



RUSHEY MEAD ACADEMY

## **Pupil Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy**

## Policy Monitoring, Evaluation and Review

The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the academy. The Academy Council will review the policy annually, unless there are significant legislative changes in the interim period.

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## 1. Policy statement

At Rushey Mead Academy we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of students, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to her or his community. (World Health Organization)

Rushey Mead Academy is passionate about making a difference to the lives of young people. We believe in #TogetherStronger; working with each other, with teachers, colleagues across the school and external agencies, as well as the wider school community and most importantly with the young people in our school. We act with determination and are pro-active in the promotion of positive mental health. Whatever issues our students, their families, the school, our team, or the community face, we always support, react, and pull together. Finally, we are committed to making a positive difference; we are not passive players in young people's lives but active participants who can and do make a real difference. This is reflected in many areas of the school's curriculum as well as other events organised in school. Students are empowered to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language, and confidence to seek help, for themselves or others when needed. RMA staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and available to them within the community. Relevant sources of support are displayed and communicated via newsletters and on our school website.

Our intent statement and core values, support our students to become "knowledgeable, critical, enriched and well poised to lead fulfilling lives".

## 2. Scope

This policy is intended to:

- Provide guidance to school staff on our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across all communities in the school
- Inform students and parents about the support that they can expect from the school in respect of supporting mental health and wellbeing
- Read this policy in conjunction with:
  - SEND Policy
  - Behaviour Policy
  - Anti-Bullying Policy
  - Safeguarding Policy

## 3. Policy aims

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school
- Create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion
- Foster a positive atmosphere in school, where students feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly
- Celebrate all the ways students achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom
- Allow students to participate in forming our approach to mental health by promoting pupil voice
- Give students the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Spread awareness of the varieties of ways mental health issues can manifest
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Provide support to staff working with students with mental health issues
- Provide support and access to resources to students experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them

At Rushey Mead Academy, we will always:

- Help children to understand their emotions and experiences better.
- Ensure our students feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries.
- Help children to form and maintain relationships.
- Encourage children to be confident and help to promote their self-esteem.
- Help children to develop resilience and ways of coping with setback.
- Help students understand how to look after their mental health.

We will always promote a healthy environment by:

- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all students and staff.
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements.
- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect.
- Promoting our students' voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making.
- Celebrating each student for who they are and making every student feel valued and respected.
- Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and providing support to any student that needs it.
- Raising awareness amongst staff and students about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms.
- Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of ill mental health in students.
- Supporting staff with caring for their mental health.

## 4. Legal basis

This policy was written with regard to:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

