



Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Document provenance

This policy was approved by

Education Committee

Date: March 2023

Next Review:

Date: March 2025

Unless there are legislative or regulatory changes in the interim, this policy will be reviewed every two years. Should no substantive changes be required at that point, the policy will move to the next review cycle

ELT (Executive Leadership Team) Owner: Director of SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities)

Related documents:

- E-ACT Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- E-ACT Equality and Diversity Policy
- E-ACT Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy
- E-ACT SEND and Learning Policy

Summary of policy:

This policy outlines how E-ACT Academies will work to promote the positive mental health and wellbeing of all pupils to enable them to flourish.

Academy Mental Health Lead is:	Sharon Degg (SENCO)
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Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

1. Introduction and purpose

- 1.1. Within our Academy, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole Academy 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 and young people's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. All children and young people move up and down the mental health continuum during their Academy career. However, some face significant life events which can seriously impact their emotional wellbeing and can include mental illness.
- 1.2. The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "Schools have a role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children" ([Mental Health and Behaviour in School, 2018](#)). Schools can be a place for all pupils 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. The academy is also a place of respite from difficult home lives and offers, positive role models and relationships, which are critical in promoting the wellbeing of all young people.
- 1.3. The role of the Academy is to ensure that pupils are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or 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.
- 1.4. The aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health difficulties and to be an academy where:
 - All pupils are valued
 - Pupils have a sense of belonging and feel safe
 - Pupils feel able to talk openly about their problems without feeling stigma or discrimination.
 - Positive mental health is promoted and valued
 - Bullying is not tolerated.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all staff, pupils, parents/carers, visitors to the academy and the community.

3. Legislation and regulation

Definition of mental health

- 3.1. Mental health and wellbeing is defined as *“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 Organisation - http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en/)
- 3.2. Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all our pupils 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.
- 3.3. Under the [Equality Act 2010](#) a child or young person with a mental health illness is described as having a mental impairment and therefore a disability. A disability is described in law (the Equality Act 2010) as ‘a physical or mental impairment, which has a long-term (a year or more) and substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.’
- 3.4. The Equality Act requires early year’s providers, schools, colleges, other educational settings, and local authorities to:
 - Not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass, or victimise disabled children and young people;
 - Make reasonable adjustments, so that disabled children and young people are not disadvantaged. This duty is known as ‘anticipatory.’
- 3.5. All academies will operate within the law. The legal framework, statutory guidance, key policies, and government strategies most pertinent to mental health can be found in:
 - The Mental Health Act (2007)
 - Mental Health (Discrimination) Act (2013)
 - The Equality Act 2010
 - The Children and Families Act 2014, Part 3
 - The Special Educational Needs and Disability Regulations 2014
 - The SEND Code of Practice (last updated April 2015)

- Working Together to Safeguard Children (July 2018)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (September 2022)
- Mental health and behaviour in schools (November 2018)
- Transforming children and young people’s mental health provision: a green paper (last updated July 2018)

4. Policy statement

- 4.1. E-ACT’s three core values are at the heart of all it does and this policy strongly advocates: Partnership working across academies and utilising trust expertise, local, and specialist agencies, as well as a meaningful child centred approach to supporting pupils in line with the MHFA (Mental Health First Aider) England ALGEE framework (‘Team Spirit’); High aspirations and opportunity (‘Think Big’); A commitment to legal compliance and a genuine desire to support *all* children and young people (‘Do the right thing’).
- 4.2. This policy compliments E-ACT’s Mental Health Strategy ASK (Awareness, Support Kindness):
- Awareness – All pupils are taught about mental health and wellbeing through the E-ACT mental health curriculum and raising awareness events.
 - Support – There is a graduated response to support to ensure all pupils receive the support they require.
 - Kindness – Acts of kindness are encouraged, recognised, and celebrated both for personal wellbeing and towards others.
- 4.3. We will ensure that:
- All academies will be proactive in identifying and supporting a child or young person with mental health difficulties, ensuring the pupil is at the centre of all decisions and take into account their feelings, wishes and views.
 - Academies will work closely with the local authority, external agencies, and charitable organisations to ensure appropriate care is accessed to support the pupil.
 - All academies have procedures and professionals in place to enable them to fulfil their duties and to drive a caring and positive wellbeing centred ethos and vision.

Support for our Academies

- 4.4. E-ACT has a National Mental Health Lead who leads the mental health strategy

and provides guidance and support to MHFA instructors and any member of staff within the organisation.

Approach to Positive Mental Health

- 4.5. All academies have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health (see appendix 1). Some pupils will require additional help and all staff through the Youth MHFA training will 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 appropriate support. In addition, the Trust also has in place Senior Mental Health Lead Training.
- 4.6. The academies recognise that many behaviours and emotional problems can be supported within the academy environment, or with advice from external professionals. Some pupils 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.
- 4.7. All academies will make reasonable adjustments for children and young people experiencing emotional distress and mental health difficulties to support recovery in line with legislation.

