



## WATERSIDE ACADEMY

### MENTAL HEALTH POLICY 2024-2025

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#### Policy Details

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<b>Status:</b>	<b>In-house</b>
<b>Frequency of review:</b>	<b>Annual</b>
<b>Lead member of staff:</b>	<b>Stephanie Larner</b>
<b>Last reviewed:</b>	<b>November 2024</b>
<b>Next Review Date:</b>	<b>November 2025</b>

#### Introduction

At Waterside Academy, we are committed to fostering the mental and physical health of all students and staff. This policy outlines our approach to promoting wellbeing, identifying

and supporting mental health concerns, and ensuring compliance with UK legislation on wellbeing in schools. Our mental health lead is **Ms. Sarah Jane Littler**, overseen by **Ms. Steph Larner**, Assistant Headteacher. The safeguarding leads are **Mrs. Kathy Johnson** and **Ms Dawn Hill**.

We provide support to students through Emotional Literacy Support Assistants (ELSA) and behaviour support teaching assistants during the school day. For external support, students may access the Mental Health Support Team (MHST), the School Nurse, Venus, Change Grow Live (CGL), and many other agencies. Staff can seek assistance via Occupational Health through **The School Business Manager**. In immediate cases of safety concerns, individuals should be taken to **A&E** without delay.

### **What Do We Mean by Mental Health?**

Mental health is how we think, feel, and act. Good mental health enables individuals to:

- Develop psychologically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually.
- Build and sustain satisfying relationships.
- Enjoy solitude and empathize with others.
- Navigate challenges and learn from setbacks.

Evidence shows that children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) have experienced heightened mental health challenges, especially post-pandemic. Supporting these students remains a core priority.

### **Policy Statement**

Waterside Academy actively promotes the mental and physical wellbeing of its community through the following:

- A robust PSHE curriculum focusing on resilience and self-care.
- Access to structured physical activity to enhance emotional health.
- Dedicated mental health education for students, staff, and parents.

We promote these ten principles for good mental health:

1. Proper sleep patterns.
2. Regular exercise.
3. Healthy, balanced meals.
4. Time for relaxation.
5. Emotional resilience and self-acceptance.
6. A sense of humour.
7. Clear personal boundaries.
8. Acts of kindness.
9. Outdoor activity.
10. Maintaining perspective.

### **Aims**

This policy aims to:

- Increase awareness and understanding of mental health issues.

- Provide early intervention to support individuals experiencing mental health challenges.
  - Equip staff with tools to recognize and address warning signs and risk factors.
  - Offer clear support pathways for students, staff, and parents.
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## **Responsibilities**

### **Safeguarding**

Waterside Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting students' welfare, including mental health. All concerns are handled under the guidance of **Mrs. Kathy Johnson and Ms Dawn Hill**, the safeguarding leads in partnership with the wider safeguarding team.

### **Governing Body**

The Governing Body ensures safeguarding policies, including those related to mental health, are regularly reviewed and effectively implemented.

### **Leadership**

The Headteacher ensures the daily adherence to this policy and the integration of mental health into school practices.

### **Staff**

All staff have a duty of care to recognize and address signs of mental health difficulties and distress. New staff are trained on the academy's mental health support systems during their induction.

### **Parents**

Parents are expected to inform the Safeguarding Officer about any concerns regarding their child's mental health or family circumstances affecting wellbeing.

## **Signs and Symptoms of Mental Health Concerns**

Staff are trained to recognize signs of:

- Anxiety and depression.
- Eating disorders.
- Self-harm.

Procedures for addressing these concerns are detailed in the **Appendices I-III**.

## **Procedures for Addressing Mental Health Concerns**

### **ASK, ASSESS, ACT**

1. **Ask** the individual what support they need.
2. **Assess** the risk of harm to self or others.

3. **Act** to mitigate risks and seek additional support.

### **Escalation Pathways**

- **High Risk:** Report immediately to the Safeguarding Team. Actions may include referrals to CAMHS, Early Help Assessment, or professional intervention.
- **Low Risk:** Monitor the student through tiered support strategies in school.

### **Confidentiality**

While maintaining confidentiality, staff must disclose concerns that pose significant risks to others to safeguarding officers.

### **Support and Reintegration**

#### **Students**

- Access to ELSA, behaviour support, and external services.
- Tailored **Risk Assessments** and **Transition Plans** created collaboratively with families and professionals for reintegration after absences.

#### **Staff**

- Access to Occupational Health through Elaine Oliver.
- Support for managing challenging cases via senior leadership and peer collaboration.

### **Mental Health First Aid**

The academy ensures that:

- All pastoral staff are trained in mental health first aid.
- Adequate staff are available to provide first aid and referrals.
- All safeguarding and mental health concerns are recorded in **CPOMS**.

### **Absence Management**

For prolonged student absences, the school provides:

- Remote learning through Google Classroom.
- Individualized support plans developed with healthcare professionals.

### **Promoting a Culture of Wellbeing**

We address stigma through:

- Workshops and assemblies.
- Staff CPD sessions.
- Parent information evenings.

The school community works collaboratively to build an environment where mental health is openly discussed, and help is readily accessible.