



Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

September 2021

Review Date	By whom	Summary of changes made	Date implemented
September 2021	Keir Mather	Updated services available	September 2021

Date of next review: September 2022 or before in line with any changes to legislation and guidance.

Policy statement

At Da Vinci Academy we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows students' voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Da Vinci Academy's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from all staff that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

Key staff members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of students, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

Keir Mather – Designated Lead for Mental Health & Wellbeing

Laura Hinman – Designated Governor for Mental Health & Wellbeing

Sophie McKenzie - SENDCo

Karen Thompson – Mental Health first aider

Fran Cowling – School Counsellor

Sarah Wells & Steph Downing – School Health

All students have access to a form tutor on a daily basis; the tutor team is supported by a teaching Achievement Leader (AL) and non-teaching Assistant Achievement Leader (AAL)

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of student, in the first instance they should speak to the (***Keir Mather and/or Karen Thompson***).

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's safeguarding policy and procedures must be followed, this includes the completion of a referral on My Concern.

If the child presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

Teaching about mental health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our tutor programme (Character). The importance of being mentally well is also discussed across the curriculum and is highlighted within our safeguarding curriculum map. Additional time is also allowed within the curriculum for the delivery of AT MY BEST in Year 7 (1 hour per week) and Year 8 (1 hour per week).

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards, staffroom, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure students understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why should they access it
- What is likely to happen next

Sources or support at school and in the local community

Additional signposting to external agencies can be found on the school website.

What support is available?	Who is it suitable for?	How is it accessed?	Where can you find additional information?
Pastoral Support	All students	Support can be accessed by speaking to your/your child's form tutor or a member of the achievement team	Additional information about who the achievement team are can be found on the school website and around the school
Mental Health First Aid	All students	Support can be accessed by speaking to any member of staff who will then signpost you to our mental health first aider Karen Thompson.	Karen can be found in the safeguarding office. Karen's picture is displayed in every classroom and on the school website.
School Counsellor (Fran Cowling)	All students	If you feel you/your child would benefit from counselling you should approach a member of	Please contact Keir Mather for additional information. 01332 831515

		school staff. All referrals are managed by the Designated Lead for Mental Health – Keir Mather	
Kooth	All students	Kooth is a free online counselling service. A link to the Kooth website can be found on the school website.	More information can be obtained from Keir Mather. Kooth also attend some of DVAs parent’s evenings.
School Health Support	All students	Students can access support from the school nurse in two ways. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Attending the health hub drop in (every Wednesday lunch) 2. A referral completed by the safeguarding team 	Please contact Keir Mather or Karen Thompson for additional information. Pictures of the school health team can be found on the school website.
CAMHS	All students	CAMHS can be accessed in two ways <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In a crisis situation –e.g. suicidal thoughts the school recommends students go to A+E, here they will be accessed by CAMHS 2. Through SPOA (Single point of access), this can be completed by school staff in conjunction with parents and carers. 	Please contact your/your child’s achievement or assistant achievement leader for additional information. CAMHS can also be accessed through the GP.
Educational Psychologist	All students	A referral to the Educational Psychologist will come through the schools SEND department.	Please contact our SENDCo – Mrs Sophie McKenzie for additional information
Changing Lives – Action for Children	All students	Parents and school staff can complete a referral to building sound minds for intervention.	Please contact Keir Mather or Karen Thompson for additional information
Early Help Offer – Time for boys/girls	All students	A six week intervention programme available for students with low self-esteem. It is accessed through a referral completed by the safeguarding team.	Please contact Keir Mather or Karen Thompson for additional information

Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student 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 alert (Keir Mather and Karen Thompson via My Concern).

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of 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

Targeted support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with school nurses and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working closely with Derby Children’s Services, CAMHS and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;
- Identifying and assessing in line with the Early Help Assessment (EHA), children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers.
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, According to the child’s needs;
- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality;

- Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it

Managing disclosures

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

All disclosures should be recorded on my concern without delay.

Confidentiality

The emotional and physical safety of our children is paramount and staff listen rather than advise. Staff make it clear to students that the concern will be shared with the Safeguarding Team and recorded, in order to provide appropriate support to the student.

Whole school approach

Working with parents/carers

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the phone call/meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Supporting parents

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems;

- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.);
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. Parents have access to information on the school website.
- Free online counselling is also available to parents and carers through Qwell, a link to the website can be found on the school website.

Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the student 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 needs help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, 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 students safe. A nominated member of staff will receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent. The mental health first aider at Da Vinci Academy is **Karen Thompson**.

Our website will contain relevant information for staff and parents who wish to learn more about mental health.

Training opportunities for staff that 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 developing situations with one or more students.

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.

Supporting and promoting the mental health and wellbeing of staff is an essential component of a healthy school and we promote opportunities to maintain a healthy work life balance and wellbeing, taking part in staff activities and fitness groups. Staff also have access to Employee Assistance Programme where they can access 24/7 support and counselling.

Website Links

[ChildLine](#)

[Mind](#)

[NSPCC](#)

[Mentally Healthy Schools](#)

[NHS](#)

[Kids Helpline](#)

[Qwell - Online counselling for parents/carers \(Adults\)](#)

[Head Space](#)

[Building Sound Minds](#)

[Hub of Hope](#)

[Anna Freud Centre](#)

[Kooth - Free Online Counselling](#)

[Zumos](#)

[Young Minds](#)

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is **September 2022**.

In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes.

This is the responsibility of **Keir Mather – Designated Leader for Mental Health**.