



Mental Health and Well Being Policy

At Thomas Alleyne's High School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (students, 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.

Innovating today, educating for tomorrow.

Document History

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1. Policy Statement

At Thomas Alleyne's High School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (students, 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. It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and well-being influences their cognitive development and learning, as well as their physical and social health and their mental well-being in adulthood.

The department for Education recognises that in order to help their pupils succeed: schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy.

'Mental Health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community' (World Health Organisation, 2014)

At our school, we aim to promote positive mental health for every student, parent/carer and staff. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at identified vulnerable pupils and families.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. The latest statistics show that between the ages of 5 and 19 one in eight will have an identifiable mental health issue at any one time and rates of mental disorders increase with age.

The policy describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and well being and is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors. It should be read in conjunction with our SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need and the safeguarding policy in relation to prompt action and wider concerns of vulnerability. The policy is also linked to the sex and relationships policy and mental health topics are taught in the Thomas Character programme.

All staff should be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Education staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences, can impact on their mental health, behaviour, and education.

2. Ethos and Policy Purpose

We want Thomas Alleyne's to be a mentally healthy school so that staff and students achieve their personal best and are able to take every advantage of the opportunities presented to them.

This policy sets out:

- How we promote positive mental health.
- How we prevent mental health problems.
- How we identify and support children with mental health needs.
- How we train and support all staff to understand mental health issues and spot early warning signs to help prevent or address mental health problems
- Key information about some common mental health problems.
- Where parents, staff and children can get further advice and support N

Named Mental Health Lead: Helen Major

3. Teaching about Mental Health and Well Being

We believe that all staff have a responsibility to promote positive mental health, and to understand about protective and risk factors for mental health. Some children will require additional help and all staff should have the skills to look out for any early warning signs of mental health problems and ensure that children with mental health needs get early intervention and the support they need.

All staff understand about possible risk factors that might make some children more likely to experience problems, such as: physical long-term illness, having a parent who has a mental health problem, death and loss, including loss of friendships, family breakdown and bullying. They should also understand the factors that protect children from adversity, such as self-esteem, communication and problem-solving skills, a sense of worth and belonging and emotional literacy.

Departments highlight cross curricular links with their subject and positive mental health where possible e.g. making time in your day to do something you enjoy – reading, art, music drama, food technology - the link between diet and the effects on our mood, physical education – the release of endorphins following exercise/activity.

Mental Health and Wellness topics delivered in the Thomas Character Programme and in assemblies e.g. celebrating myself, mental health and revision, e-safety, social media, relationships, substance abuse and mental health.

4. Training of Staff

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 students safe. Updates are regularly distributed to our staff throughout the academic year, offering valuable support and guidance that can benefit our students.

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. Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Within the CPD offer there are also well-being sessions which staff can attend.

We will ensure that at least two staff members are trained as Mental Health First Aiders, with six staff members holding Level 3 Safeguarding training, and an additional seven staff members trained to Level 2 in Safeguarding. These trained staff will provide crucial support to students in need of mental health assistance.

5. Pupil Identification

Wellbeing measures including staff observations focusing on any changes in behaviour, attention and presentation will feed into the identification process, as well as any communication from the students regarding their emotions and feelings. Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing should log this information on the My Concern platform. If there is a fear that the child is in danger of immediate harm then a member of the safeguarding team will be alerted immediately. If the child presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies will be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary. We work closely with CAMHS workers, Mental Health in Schools team and YESS counselling service.

6. Staff Identification

It is recognised at Thomas Alleyne's that promoting staff health and emotional well-being should be an integral part of the whole staff approach to mental health and well-being. Therefore, training and signposting to materials to mental health and emotional well-being will be made available to all staff.

Documentation (electronic or paper) which staff can refer to. Held in school for reference containing informative advice about key factors understanding the importance of their own emotional well-being and where to go for additional support and advice.

An open-door policy to senior leadership is always available if staff are in need of speaking to someone about issues of concern and a fully committed supportive governing body. External counselling is available to any member of staff that feels that they need it. Appointments can be made through the headteacher.

7. Working with Parents and Carers

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 and weekly newsletter, Round Up.
- Ensure parents are aware of who they can talk to, and how to get the support they need if they have concerns about their own child or friend of their child.
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents and guardians via the school website
- Utilise, where appropriate, external speakers deliver information on mental health concerns and strategies
- Keep parents informed about mental health topics their children are learning about in the respect programme and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

8. School Provision and working with other agencies

Through our safeguarding board and pastoral system, referrals can be made to external agencies for individuals who need support for various ill mental health conditions. We would also recommend an appointment with a GP.

Agencies we refer to:

- Mental Health in School Team – who can work with students in school on low mood, behaviour difficulties, worry management, anxiety/avoidance e.g. simple phobias, separation anxiety, panic management, thought challenging – negative automatic thoughts, sleep hygiene.
- YESS
- Mental Health Support Team in Schools
- Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (they have set up a 24/7 urgent NHS mental health service providing telephone support, advice and triage for if you live in South Staffordshire: **0300 555 5001**)

Contact the Access Team at our Crisis Care Centre, any time of the day or night, every day and for any age on 0300 123 0907 (Option 1). If you have a hearing impairment and are unable to utilise the telephone, you can text the Access Team on 07739 775202 and the team will respond as soon as possible (please note: this text service is charged at your network provider's rate).

These phone lines will be staffed by CAMHS and Adult Mental Health workers and will therefore be able to support anyone, at any time, whatever their age. Both Trusts however suggest that where a child or young person is currently under the care of a CAMHS Team that, if possible, in the first instance, they contact the team directly to get support.

- Action for Children
- CAMHS

Whole School Mental Health Provision Map:

Wave One – Quality First Teaching

- A form tutor system that enables students to be with form tutors for 20 minutes each morning.
- Form time is also the time that students are educated, through the PSHE curriculum (RE-SPECT Programme now THOMAS character) on mental health awareness.
- Form rooms all have boards that signpost students to organisations supporting mental health, safeguarding and community projects.
- Clear and consistent behaviour system that challenges poor behaviour and regards good behaviour
- Celebration Assemblies
- Dedicated Pupil Welfare officers that are non-teaching
- Buddy system for new students or students that are struggling to build social groups
- Team building exercises in form time
- All staff are L1 safeguarding trained and we have regular CPD on recognising the signs of a young person that is struggling with mental health.
- Call out system and Time out cards for students that need to access pastoral and mental health support during lesson times
- Designated SEMH spaces including
- Mental Health support and advice is also sent out to parents via our weekly 'Parent News'.
- Health, safety and wellbeing policy
- Mental health and wellbeing policy
- Safeguarding model policy
- Support and supervision policy
- 2 staff are trained to provide Mental Health first aid.
- 1 teaching assistant is an SEMH specialist.

Wave Two – Guided/Group Intervention:

- Allies Club or students managing their gender identity sexuality or looking to build friendships.
- Designated safe spaces for children in school (Keeling House or Ross House) where small groups of students can eat lunch and socialise in less populated locations.
- GRIT Coaching
- YESS are a group of counsellors and well-being practitioners providing emotional support and opportunities for children, young people and adults. For PP students, this is funded for families from the PP budget. For students that are not PP, sessions have been funded via the pastoral budget. Some families have also privately funded these sessions.
- Supervision and counselling offered to all staff.
- PSP's to support emotional behaviour students.

Wave Three – Individual Support:

- Boxall Profile
- Entrust behaviour referrals
- Ed Psych consultations
- Risk assessments for in school and within the home as well as safety plans based on student's needs. These are implemented in collaboration with families, GP's, YESS, MHST and CAMHS where relevant and appropriate.
- Part time timetables or reduced curriculum timetables.
- TAHS also liaises and works in collaboration with CAMHS and acts on advice from CAMHS for any students to ensure that we are accommodating students under their supervision.
- TAHS accommodate students that are under the supervision of MHST, YESS and CAMHS by providing meeting spaces (face to face and virtual) to ensure they can attend their meetings in the school day.
- Mental Health Sessions delivered by Registered Member MBACP.

9. Monitoring and Evaluating

Weekly safeguarding board meetings are held to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions that have been put in place for individuals.

Delivery of materials in THOMAS Character lessons are reviewed in House team meetings. Staff are encouraged to share resources which have been well received and effective by their class.

Trends of My Concern cases are monitored using the My Concern reporting facility e.g. self-harm. These trends are reported termly to the trust by the DSL in school. The DSL is Helen Major.

Other policies to refer to:

- Supervision policy
- Safeguarding policy
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024

10. Guidance and Resources for Parents, Carers and Children

Beat

For parents and carers worried about their child's eating problems or disorder, they can refer to BEAT's advice, support and helpline (Tel: 0808 801 0677). [Get help for an eating disorder](#)

Chat Health

Text message service and app for young people and parents to ask for health and wellbeing advice [Chat Health](#)

The Mix.

Support for young people regarding self-harm including apps and tools, a one to one

chat option, telephone helpline and crisis messenger. [The Mix](#)

Papyrus

Papyrus (Prevention of Young Suicide), www.papyrus-uk.org provide confidential advice and support for young people who feel suicidal: HOPELineUK 0800 068 41 41; Text 07786 209 697; Email: pat@papyrus-uk.org [Papyrus](#)

Shout

Anyone in a crisis can also text 85258 for SHOUT, the UK's first 24/7 crisis text service (free on all major mobile networks, for anyone in crisis anytime) Shout [Shout: the UK's free, confidential and 24/7 mental health text service for crisis support | Shout 85258](#)

Stem4

Support for young people and free apps for them to use providing them with a range of ways to help manage anxiety and the urge to self-harm. [stem4 - supporting teenage mental health](#)

Time to Change

A selection of straightforward, tried and tested resources and free materials to get young people in school talking. The resources include 10- and 15-minute assembly plans, short activities including quizzes and conversation bingo together with resources for parents. [Time to Change](#)

University of Oxford Self-Harm Parent Guide

The University of Oxford have also produced a guide for parents and carers to support their child or young person in dealing with self-harm. [Parent/Carer guide on self-harm](#)

The Dove Project

Provides bereavement and loss counselling in North Staffordshire for children aged 4 and above.

[Bereavement Counselling and Support | The Dove Service](#)

Winston's wish

A childhood bereavement charity which works with children who have experienced the death of a parent or sibling. [Winston's Wish - Bereavement Support for Children](#)

Young Minds

Provide a wide range of mental health support for young people, which includes bereavement support
Young Minds Bereavement Support

11. Exam and Results Stress

Background

Researchers at the University of Manchester have recently completed an investigation into suicide in children and young people, funded by the Healthcare Quality Improvement Partnership. This is the first-time experts have studied the contributory factors to suicide in people under 25 on a large scale. The full report was published in May 2016 and can be downloaded on:

<http://www.bbmh.manchester.ac.uk/cmhs/research/centreforsuicideprevention/nci/>

The findings of the study showed that for young people who committed suicide between January 2014 and April 2015:

- 36% had a physical health condition such as acne or asthma
- 29% were facing exams or exam results
- 28% had been bereaved
- 22% had been bullied, mostly face to face

With respect to the impact of exams, the study identified that four young people died on the day of an exam or the day after.

The report, the first stage in a UK-wide analysis of suicides in people aged under 25, identified warning signs in some cases, and highlighted the need for proper support to be made available for children and young people at risk.

In response, the Samaritans head of external affairs, Jacqui Morrissey, said: "From the report, Samaritans is concerned that in the majority of cases there were clear warning signs that the young person was struggling to cope."

She added: "The message is clear, we need to make sure that the right support is in place for all young people, that all parents, carers and teachers understand about suicide risk and that young people are equipped to look after their emotional well-being before life's pressures become overwhelming."

Brian Dow, from Rethink Mental Illness commented, "The report sends a strong message that mental health services for young people need to improve. We must redouble our efforts to support children and young people and ensure that they are getting the help they need."

HOPELine UK, is a confidential support and advice service for young people who may be having thoughts of suicide. They have seen a large rise in contacts from young people and parents in recent years, quadrupling since 2013. It reports that most of the calls, texts and emails it receives relate to exam stress.

Best Practice Guidelines

Staffordshire County Council has drawn up the following guidelines for educational settings. Schools already promote good mental health. This advice should be used to ensure children

and young people receive the best possible support, especially during periods of exam-related stress. This is especially important in years 10 to 13, but is relevant for younger pupils, including those in primary settings completing SATs and other assessments.

Reducing Exam Stress

School staff have a responsibility to support all pupils in preparing for exams and managing anxiety associated with the assessment process. This can be achieved through helping pupils to:

- To identify factors that give rise to stress
- To identify the signs of stress
- To identify practical strategies for dealing with stress and promoting student resilience and well-being

Schools should consider providing some or all of the following:

- assemblies or pastoral support sessions to address stress management, time management, self-organisation, exam planning, health lifestyle and developing personal resilience
- practical guidance on exam and results arrangements,
- drop in sessions, pastoral or counselling support or access to nurture groups for pupils at risk
- workshop events
- training for staff in recognising the signs of stress and providing guidance on promoting resilience.
- guidance and advice to parents on supporting their children through the assessment process, especially in primary settings
- ensuring working conditions in exam rooms are suitable, including making water available
- for pupils with SEND, ensuring access arrangements are confirmed in good time, allowing pupils to work with designated readers / scribes prior to the actual exams and making visual timetables available if required

The Educational Psychology Service can provide further advice, guidance and training to school staff in managing exam stress

Providing Feedback on Results

All staff meeting with pupils to discuss exam results, and the implications for future study, should take account of their knowledge of the young person and personalise the interview as required.

Parents / carers should be informed that interviews will be taking place and given the opportunity to attend with the student.

School leadership teams should ensure that adequate numbers of staff, including teachers, counsellors and careers guidance personnel are available. In addition, appropriate facilities for confidential interviews should be provided, and a single point of contact for concerns or follow up should be identified.

Students should not attend interviews and then leave the school premises immediately. This allows a period for informal monitoring of reactions to results feedback.

Staff completing interviews should be provided with the following guidance in advance of any individual interviews:

- Teachers delivering post examination feedback should be aware of the potential 'warning signs' that may be evident in a student's behaviour, thus recognising when an interview needs to be suspended, a student afforded a private 'break out' room or be provided with access to an impartial counsellor.
- Similarly, teachers need to be alert to the need to contact a student's parents immediately if a student becomes very upset
- Teachers (subject teachers or otherwise) should be aware of how to deal with post examination email communication with students. If relevant, this should be discussed in the post examination interview
- Sufficient time should be set aside for post examination interviews. Five-minute slots provide insufficient quality time for students and staff. Over running due to tight time-scales may create additional stress which could lead to a teacher's judgment being impaired.
- Consider carrying out the interviews with 2 teachers, where at least one of the teachers knows (has regularly taught) the student. This provides a greater chance of recognising unusual or strange behaviour in a student which is out of character. Appropriate action can then be taken to ensure their safety.
- Where a student is strongly resisting continuing with a recommended subject and this recommendation is causing the student severe distress, teachers must provide the opportunity for discussion with another adult
- Teachers should not issue timetables for the next academic year to a student, unless the student is in full agreement with the recommendations at that time. This leaves open the opportunity for choice and reflection.

Getting Help

There are organisations that offer support and advice for teenagers who self-harm and may be feeling suicidal, as well as their friends and families.

These include:

- Samaritans – call 116 123 (open 24 hours a day), email: jo@samaritans.org or visit your local Samaritans branch
- Mind – call 0300 123 3393 or text 86463 (9am to 6pm on weekdays)
- Harmless – email info@harmless.org.uk
- National Self Harm Network forums
- YoungMinds Parents Helpline – call 0808 802 5544 (9.30am to 4pm on weekdays)
- HOPELine UK call 0800 068 41 41

In addition, resources for teachers are available via a range of websites, as follows:

- <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2013/jun/10/meditation-mindfulness-schools-stress-calming-classrooms>
- <https://mindfulnessinschools.org/>
- <http://www.breathingspacelondon.org.uk/mindfulness-for-schools/>
- <http://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/fitness/Pages/yoga.aspx>
- <http://www.schoolwellbeing.co.uk/resources>
- <https://www.minded.org.uk/>
- <http://www.teachingideas.co.uk/emotions/worry-box>
- <http://www.twinkl.co.uk/resource/T-CR-29762-worry-box>
- <http://www.assemblies.org.uk/pri/360/a-worry-shared>
- <http://www.ledbury.hereford.sch.uk/values-based-education/>

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/380595/SMSC_Guidance_Maintained_Schools.pdf