

Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Introduction

At Leicester Community Academy 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.

Leicester Community Academy - (The charity Leicester Educational Trust runs the school Leicester Community Academy)

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.

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 Equality Policy and the Medical Policy. In addition the Anti Bullying Policy and the SEN Policy have a bearing on this policy.

Responsibilities

The Head Teachers have overall responsibility for this policy. They will ensure that:

- The policy is kept under review and updated annually in the first instance.
- Appropriate training will be organised for all staff.

Leicester Community Academy - (The charity Leicester Educational Trust runs the school Leicester Community Academy)

- Students and staff are encouraged to bring to the attention of relevant staff any mental health difficulties so that appropriate support measures can be put in place.

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

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 e.g. those on the VLE

Building Resilience and Offering Support for students

Support can be provided in a number of ways including but not limited to:

- Day to Day support and guidance from Form Tutor and Head Teacher.
- Mentoring by a member of staff.

Leicester Community Academy - (The charity Leicester Educational Trust runs the school Leicester Community Academy)

- Life Skills / Sex and Relationships Education (SRE) / and Resilience curriculum focusing on preventative intervention and effective coping strategies including healthy living, positive relationships and peer support.
- Liaison with GP.
- Liaison with Youth Connexions.
- Liaison / referral to CAMHS for students requiring more intensive specialist support.

Students that are reintegrating back into school after an episode / crisis or period of time off school may need a personalised learning programme. Some students with severe mental health needs may not be able to attend school on a full-time basis. ESTMA may need to be involved.

The Process of Referral

All staff concerned with the mental health and well - being of a student should in the first instance speak to the student's Form Tutor as they have daily contact with the student. The Head Teacher will be informed and the student will be supported and monitored in the most appropriate way. Each case will be assessed individually to offer a personalised response. Parents will be contacted. There will be close liaison between the Head Teacher, Form Tutor, key members of staff and the family.

If any member of staff feels that the student is in immediate danger of harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed.

If a student has seriously self - harmed then appropriate first aid should be given immediately.

Students may self - refer by contacting the member of staff with whom they feel most comfortable. Contact will then be made with the Head Teacher.

Supporting Staff and Students Working With Students with Mental Health Issues

Leicester Community Academy acknowledges that staff and students who are working closely with or supporting distressed

Leicester Community Academy - (The charity Leicester Educational Trust runs the school Leicester Community Academy)

students exhibiting a range of mental health issues can themselves be placed under emotional strain.

Support will be provided to all who request it in terms of management supervision with any middle or senior leader in the school that is deemed appropriate.

The school will seek to provide a range of opportunities for staff to access training in dealing with students with mental health problems.

Reviewed: December 2017

Next Review: December 2018