Pupils' Mental Health Policy

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing at TPAT Schools

TPAT Policy Management

Document history

Review date	Version	Reviewer / owner	Executive approval	Approving body	Meeting date of policy approval
12/2023	1	Director of Inclusion and SENDCo / Strategic Mental and Emotional Wellbeing Lead	12/2021	EPSC	12/2021
10/2023	2	Director of Inclusion and SENDCo / Strategic Mental and Emotional Wellbeing Lead	10/2023	EPSC	16/10/2023
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Material changes since last publication

Section	Changes
Version 2	References to individual schools have been removed

This policy is reviewed annually. The next review is due by March 2026.

Contents

This policy was written in consultation with staff, pupils (Young Inspectors), parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing.

1. Introduction

The Trust intends and expects that all decisions, policies and procedures will be underpinned at all times by its vision and values:

Our aim:

To create centres of educational excellence that inspire all pupils to turn their potential into performance

To achieve this our schools will:

- Provide a broad and balanced curriculum that allows pupils to develop their talents and ambitions Deliver the highest quality learning opportunities facilitated by excellent teachers

- Inspire our pupils to become confident, motivated and respectful individuals ready to make a positive contribution to society

The Trust will support our schools by:

- Maximising the resources and expertise available to individual schools

- Providing a platform for the sharing of excellent practice

- Challenging and developing staff to turn their potential into performance

1.1 Aims and Scope

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

At our schools we:

- Help pupils to understand their emotions and feelings better.

- Help pupils feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries.

- Help pupils socially to form and maintain relationships.

- Promote self-esteem and ensure pupils know that they count.

- Encourage pupils to be confident and 'dare to be different'.

- Help pupils to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.

We promote a positive 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.

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches.

- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties such as divorce, family trauma or bereavement.

- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment disorder.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical Needs and SEND policies in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying, Equality and Inclusion, and PSHE and SMSC. It also sits alongside Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures.

1.2 Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, each school has its own Designating Safeguarding lead, Special Educational Needs Coordinator and mental Health lead.

2. Policy Statement

2.1 Policy terms

At The Park Academies Trust (TPAT), we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff. 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 positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

Mental health is an integral and essential component of health. The WHO constitution states:

"Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. An important implication of this definition is that mental health is more than just the absence of mental disorders or disabilities.

Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

Mental health is fundamental to our collective and individual ability as humans to think, emote, interact with each other, earn a living and enjoy life. On this basis, the promotion, protection and restoration of mental health can be regarded as a vital concern of individuals, communities and societies throughout the world".

World Health Organization 2018

3. Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

3.1 2 – 19 Provision

A core mental health curriculum is delivered during PSHE and assemblies; this is then tailored and adapted using Readiness for Learning (RfL) as derived from the pupil perceptions survey. RfL is designed to give the individual school a useful first impression of how its overall health and wellbeing situation compares both nationally and within the Trust. The results give a quick way of identifying groups or individual students who may be causing concern or who might need extra support, and it guides and informs areas of the curriculum which need to be developed particularly within PSHE and assemblies.

This provision is bolstered with small group and individual interventions such as Peer Support, ELSA, T zone, Re-tracking and work with a range of external agencies including Targeted Mental Health, Play Therapists, Educational Psychology. All schools have a range of safe spaces, and class resources universal provision. Additional specific interventions may also be determined by the specific needs of the cohort. Trust Therapeutic Alternative Provision may be used for early intervention where necessary.

Pupils who are identified with specific concerns through systems such as CPOMS, or by staff, are checked on by pastoral staff, who will offer regular time to talk if appropriate.

We will ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

3.2 Targeted Support

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

- Circle time approaches or activities.

- Targeted use of PHSE/Jigsaw/ELSA resources.

- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'worry boxes', 'worry monsters'.

- Managing emotions resources including Cognitive Behaviour Therapy, mental health and wellbeing groups.

- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

- Tranquillity Zone

The schools will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- The Pupil Perception Survey: https://pupilperceptions.pearson.co.uk/perceptions

- The Boxall Profile: Boxall

- ELSA – pre and post assessments: Elsa

- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire: Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)

3.3 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.

3.4 Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

All staff will record on CPOMs if they identify concerns with any of the following:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

These concerns are then discussed at Mental Health Triage Meetings and recorded as appropriate.

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil 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 designated child protection and safeguarding officer or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

3.5 Procedure for Concern in relation to Mental Health issues

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health, or that of a friend, to a member of staff, the response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. If specific advice is asked for the member of staff will talk the case through with the DSL.

Staff should listen, rather than advise, and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded in writing on CPOMs.

This information should be shared with the appropriate staff above who will offer support, advice about next steps and take the appropriate actions.

3.6 Working with Parents / Carers

In order to support parents/carers we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on each school's website, school notice boards, newsletters, other media platforms.

- Ensure that all parents / carers are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their child.

- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents / carers.

- Share ideas about how parents / carers can support positive mental health in their children.

- Keep parents / carers informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

3.7 Working with Other Agencies and Partners

The Park Academies Trust is heavily involved in the Barnardo's Mental Health Trailblazer with Early Mental Health Practitioners attached to the Trust.

As part of our targeted provision we will work with other agencies to support pupils' emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The School Nurse
- The Early Help Hub
- Parenting Hub
- Educational Psychology Service
- Social, Emotional and Mental Health Support team
- TaMHs (Targeted Mental Health in Schools)
- Community Paediatricians
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- Counselling services
- Family Support Workers
- Therapists

3.8 Supporting Peers

When a pupil 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 can be of support or may need additional support themselves.

Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents 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

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

4. Appendices

4.1 Confidentiality

We will be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we think it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on then we will explain to the child:

- Who we are going to talk to

- What we are going to tell them

- Why we need to tell them

Parents must always be informed when disclosures regarding a pupils' emotional or mental health and wellbeing are made. Pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the pupil should be given 24 hours to share this information before the school contacts parents. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

4.2 Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training (at least once a year) about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular safeguarding training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

Staff will access training resources on Nimbl or The National College in response to a cohort, class or school specific issue.

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 to developing situations with one or more pupils. All Mental Health Leads will undertake the national training.

4.3 References

- DfE Mental health and Behaviour in Schools

- DFE Mental Health and Wellbeing in schools

- Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing

- DfE Promoting the health and well-being of looked-after pupils

- PSHE Association – preparing to teach about mental health guidance

- Jigsaw Program

- Heads Together - Mentally Health Schools

- Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education

4.4 Links to Other School / Trust Policies

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy, including those who cannot attend school
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- PSHE / SMSC Policy
- SEND Statement
- Equality Information and Objectives Statement