



# WELLBEING POLICY

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## **WELLBEING POLICY**

### **Introduction**

At Orion, we aim to promote positive mental health for every pupil and member of staff. We aim to achieve this using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils. In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures, we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly; and indirectly by mental ill health.

### **The Policy Aims to:**

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils
- 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 pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers
- Provide support to staff to manage their own and colleague's well-being.

### **Mental Health and Behaviour**

We are aware that pupil behaviour is often driven by unmet need and is linked to both mental health needs and to special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities. Unmet and undiagnosed needs can often contribute to behavioural problems within schools and with this in mind we have shifted away from a one size fits all approach to behaviour and have adopted a more flexible and tailored approaches to support that recognises pupils' individual needs and diversity.

At Orion we have clear expectations and boundaries in relation to pupil behaviour, and we teach pupils positive behaviours to help them to thrive in the school environment. This is coupled with a supportive, nurturing and inclusive school environment, where every pupil is valued. We also prioritise and embed relational and restorative approaches in order to improve both behaviour and mental health.

Our aims are to move beyond a place where behaviour is seen as problematic and something that needs to be managed, to a much more concerned and curious place about what the behaviour could be telling us. By changing the way behaviour is viewed, pupil needs can be identified at a much earlier stage.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- School Mental Health Lead (Murett Mendez)
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (Elizabeth Caldicott)

The Leadership Team, Governors and school staff will work towards an ethos where everyone is valued, where respect, empathy and honesty are the cornerstones of all school relationships and where health and wellbeing are held central to school practice. We expect all staff and pupils to show respect and empathy for each other and to treat confidential information sensitively and according to school policy.

## **Pupil Wellbeing**

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to the DSL in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm, then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the safeguarding team. If the pupil presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary. Where a referral to the Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the DSL.

## **Individual Care Plans**

An Individual Care Plan will be drawn up for those pupils who are assessed as having concerns with their mental and emotional wellbeing or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This will involve the pupil, parents and the relevant health care professionals and will detail the support they will be given. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

## **Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE and RSE curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort taught but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. We will ensure that we teach mental health and emotional

wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. We have designed a wellbeing framework to complement the academic curriculum and create opportunities throughout the year to touch on a range of mental health and wellbeing topics.

## **Warning Signs**

School staff may 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 DSL.

Possible warning signs include:

- 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
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

## **Managing Disclosures**

Disclosures by pupils and confidentiality

We recognise how important it is that staff are calm, supportive and non-judgmental to pupils who disclose a concern about themselves or a friend. The emotional and physical safety of pupils is paramount, and staff should listen rather than advise. Staff must make it clear to pupils that the concern will be shared with the DSL and recorded to provide appropriate support to the pupil. All disclosures are recorded and held on a confidential pupil file, including date, name of pupil and member of staff to whom they disclosed, summary of the disclosure and next steps. All disclosures will be managed in accordance with the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

## **Working with Parents**

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

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website.
- Parents/carers/staff may also require specific relevant support information regarding self-harm, eating disorders, psychosis, anxiety, depression and more. The DSL can signpost individuals further when necessary.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to 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.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through planned information sharing.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and RSE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

## **Supporting Peers**

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. Pastoral support will be offered to children impacted by friend's problems and/or behaviours. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case-by-case basis which friends may need additional support.

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

## **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 to enable them to keep pupils safe. Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance review process and additional continuing professional development will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

## **Staff Wellbeing**

We recognise that our staff are our most important resource and need to be valued, supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally within a caring, nurturing and purposeful learning environment. We recognise that there is a direct

correlation between the wellbeing of our staff and the wellbeing of our pupils and that the culture and the ethos of the school are determined by the extent to which staff work towards a shared vision.

We believe that it is essential that staff feel part of a valued team, have the opportunity to express their views, have their suggestions for improvement taken seriously and are supported to manage workload within a culture that supports a healthy work-life balance.

We aim to:

- Support staff mental health and wellbeing
- Minimise stress
- Help staff to keep a healthy work-life balance
- Help school staff manage their family and work responsibilities
- Promote healthy lifestyle choices and raise awareness of the impact of negative choices
- Ensure staff feel valued
- Recognise and promote the importance of a happy team
- Involve staff in decision making
- Take account of equality implications

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

Responsibilities of the Leadership Team:

- Raising the profile of healthy lifestyles and promoting positive attitudes to mental health and wellbeing.
- Signposting staff, providing information and listening
- Providing personal and professional development such as teambuilding, management of change, stress management, assertiveness and communication.
- Providing a non-judgmental and confidential support system such as coaching and mentoring and pastoral support for staff.
- Monitoring the workload of members of staff and being able to see signs of stress
- Listening to the views of staff and involving them in decision making processes
- Ensuring the efforts and successes of staff are acknowledged and celebrated.
- Making sure staff have been given the right training to do their jobs confidently.
- Ensuring staff feel valued and time is set aside for them.
- Recognising that staff may have experiences in their personal lives that may make vulnerable to pressures at work and which may have a temporary influence on their performance.
- Ensuring that there are effective methods of communication

Responsibilities of Members of staff:

- Treating one another with empathy, respect and kindness
- Taking care of their own health and safety at work and communicating with key staff where they need support
- Being committed to the ethos of staff wellbeing and keeping in mind the workload and wellbeing of colleagues
- Valuing all members of staff in the school and acknowledging the important role that everyone takes
- Contributing to the ethos and social aspects of school life where possible to build morale and effective team spirit
- Developing and respecting shared areas where possible so that there is space to relax as well as appropriate workspaces.

### **Monitoring and Review**

Monitoring of mental health issues and policy implementation will be via:

- Continuing professional development (CPD) sessions delivered to staff relating to mental health
- PSHE and RSE topics relating to mental health
- Feedback from wellbeing weeks or wellbeing assemblies
- End of term report of the number of mental health concern logs and referrals to Mental Health Services.