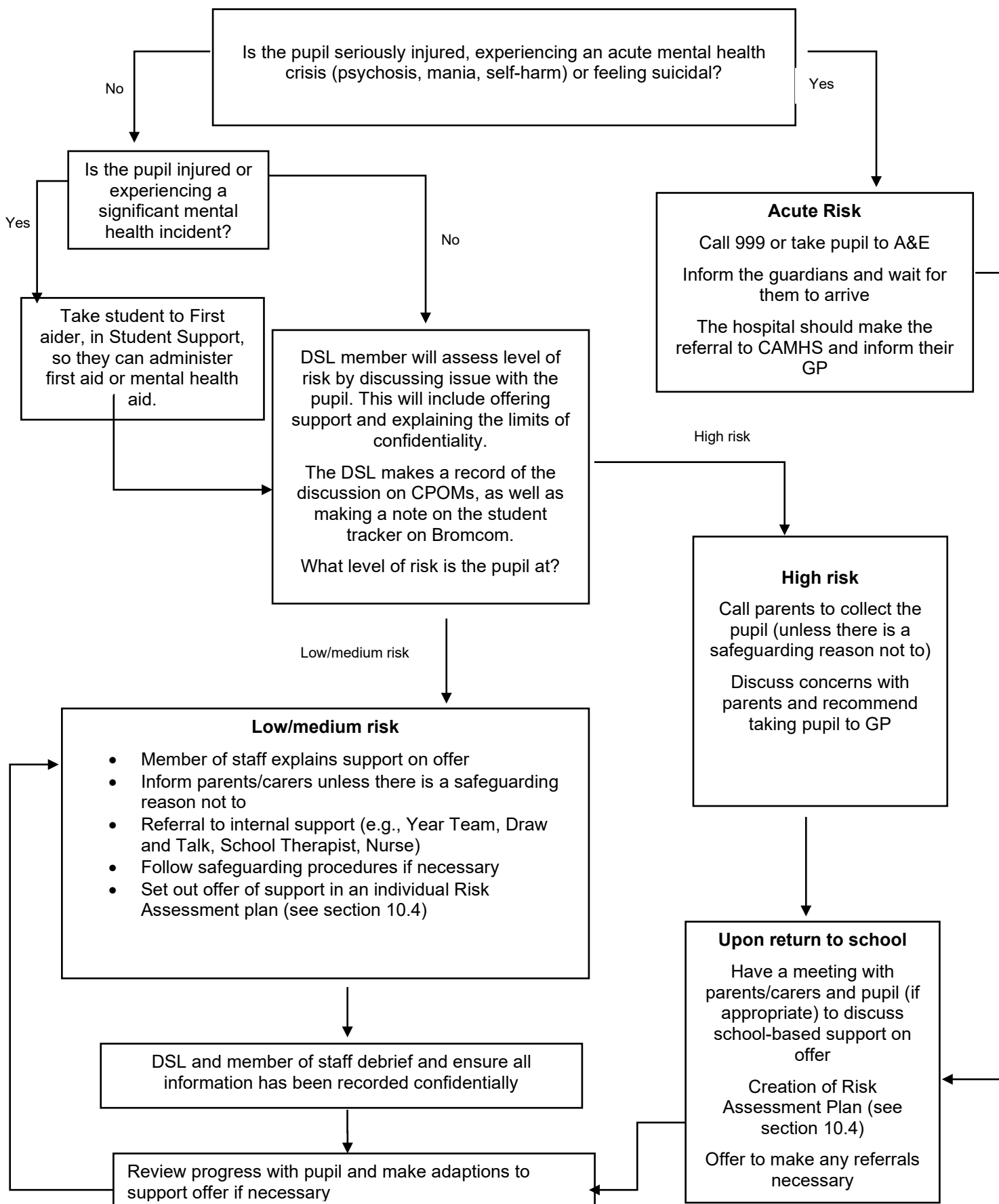
## **5. Roles and responsibilities**

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the DSL and Mental Health Lead.

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Principal
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Special Educational Needs Co-Ordinator
- Mental Health Lead
- Designated Child Protection Officer
- School Therapist
- Assistant Heads of Year

## 6. Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



## 7. Warning signs

All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in mood or energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

## 8. Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental, and reassuring.

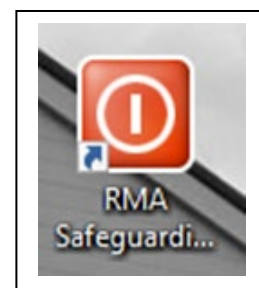
Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding policy and complete a Safeguarding referral form by clicking the icon. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file.

When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

- Date the form is being completed
- The full name of the pupil(s) involved
- Year and tutor group of pupil(s)
- The date, time and location of the disclosure
- The context in which the disclosure was made
- Details of any witnesses/Linked students
- Any actions taken so far

Please see further Disclosure information in the Safeguarding Policy, Appendix 2.





## 9. Confidentiality

- Staff should not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret, instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.
- A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:
  - Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing
  - The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school
  - Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question
- Staff should always share disclosures with at least one appropriate colleague. This will usually be the DSL. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.
- Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:
  - Who they will share the information with
  - What information they will share
  - Why they need to share that information
- Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.
- Parents will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the Safeguarding Policy will be followed.

