

## Elevate Well Being Policy

<b>Policy Type</b>	
<b>Adopted by</b>	
<b>Chair of the Trustees</b>	
<b>Date</b>	
<b>To be reviewed</b>	3 years
<b>On Website</b>	

## Policy Statement

*Mental health is 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 Organization)*

## Aims:

Elevate and its Academies:

- aim to promote positive mental health for every member of staff and child;
- pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable children;
- aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures they can promote a safe and stable environment for children affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues;
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues;
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing;
- Provide support to staff working with children with mental health and wellbeing issues;
- Provide support to children suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers.

## Scope:

This policy describes Elevates and its Academies approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. It is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff, Trustees and governors.

References below to 'the Head Teacher' includes the Executive Head Teacher, Head Teacher or acting Head Teacher as appropriate.

## This Policy is linked to the Following Policies:

Elevate's Medical Needs Policy

SEND policy.

Child Protection and Safeguarding policy

Elevate Confidentiality policy

Elevate Behaviour policy

## Resources:

- PSHE Association, *Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing* (PSHE Association, 2015), available at [www.psheassociation.org.uk/system/files/Mental%20health%20guidance\\_0.pdf](http://www.psheassociation.org.uk/system/files/Mental%20health%20guidance_0.pdf) [accessed 14/03/18].
- DFE Mental Health and Behaviour in schools – November 2018;
- Guidance for schools on developing emotional health and well being, national healthy schools programme;
- Social and Emotional well being in primary education- NICE ([www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk)) ;
- Diocese of York's mental health and well being Guidance;

### Lead Members of Staff:

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

- [insert name] – Designated Safeguarding lead (DSL)
- [insert name] - Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead (MHEWL)
- [insert name] - Lead First Aider
- [insert name] - Pastoral Lead
- [insert name] - CPD Lead
- [insert name] - Head of PSHE

Any member of staff who is concerned about **the mental health** or wellbeing of a child should speak to the MHEWL in the first instance. If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the DSL or the Head teacher.

If the child 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 EMS or CAMHS is appropriate, or liaisons with other outside agencies- Compass Buzz, play therapists etc this will be led and managed by the MHEWL. Guidance about referring to CAMHS is provided in *Appendix 2*.

### Individual Care Plans (*Appendix 1*):

An individual care plan will be completed for children causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health.

This should be drawn up involving the child, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

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

### Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing:

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by the children 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 the Academies are teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling children to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

Elevate and its Academies will follow the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that they teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner. Staff are trained in therapeutic techniques and nurture time.

### Signposting:

Elevate and its Academies will ensure that staff, children and parents are aware of sources of support within the Academy and in the local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it.

Elevate and its Academies will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to children within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever sources of support are highlighted, this will increase the chance of child help-seeking by ensuring children 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:

Academy staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a child 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 MHEWL Lead.

### 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:

- A child may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure;
- If a child chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental;
- Staff should listen, rather than advise and the first thoughts should be of the child's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'
- All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the child'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 MHEWL who will provide store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.  
See Appendix 2 for guidance about making a referral to CAMHS.

### **Confidentiality:**

Elevate and its Academies should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a child on then the child should be made aware of:

- Who we are going to talk to;
- What we are going to tell them;
- Why we need to tell them.

Information about a child should not be shared without first telling them. Ideally they should consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. Particularly if a child is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with the MHEWL, as this helps to safeguard the member of staff's emotional wellbeing, and it ensures continuity of care if the member of staff is absent and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. The Academy should explain this to the child and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, the child should be given 24 hours to share this information before the Academy contacts parents. The Academy should always give children the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

**If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection office must be informed immediately.**

### **Working with Parents:**

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, the Academy needs to be sensitive in their approach. Before disclosing to parents they should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable;
- Where should the meeting happen? At the Academy, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the child, other members of staff;
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. The Academy should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

The Academy should always highlight further sources of information to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that is being shared. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

The Academy should always provide clear means of contacting them with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

### **Working with All Parents:**

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the Academy about supporting their children's emotional and mental health.

In order to support parents the Academy will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on the Academy website;
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child;
- Make Elevate's Well Being policy easily accessible to parents;
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through regular information evenings;
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

### **Supporting Peers:**

When a child 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. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, the Academy will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support.

Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the child 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 help (e.g. signs of relapse).

Additionally, the Academy 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 in order to enable them to keep children safe;
- The Academy will host relevant information on the virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The Mind Ed ([www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)) 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 the performance management process and additional CPD will be supported

throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more children;

- Where the need to do so becomes evident, the Academy will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health;
- Suggestions for individual, group or whole Academy CPD should be discussed with the Head teacher who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

**Appendix 1: Individual Care Plan**

**Appendix 2: CAHMS contact**