing them to be their very best selves.

myHappymind uses 5 linked modules of work, across all year groups. The modules aim to foster a consistent, inclusive approach to help children understand and manage their own mental health and well-being, as well as building resilience, confidence, and self-esteem. The module content is outlined below:

Meet Your Brain: Understanding how your brain works and how to ensure we look after it so that we can manage our emotions and be at our best. Growth mindset is a key part of this too.

Celebrate: Understanding your unique character strengths and learning to celebrate them. This is a fantastic module for building self-esteem.

Appreciate: Understanding why gratitude matters and how you can develop gratitude as a habit. Gratitude is key to well-being and resilience and we're all about making it a habit!

Relate: Understanding why positive relationships matter and how to build them. We're focussed on the building blocks of good relationships and friendships.

Engage: Understanding how to set meaningful goals that matter and how to keep resilient in times of challenge. This module is all about building self-esteem and resilience too.

We also teach the 'Five Ways to Wellbeing' strategy: Children are taught about:

- Connecting with Others
- Taking Notice
- Learning New Things
- Giving to Others
- Being Active

Internal mental health interventions

Where there is a concern, the class teacher will raise this with the parent at the earliest opportunity and/or Learning Mentor. A pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

- Nurture groups
- Peer support
- Managing specific feelings intervention
- Sessions with the learning mentor
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- Reduced timetable
- Time-out pass
- Counselling

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

We also offer daily lunchtime drop-in sessions in our school Wellbeing Base which offers children a quiet place to come and talk and share feelings, concerns or worries they may be having in school or outside of school. Children can explore strategies with adults for dealing with specific feelings in a helpful way.

Lead members of staff meet at least once half termly to review children receiving support and their progress. Teaching staff are asked to identify children requiring additional support for their mental health and wellbeing and where necessary may be placed on the SEN register for SEMH (social, emotional, mental health) needs. This is in consultation with the SENCo.

Targets linked to social and emotional skills are created, interventions are put into place and these are then reviewed on a regular basis by the inclusion team to assess the quality of the intervention and its impact on the child. The school makes use of a variety of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including emotional literacy scales, boxall profiles, banding levels and wellbeing cards.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support. This is through assemblies, the school website and sharing information on monthly newsletters.

Identifying needs and warning signs

School staff will look for 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 the DSL/Mental Health Lead.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in:
 - Mood or energy level
 - Eating or sleeping patterns
 - Attitude in lessons or academic attainment
 - Level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Rapid weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

Pupil wellbeing surveys are also used as a means of identifying individual children who may need support with their mental health. Information shared with teachers and pupils who are a concern is followed up by the learning mentor. Survey results are also used to prioritise aspects of mental health and wellbeing to address and action as a whole school.

Working with Parents/Carers

We will work with parents/carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent/carer forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents/carers about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face-to-face.

These meetings can be difficult, so our school will ensure that parents/carers are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record on EduKey.

If appropriate, an individual healthcare plan (IHP) will be created in collaboration with parents/carers.

Working with other agencies and partners

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Counselling services (Harbour & YCT)
- Family support workers
- Therapists
- Local mental health support teams (MIND)
- Mental health charities (e.g. [Samaritans](#), [Mind](#), [Young Minds](#), [Kooth](#))
- Affinity

- Inclusion Partner
- Essex Child & Family Wellbeing Service
- Essex School Infolink (SEMH)

Training

All staff will be offered training so they:

- Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

All teachers and support staff receive Trauma Perceptive Practice training to support children's emotional health and wellbeing.

The National College provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can affect that staff member's own mental health and wellbeing. To help with this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Offer staff supervision sessions
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment

Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed every two year

Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis

