

### **Student Mental Wellbeing Policy**

At Balance Alternative Provision the aim is to promote positive mental health for all students and staff. We use a mix of whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at individual students. It is important to us that we help you to:

- Learn how to look after your own positive mental health
- Increase your understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Recognise early warning signs of mental ill health
- Providing support to staff working with young people with mental health difficulties
- Promoting physical activity and resilience

Any member of staff who are worried about your mental health or wellbeing will talk to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a worry that you are in danger of immediate harm then our safeguarding procedures will be followed. If there is a medical emergency then we will follow the normal procedures for medical emergencies, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

#### **Teaching You About Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding you need to keep yourself and others physically and mentally safe and healthy are included as part of our PSHE curriculum.

We will help you to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language, and confidence to seek help for yourself and others. We invite specialist speakers into school and take you on visits to help improve your understanding.

As a school we will offer you opportunities to talk and think about mental health and well-being issues. This may be at an individual, group or whole school level.

#### **Helping You Get Help**

We will make sure that you are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. Our displays around school will have relevant sources of support and will regularly highlight sources of support for you. We will help you 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**

School staff will look out for your mental health by being aware of possible warning signs including changes in your behaviour and mood, absence from school, secretive behaviour, the way you talk about how you feel.

When You Talk to us About Your Mental Health we are here to help you. When you talk to us about your own mental health or that of a friend, the member of staff's response will always be calm, supportive, and non-judgemental.

Staff will listen rather than advise and our first thoughts will be about your emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?.'

### Confidentiality

We will always be honest with you about confidentiality. We cannot and will not keep a secret. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about you on, then we will talk to you about:

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

Ideally you will give us your agreement to share the information, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. We will not gossip about you or treat you differently.

### Supporting Each Other

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support and may not know how.

Additionally, we will want to highlight with your friends:

- 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

### Working with parents / carers

Where it is deemed appropriate to talk to your parents / carers, we will be considerate and sensitive in our approach. Before talking to parents / carers we will consider the following questions:

- Can we have a face-to-face meeting with the parent/carers?
- Where should the meeting take place? At school, at the home address or somewhere neutral such as head office.
- Who should be present? Consider parents / carers, the pupil, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?
- We also need to consider staff safety concerns.

This can be an upsetting time for parents / carers to learn of pupil's difficulties and may respond in

anger, fear and may become upset in the conversation. We are accepting of this and acknowledge this (within reason) and give time to parent / carer / pupil time to reflect.

#### Working with all parents /carers.

Parents / carers are often very welcoming of support and information from school about supporting the needs of their children's mental health and well-being. In order to support we, as school, will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health difficulties on the school website;
- Ensure that all parents / carers are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or other pupils within the school;
- Make our Mental health and well-being policy easily accessible to parents / carers;
- Share ideas about how parents / carers can support positive mental health and well-being through their children.

#### Training

We have a number of staff who have undertaken the mental health first aid training and as new staff arrive they are given training opportunities on understanding mental health issues and how best to support you and your needs.

#### Policy Review

All the adults in school think that your health, safety, and welfare are very important. Safeguarding is everything we do in school to keep you safe from harm.

This policy is to help you decide what could be a problem and where to get help and support. Sometimes we will spot that you need help even if you think you don't need support.

At Balance Alternative Provision we show respect students and adults and help to protect their rights. Our safeguarding lead is Andy Dean.

- We provide a safe environment for you to learn in.
- We get to know you and your family well so that we can understand how to support you.
- We teach you how to recognise risks in different situations, and how to protect yourselves and stay safe.
- We help to make sure that you remain safe, at home as well as at school. We give you a safe space to talk about what is going on in your life.
- We have skilled staff who are trained to recognise signs that might be a cause for concern. We can get you the right support you and your family need.
- We have displays around school with phone numbers and websites where you can get help.

#### When Might You Need Help?

If someone in your family or at school is hurting you. This might be physically or emotionally. If someone in your family or at school says horrible things to you that makes you feel sad. If you feel that you are being bullied. If you feel that you want to hurt yourself. You can talk to any adult in the provision if you need to, just tell them.

If we notice a change in your behaviour or appearance that suggests something is not quite right.

If you are at risk because of substance misuse. If you are at risk of sexual exploitation.

### What Do We Do to Get You Help?

We will talk to your parent/carers. Depending on the situation we might provide you with support at school.

If it is more serious, we will contact the Children's Services Duty and Advice Team. They might give us advice, or they might need to visit your family. We will keep you up to date with what is happening.

### How Can You Help Yourself?

You can talk to staff before a problem gets too big.

You can contact Childline yourself on 0800 1111

You can contact the Police by calling 101

Here you will find links to advice and guidance from professional organisations that support Mental Health in young people and adults.

Organisations that can help you:

- Kooth
- Samaritans
- Barnardos
- Addaction
- Exams Stress
- Bullying Issues
- Bereavement
- Transgender
- Anna Freud Centre
- Action for Happiness
- Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools
- ChildLine
- STEM4
- Early Intervention Foundation
- Department of Health
- [Rethink Mental Illness](#)
- The Royal College of Psychiatrists
- Time to Change
- The Association for Young People's Health (AYPH)
- Mental Health Foundation
- MindEd
- Wellness Recovery Action Planning (WRAP)
- NHS Choices

### ***Suicidal Crisis***

- Mind
- Samaritans
- Charlie Waller Memorial Trust
- Stamp Out Suicide
- Students Against Depression
- Parent's Helpline – YoungMinds
- ASIST (Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training)
- CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)
- Young Health Talk/Health Talk
- Cruse Bereavement Care
- PAPYRUS (Parents Association for the Prevention of Young Suicide)
- Survivors of Bereavement by Suicide
- Grassroots
- Action For Happiness
- Childline
- Supporting a Child or Young Person
- Are you worried about a young child?
- A young person's guide to managing difficult feelings
- Managing difficult feelings
- Prevention of young suicide
- HOW TO MAKE A 'HOPE/CRISIS BOX'
- Communicating with young people
- Grassroots Suicide Prevention
- Stay Alive App
- Resources
- Kooth
- Anna Freud – National Centre for children and families
- Youth Wellbeing Directory
- Supporting health and wellbeing in schools booklets
- We all have mental health animation
- Young Minds
- Action For Happiness
- Action For Happiness App