What our academies will do

- 4.8. Academies will designate a member of the senior leadership team to be responsible for overseeing, coordinating, and championing mental health and wellbeing education and provision. The designated mental health lead for the academy is detailed on page 2.
- 4.9. Academies will prepare a mental health and wellbeing action plan. The plan will set out the details regarding the implementation of the E-ACT Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy.
- 4.10. Academies will ensure that all member of staff have access to Youth MHFA training and take responsibility in promoting positive wellbeing and identifying and supporting pupils experiencing mental health difficulties.
- 4.11. Academies will:
 - Provide a safe environment to enable pupils to express themselves and be listened to.
 - Ensure the welfare and safety of all pupils
 - Identify appropriate support for pupils based on their needs.
 - Involve parents and carers when their child needs support.
 - Involve pupils in the care and support they have, ensuring the voice/views of the young person is always taken into account.

- Monitor, review and evaluate the support with children and keep parents and carers updated.
- 4.12. Academies will utilise the MHFA ALGEE framework to support with crisis situations and to inform support process:
- A** - Approach, assess and assist the young person.
 - L** - Listen and communicate non-judgementally.
 - G** - Give support and information.
 - E** - Encourage appropriate professional support.
 - E** - Encourage other supports.
- 4.13. 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.
- 4.14. Academy staff and the mental health lead will work alongside the SENCo (SEN coordinator) to support identification and the assessment for a pupil to ascertain if they should be identified as 'SEND Support' under the category of Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) as part of the SEND Code of Practice.
- 4.15. If a pupil has received intensive and/or specialised external mental health professional support, the academy has a duty of care to support pupils and will seek advice from medical staff and mental health professionals on the best way to support children. We will carry out a risk assessment and produce an Individual Care Plan to support children to re-integrate successfully back to Academy.
- 4.16. Academies recognise that when a pupil is experiencing mental health problems it can be challenging for their friends, who often want to help them but are not sure the best thing to do and can also be emotionally affected, therefore appropriate support will be provided.
- 4.17. Academies also recognise the importance of support for parents/carers caring for a young person with a mental health difficulty. Academies operate an open-door policy and will ensure regular communication between home and school. Staff can signpost to additional sources of support outside of the academy through the MHFA resources.
- 4.18. If there is a concern that a pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the Academy's safeguarding procedures are followed. If there is a medical emergency, then the Academy's procedures for medical emergencies are followed.

5. Training

- 5.1. E-ACT has trained Youth MHFA instructors to deliver the two-day youth MHFA training to all members of staff within academies. Training sessions are delivered

throughout the academic year.

6. Responsibilities

The following responsibilities apply in relation to this policy:

- 6.1. Headteachers are responsible for ensuring a member of the senior leadership team is the designated mental health lead within their academy.
- 6.2. The Mental Health Lead is responsible for overseeing, coordinating, and championing mental health and wellbeing education and provision.
- 6.3. MHFA instructors are responsible for supporting academies with meeting the requirements of the Mental Health and Wellbeing policy.
- 6.4. All staff are responsible for promoting positive wellbeing and identifying and supporting pupils experiencing mental health difficulties.
- 6.5. Pupil Mental Health Ambassadors will support in the promotion of positive mental wellbeing.
- 6.6. Trustees and the Executive Leadership Team have overall responsibility for the implementation and approval of this policy.

7. Monitoring and compliance

7.1 The National Lead for Mental Health and Education Directors will monitor compliance with this policy and within the academies, which will be reported at the Challenge Days.

Appendix 1

Protective Factors and Risk Factors

(Adapted from [Mental health and behaviour in schools \(November 2018\)](#)):

	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"> • 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 parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education • Supportive long-term relationship or the absence of severe discord
In the Academy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Negative peer influences • Peer pressure • Inconsistent implementation of the behaviour policy. • Poor relationships with staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems • A whole-Academy approach to promoting good mental health • Positive relationships between pupils and staff

Appendix 2

For support on specific mental health needs:

- Anxiety UK: www.anxietyuk.org.uk
- OCD UK: www.ocduk.org
- Depression Alliance: www.depressoinalliance.org
- Eating Disorders: www.b-eat.co.uk and www.inourhands.com
- National Self-Harm Network: www.nshn.co.uk www.selfharm.co.uk
- Suicidal thoughts Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org
- 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

Appendix 3

Academy Action Plan:

The Dolphin School pupil mental health action plan is currently under review.

<u>Raising Awareness and Implementation of the Policy</u>				
<u>Objective</u>	<u>Actions</u>	<u>Who is responsible?</u>	<u>Time scale</u>	<u>Evaluation/ Impact</u>
Student led activities				
Academy activities (incl. details of how the academy will implement the E-ACT mental health curriculum)				
Family / community activities				

Assessment, Interventions and Support

<u>Level of need</u>	<u>Assessment and Early Identification Indicators</u>	<u>Interventions and Support Available</u> The kinds of intervention and support provided will be decided in consultation with key members of staff, parents, and children	<u>Monitoring</u>
High need			
Some need			
Low need			