



Parmiter’s School Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
2. Aims.....	2
3. Responsibilities.....	2
4. Monitoring and referral processes.....	3
5. Offering support and building resilience	3
6. Supporting staff who are working with students with mental health issues.....	4

1. Introduction

At Parmiter’s School we believe that it is essential to support students with their emotional well-being to enable them to reach their full potential. Improved mental health and wellbeing is associated with a range of better outcomes for people of all ages and backgrounds. These include improved physical health and life expectancy, better educational achievement, increased skills, reduced health risk behaviours such as smoking and alcohol misuse, reduced risk of mental health problems and suicide, improved employment rates and productivity, reduced anti-social behaviour and criminality, and higher levels of social interaction and participation.

It is estimated that 10% of all children aged 5-16 yrs experience mental health needs at some point. 50% of those with life-long mental health problems first experienced symptoms by the age of 14 years. 1 in 4 British adults experience at least one diagnosable mental health problem in any one year and 1 in 6 experience this at any given time.

As a school we understand that some mental health difficulties are temporary due to exceptional circumstances, while others reflect emerging longer term mental health illness

Definition of ‘mental health’ & ‘mental health difficulties’

Mental health can be defined as “the emotional and spiritual resilience which enables us to enjoy life and to survive pain, disappointment and sadness”.

For the purposes of this policy, the term “mental health difficulties “refers to:

- Long term mental illnesses or psychiatric conditions - which may be classified as a disability under the Equality Act.
- Emerging mental health problems which may develop into conditions which require ongoing support or intervention.
- Temporary debilitating mental health conditions or reactions which impact on a student’s ability to fulfil their academic potential.

There are a range of conditions which come under the umbrella term “mental health difficulties,” including anxiety, depression, eating disorders, bipolar mood disorder, schizophrenia (psychotic episodes), self harm, obsessive compulsive disorder, and many more, as diagnosed by a relevant medical practitioner.

As a school we understand that some mental health difficulties are temporary due to exceptional circumstances, while others reflect emerging longer term mental health illness

Many students will be able to cope with mental health problems with minimal support but others will need more intensive support.

2. Aims

The aims of this policy are to provide a clear, transparent and practical policy relating to mental health issues for students, staff, parents and carers.

The School aims to increase the level of awareness and understanding amongst staff and parents/carers of the issues involving the mental health of young people. We also aim to detect and address problems in their earliest stages and increase the level of support available to students with mental health issues in partnership with appropriate outside support agencies such as CAMHS.

This policy should be read and considered alongside the Child Protection Policy, the Single Equality Scheme and the Medical Policy. In addition, the Anti Bullying Policy and the SEN Policy have a bearing on this policy.

3. Responsibilities

The school has a responsibility to keep all students and staff safe – physically and emotionally - by offering an emotionally safe environment, free from discrimination, bullying or stigma.

The Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral) has overall responsibility for this policy. They will ensure that:

- The policy is kept under review and updated regularly
- Appropriate training will be organised for all staff
- Ensure that appropriate assessment and support measures are put in place where concerns are raised.

Responsibility of all staff:

- Contribute towards a non-stigmatising community
- Treat each student with a mental health difficulty as an individual, not a problem or a condition
- Take advantage of training and information sources
- Uphold confidentiality (wherever safety is not at risk)
- Recognise the limits to what they can do when supporting students

Responsibility of Students:

- Contribute towards a non-stigmatising community
- Recognise the limits to what they can do when supporting peers
- Ask for support either for themselves or for their peers
- Take advantage of the resources available

4. Monitoring and referral processes

We aim to detect and address problems in their earliest stages. There is a fine line between appropriate responsiveness and inappropriate intrusiveness into the personal lives of students and their families however all staff must respond to the well-being and welfare concerns of our students no matter what.

Any staff member concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a student should speak to the student's Form Tutor, who has daily contact with the student, to share their concerns. Form Tutors are well placed to spot changes in behaviour which may indicate a problem. The form tutor should in turn discuss the student with their Head of Year or Head of Key Stage.

Where a member of staff has significant concerns about the welfare of a student they should follow our usual safeguarding procedures and complete a 'Cause for Concern' form. If a member of staff is unsure about the level of risk to a student they should seek guidance from the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral).

If a student has self-harmed then staff should follow the normal procedures for medical emergencies, seeking advice from matron before reporting the incident to the Assistant Headteacher (Pastoral).

CPOMS is used as a means of keeping records of mental health concerns. This enables continuity of care as a student passes into a new Key Stage and is especially pertinent at KS4 to KS5 transition as the pastoral staff working with the student are likely to change.

5. Offering support and building resilience

Schools offer important opportunities to prevent mental health problems by promoting resilience. Providing students with inner resources that they can draw on as a buffer when negative or stressful things happen can help them to thrive even in the face of significant challenges. However these strategies do not work for all young people and for some they may not feel able to cope with their problems.

It is important when responding to students who are self-harming that you remain calm and non-judgemental.

You should not:

- Dismiss concerns or disclosures as insignificant, they may provide a vital link to other information
- Keep such concerns to themselves
- Promise secrecy to children or adults making disclosures but reassure them that information will be shared appropriately and confidentially.

Parmiter's School aims to increase the appropriate level of support available to students with mental health issues in partnership with outside health agencies and support groups. We are able to signpost and/or refer students, parents and carers to other agencies who support young people with mental health issues, including self-harm and eating disorders.

Support available includes, but is not exclusive to:

- Day to day support and guidance from Form Tutor and Head of Year
- Mentoring by a member of staff
- Personal Development curriculum focusing on preventative intervention and effective coping strategies including healthy living, positive relationships and peer support
- Support from Matron – UPS (Unconditional Positive Support)
- Access to school nurse for advice (6th Form students may self- refer via telephone)
- Outreach support delivered by Chessbrook ESC
- Use of DSPL9 Triage service for targeted advice
- Liaison with GP

- Liaison with YC Herts
- Liaison /referral to CAMHS for students requiring more intensive specialist support.
- Students reintegrating back into school after an episode/crisis or period of time off school may need a personalised learning programme. Where students require additional support to return to school we may refer to ESMA
- School has appointed an SEMH TA to work with KS3 and KS4 students who may be more vulnerable.

6. Supporting staff who are working with students with mental health issues

Parmiter's School acknowledges that staff who are working closely with distressed students can themselves be placed under emotional strain.

We aim to increase the level of awareness and understanding amongst staff of issues involving the mental health of young people, in particular concerns with self-harm and eating disorders.

Parmiter's School will provide a range of opportunities for staff to access training in dealing with students with mental health problems, including opportunities to talk with other specialist professionals working with students with recognised mental health issues.