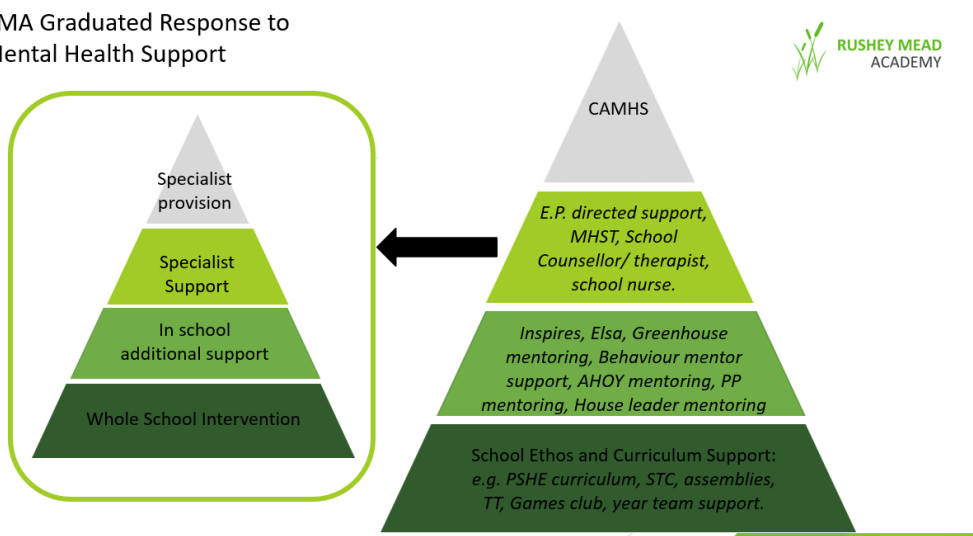
## 10. Supporting students

### 10.1 Baseline support for all students

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all students, the school offers support to all students by:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, tutor time, PSHE, STC and mental health awareness day/ week
- Signposting all students to sources of online support on the school website
- Monitoring of all pupil's mental health through assessments e.g., strengths and difficulties questionnaire
- Offering support through the senior mental health lead who has a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Offering pastoral support through the Team around the Year
- Offering support through the School Therapist

RMA Graduated Response to Mental Health Support



### 10.2 Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the Mental Health Lead will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to making an assessment and providing tailored support, further to the provision of the baseline support as detailed in section 10.1. The school will offer support in cycles of:

- Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are
- Creating a plan to provide support
- Taking the actions set out in the plan

### **10.3 Internal mental health interventions**

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

- 1:1 mentoring
- Draw and Talk sessions
- Reduced timetables
- Time out passes
- School Therapist sessions
- School Nurse sessions
- Meet/ Greet
- Use of the restoration room
- Home visits
- Support to attend appointments where deemed necessary
- Working with crisis team to ensure adequate support
- Youth Mental Health First Aiders
- Senior Mental Health Lead

### **10.4 Individual Risk Assessment plan**

A pupil will be offered an individual Risk Assessment plan if they are deemed at risk.

Risk Assessment Plans are written in collaboration with the pupil (if appropriate), their parent/carer, and any other relevant professionals.

The pupil's Risk Assessment plan will contain the following details:

- The mental health issue (and its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments)
- The pupil's needs resulting from the condition
- Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs
- The level of support needed
- Who will provide the support
- Who in the school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

## 10.5 Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer the school provides, the school will make, or encourage parents to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- GP or pediatrician
- CAMHS
- Mental health charities (e.g. [Samaritans](#), [Mind](#), [Young Minds](#), [Kooth](#))
- Local counselling services
- Early Help

## 11. Supporting and collaborating with parents and carers

We will work with parents and carers to support students' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g., parent forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face to face.

These meetings can be difficult, so the school will ensure that parents are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record.

If appropriate, an individual safety plan will be created in collaboration with parents/carers (see section 10.4).

## 12. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be extremely challenging for students. Students may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all students impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

## 13. Signposting

Sources of support will be displayed around the school and linked to on the school website, so students and parents are aware of how they can get help.

The Senior Mental Health Lead will be available to provide further information to students and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

This will be done by:

- Signposting support at the end of each PSHE lesson
- Signposting support during/ end of assemblies
- Signposting support in STC
- Signposting support on school's social media pages
- Signposting support in Tutor time
- Signposting support schools website
- Signposting support via posters around the school, as well as in the toilets/ Year team offices/ DSL office

## 14. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

### 14.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE

We will follow the [PSHE Association Guidance teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing](#).

Students will be taught to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Keep themselves safe

For more information, see our PSHE curriculum.

## **14.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health**

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with students in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging students to disclose when they think their mental health is deteriorating

## **15. Training**

All staff will be offered training so they:

- Have a good understanding of what students' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help
- Designated staff will have further training on Mental Health First Aid
- Designated staff will have further training on Youth Mental Health First Aid

## **16. Support for staff**

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can be distressing for staff. To combat this, we will:

- Hold up to date training to ensure all staff members are confident in supporting a child's mental health. Including weekly staff briefings, handouts, drops in and whole school training.
- Support staff in looking after their own mental health through Mental Health First Aiders and VIVUP counselling referrals
- Provide a safe space for staff to encourage wellbeing for staff.
- Hold wellbeing committee meetings to look together at strategies to help mental health

## **17. Monitoring arrangements**

This policy will be reviewed by the Mental Health Lead. At every review, the policy will be approved by the Principal of the school.

There will also be an Academy Councillor monitoring visit on Mental Health during the summer term.