# Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

*This policy has been approved by the Board of Trustees with reference to the academy's Equality Policy. The aims of the Equality Policy are to ensure that Plume Academy meets the needs of all, taking account of gender, gender identity, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in this academy we meet the diverse needs of students to ensure inclusion for all and that all students are prepared for full participation in a multi-ethnic society.*

| Authors: | Ratified by Board of Trustees: |
|---|---|
| Whole Academy Mental Health Champion Inclusion Lead | December 2024 |
| **Last Reviewed:** October 2024 | **Next Review:** October 2026 |

# Contents

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Mental health and wellbeing is an important part of the pastoral care of our whole community – this includes our students, staff and parents and carers as part of the Plume Family.

Those experiencing mental health difficulties should not face discrimination and the academy are committed to helping to identify these difficulties and supporting people to overcome them.

## 2. LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES

This policy should be read in conjunction with the following policies:

- • Behaviour management
- • SEND
- • Child Protection
- • Relationships & Sexual Health
- • Health and Safety
- • First Aid

## 3. DEFINITION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

We use the World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing:

*Mental health is a state of well-being in which an individual realizes his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.*
*(WHO (2018) Mental health: strengthening our response. Available at: https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-strengthening-our-response Accessed: March 2022)*

Mental health and wellbeing is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want all students to:
- • feel confident in themselves
- • be able to express a range of emotions appropriately
- • be able to make and maintain positive relationships with others
- • cope with the stresses of everyday life
- • manage times of stress and be able to deal with change
- • learn and achieve

## 4. ETHOS

We recognise that everyone will experience mental health difficulties at some point in their lives and have an ethos, and for our academy we have an inclusive ethos which encourages support and respect for both staff and students.

We aim to recognise those in need and will endeavour to support them as best we can, possibly signposting them to others who can help. We do not judge or blame, we act to provide a support network for those experiencing difficulties.

At the same time, we also recognise the importance of taking care of our own mental wellbeing, taking actions and encouraging others to include positive mental activities as part of a healthy

lifestyle. Whether this is providing opportunities to talk to others or take part in activities promoting mental health.

## 5. LEADERSHIP

The academy has a Whole Academy Mental Health Champion who reports directly to the Senior Leadership Team and meets regularly with them to discuss the provision for staff and pupil mental health and wellbeing. The agenda for these meetings may consist of:

- Staff wellbeing provision and activities
- Student wellbeing provision and activities
- Parental engagement provision and activities
- Monitoring of identification and outcomes of pupil interventions
- Monitoring individual support needs
- Policy review
- Review of Mental Health and Wellbeing Action Plan (if not covered in the points above)

General issues and provision discussions are minuted to provide a formal record; however, notes on discussions related to the support of individuals are kept confidential and are not attached to the minutes.

The Whole Academy Mental Health Champion presents a written report for the Academy Trustee's on Mental Health and Wellbeing across the academy.

They may also be involved in meetings to support staff or students with mental health needs. The Mental Health Lead may also need to review provision as a result of individual mental health needs, even if they are not directly involved in organising the support.

## 6. STUDENTS
## 6.1 IDENTIFICATION

Students with mental health needs are often identified by those closest to them: their parents or their teaching staff. These concerns are discussed with either the Assistant Head of Year, Head of Year, SEND Progress Manger, SENDCo or the Whole Academy Mental Health Champion depending on their nature.

Staff all receive training on helping them recognise the symptoms that a mental health difficulty is affecting their daily lives.

## 6.2 SUPPORT

This academy tailors its support for our students according to their needs.  As an academy we have access to the following services, provided by ourselves or externally:

- Assistant Head of Year for each year group: Supporting the pastoral needs of students within their year groups
- Academy based Counsellor: The Academy Counsellor reports to the Whole Academy Mental Health Champion and is responsible for providing a confidential counselling service to referred students.
- Mental Health Support Team: MHST are a service designed to support referred children and young people with mild to moderate mental health and emotional wellbeing in education settings. They support the whole academy approach to mental health and provide timely

advice to academy staff and to liaise with other services in order to help children and young people get the right help and stay in education.

- School Chaplaincy
- SEND interventions with the Social, Emotional and Mental Health Coordinator
- Young Carers
- Education Impact Attendance team
- Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service: Children and Young Person Practitioners work alongside the school nurses delivering early intervention emotional wellbeing support for: Low Mood, Anxiety, Phobias, Low Self Esteem.
- Emotional Well-being and Mental Health Service (EWMHS)
- Educational Psychologists
- Kids Inspire: Kids Inspire provide mental health and trauma recovery support for children, young people and their families.
- Through a range of therapeutic and community activities we promote resilience, self-awareness, and relationship building to empower more positive life choices.
- YMCA: 1-1Support, Group work, Counselling, Therapy, Support for students with social issues
- Farleigh Hospice YoYo: Supporting students in a 1-1 bereavement counselling therapy to enable students to cope with the loss of a family member
- The Children's Society
- Essex Youth Service (Good Man: Male mentoring service. Sisters in Strength: Female mentoring service)
- Risk Avert: Empower students to make better choices in response to life's risks whilst improving their resilience and emotional health.
- Big White Whale: For any person that feels overwhelmed by the pressures and stresses of life. Needing support through talking and discussing their emotions through.
- EPYDAS: To support students with issues around drugs and/or alcohol misuse or consumption.
- Power: Promotes opportunities with emotional resilience and getting students that have started to have issues with behaviours, truancy or engagement in school. POWER practitioners offer direct support to children and young people aged 8-13 and their parent/carers to help them develop ways of coping with challenging situations at home, school and in their local communities.
- Wilderness Foundation: The Wilderness Foundation UK offers a range of projects and programmes that have been developed to meet the needs of people who are facing a number of challenges in their lives. These can be within a school, family or other social setting, resulting in them putting themselves at risk.
- Family solutions: Family Solutions help families with a range of issues. They work with families for up to 12 months by helping them identify their own solutions to their problems.

## 6.3 WELLBEING

The academy provides the following universal wellbeing activities and support for our students:

- Celebration and engagement in national mental health and wellbeing awareness events, for example Children Mental Health Week, World Mental Health Day, National Mental Health Awareness week.
- Personal Development Curriculum
- Bespoke Assembly program for all year groups

- Tutor Program
- Student Voice, Student Leads & College Student Leadership Team
- LGBTQ+ Plume Pride
- BLM Student Working Party
- Extensive extra-curricular offer including subject specific clubs, sport and fitness activities
- Duke of Edinburgh Awards
- Whole Academy Wellbeing Hub's at each Campus
- SEND Breakfast Hub
- Age-appropriate Mental Health through the curriculum
- Dedicated Plume Family Wellbeing social media accounts
- Digital mental health and wellbeing Linktree Signposting support, resources and activities
- Positive Wellbeing Signage and posters around the academy
- Student Anti-Bullying Ambassadors
- Positive rewards policy

## 7. MONITORING ARRANGEMENTS

The Whole Academy Mental Health Champion, Designated Safeguarding Lead and SENDCo meet regularly to monitor the provision of mental health and wellbeing for students.

## 8. RAISING CONCERNS

If a student, staff member or parent and carer have a concern about the mental health of a student, they should initially speak to their Assistant Head of Year, the SEND Manager,  SENDCo or the Whole Academy Mental Health Lead.

## 9. QUALITY OF RESOURCES

Whilst each resource is slightly different, we assess the usefulness and quality of tools, support groups, wellbeing provision and other resources using a scoring approach using the Mental Health Resource Quality Assessment:
- What is the resource?
- What is its purpose?
- What do you want to use it for?
- How many people will it be accessible to?
- Is there evidence it will work for that purpose?
- What are the benefit for the people utilising the resource?
- What are the limitations of utilising the resource?
- What is its cost-effectiveness?

## 10. LINKS TO OTHER SERVICES

As an organisation, we signpost the mental health and wellbeing support offered by the following local and national services:

### 10.1 ONLINE SERVICES

- Kooth: online counselling & emotional well-being platform
- ChildLine: ring 0800 1111 (free call) talk to a counsellor

- YoungMinds: UK's leading charity championing the wellbeing and mental health of young people.
- The Mix: UK based charity that provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile
- Shout: Shout 85258 is a free, confidential, anonymous text support service.
- SilverCloud Mental Health Support: SilverCloud offers an online intervention for young people which you can access and complete modules on wherever, whenever. This may include topics on challenging thoughts, self-esteem, understanding emotions and sleep difficulties.
- Essex Local Offer: The Essex Local Offer website gives information about support services and local opportunities for children and young people with special educational needs and disability.
- Mind: Information for young people aged 11-18
- NHS: Talking to Teens
- Beat: Spotting Signs Eating Disorder – UK's eating disorder charity offering advice and support both for sufferers, families, friends and professionals.
- NHS: Change4Life – Healthy Eating
- NHS LiveWell: Eating Disorders – Advice for Parents
- Stem4- Teenage Mental Health support
- Big White Wall (for over 16's): support for/from community members with guidance by trained staff 24/7

**10.2 DIGITAL APPS**

- EWMHS Instagram – this is our official Instagram account, aimed at providing a wide range of reliable information, including: explanations of different wellbeing difficulties, self-care advice, local hub information, anecdotes from other young people, emergency contact numbers and much more!  Account name: ewmhs_nhs
- Head Space: an app providing guided meditation and mindfulness
- Calm: an app to help reduce anxiety, promote relaxation and relief of stress
- SAM:  an app for self-help around anxiety management
- Clear Fear – face your fear with the free Clear Fear app and learn to reduce the physical responses to threat as well as changing thoughts and behaviours and releasing emotions.
- WYSA - an 'emotionally intelligent' penguin that learns to react to the emotions you express. Over time it gets to know you better and proactively reaches out to help you.
- Cove - With Cove, you can capture your mood or express how you feel by making music and storing it in a personal journal.
- Calm Harm – provides tasks that help you resist or manage the urge to self-harm and it's completely private and password protected. It uses ideas from an evidence-based therapy called DBT.
- Stay Alive - This app is a free pocket suicide prevention resource for the UK, packed full of useful information and tools to help you stay safe in crisis.
- Mend - Mend, the #1 Breakup App, is a self-care app for heartbreak that guides you through your breakup day by day. Free for 7 days.
- Stop, Breathe, Think - A friendly app to guide people through meditations for mindfulness & compassion.
- Smiling Mind - Smiling Mind is a non-for-profit web and app-based meditation program developed by psychologists and educators to help bring mindfulness into your life.

**10.2 BOOKS**

The following books may also be helpful:

- Helping Your Anxious Child – Ronald Rapee
- What to do When Your Worry Too Much – Dawn Huebner
- Starving the Anxiety Gremlin – Kate Collins-Donnelly
- What to do When Your Brain gets Stuck – Dawn Huebner
- Breaking Free from OCD: A CBT Guide for Young People and Their Families – Jo Derisley
- Depression: A Teen's Guide to Survive and Thrive – Jacqueline Toner & Claire Freeland
- Starving the Depression Gremlin – Kate Collins-Donnelly
- What to do When You Grumble Too Much – Dawn Huebner
- Parenting a Child with Emotional Behavioural Difficulties – Daniel Hughes
- Starving the Anger Gremlin – Kate Collins-Donnelly
- What to do When Your Temper Flares – Dawn Huebner

Full details of our mental health and wellbeing offer are contained within the academy website.