



SEMH Policy

**East Crescent Road
Gravesend
Kent
DA12 2AH**

This policy was devised by the Senior Leadership Team of Pierview Academy, June 2020, and will be reviewed annually unless specific guidance or legislation supersedes this.

Introduction

We promote a caring, supportive environment in which each individual is valued and respected. We have high expectations for all and aspire to achieve excellence. Pierview Academy recognises that all children and young people need the foundation of positive mental health to benefit fully from all of the opportunities available.

Everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable. At times, anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop good mental health. The mental health of children and young people, adults in schools, parents and carers and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of development, learning, achievement and experiences.

All children and young people have the right to be educated in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody. All adults have the right to work in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody.

Pierview Academy is committed to supporting learners' psychosocial development through raising awareness, increasing understanding of the world around them and providing a place where all children and young people feel safe, secure and able to achieve and experience success and well-being.

A consistent approach means that the school environment and school ethos all promote the mental health of the whole school community. Healthy relationships underpin positive mental health and have a significant impact.

At Pierview Academy we will provide...

A mentally healthy environment which has:

- A culture that respects all
- A commitment to being responsive to children and young people's individual needs
- Links with external agencies to provide access to support and information

- A named lead for mental health promotion with the expectation that there is support and involvement and an ethos that 'mental health is everyone's business'.

A mentally healthy environment is where children and young people:

- Have opportunities to participate in activities that encourage belonging
- Participate in decision making to exercise autonomy
- Have opportunities to celebrate academic and non-academic achievements
- Have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed
- Have opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Have access to support that meets their needs eg, mentoring, counselling and signposting through leaflets in school and online
- Have a right to be in an environment that is safe, clean, and well cared for
- Are surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours, interactions and ways of relating at all times

A mentally healthy environment where staff:

- Have their individual needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way by the Senior Leadership Team, Mental Health Lead, Mental Health First Aider, local support mechanisms (MIND, St.John Ambulance, BUPA)
- Have a range of strategies that support their mental health eg. a named person to speak to, signposting to self help workshops in the individual's local authority etc.
- Have recognition of their work-life balance
- Have the mental health and well-being of the staff reviewed regularly
- Feel valued and have opportunities to contribute to decision making processes (weekly staff meetings)
- Celebrate and recognise success (Employee of the Term)
- Are able to carry out roles and responsibilities effectively (seeking direct help from line management)
- Are provided with opportunities for CPD both personally and professionally
- Have time to reflect
- Can access proactive strategies and systems to support them at times of emotional needs in both the short term and the long term

A mentally healthy environment where parents/carers:

- Are recognised for their significant contribution to children and young people's mental health

- Are welcomed, included and work in partnership with schools and agencies
- Are provided with opportunities where they can ask for help when needed
- Are signposted to appropriate agencies for support (via parent mail, multi-agency review meetings, parents evening)
- Are clear about their roles and expectations of their responsibilities in working in partnership with schools
- Opinions are sought and valued and responded to
- Strengths and difficulties are recognised, acknowledged and challenged appropriately

A mentally healthy environment is a where the whole school community:

- Is involved in promoting positive mental health
- Is valued for the role it plays in promoting positive mental health
- Contributes towards the ethos of the school

A healthy learning environment provides opportunities that promote positive mental health, through the Foundation Learning Curriculum and extended provision e.g. The Archway Project, Squirrels Riding Club, The Multi-Intelligence Hub, differentiated learning activities, individual timetables, parents/carers events, challenging stereotypes, etc.

The implementation of the policy for promoting positive mental health in schools:

- Will give schools a cohesive and co-ordinated approach to mental health
- Should underpin all policies and practices currently used in schools
- Will raise awareness as to how the whole school community can look after their own mental health and that of others
- Will help to de-stigmatise mental health
- Will support people and provide opportunities that enable everyone to reach their potential
- Will strengthen relationships and provide opportunities for different ways of working
- Will provide foundations for life-long learning
- Will promote and strengthen resilience throughout the whole school community and empower everyone to face life's challenges

Integral to this is our recognition of equal responsibility to vulnerable staff, learners and their parents/carers and those with Protected Characteristics (Equality Act, 2010) to promote positive mental health. The promotion of positive mental health for children and young people is everyone's business.

Rationale

Pierview Academy aims to provide a whole school approach to SEMH, which is essential to ensure consistency and effectiveness for all learners.

Additional practices to promote wellbeing and positive mental health include:

- A School/Student Voice which represents all year groups, that meets every term
- A Raffle Ticket Reward System is used weekly to promote positive behaviours and educational and personal successes as well as for demonstrating good citizenship and respect
- Achievement certificates are awarded termly in Assemblies

Aims

Pierview Academy aims to recognise our responsibilities in supporting learners with mental health and wellbeing needs. We aim....

- To increase the level of awareness and understanding amongst staff and parents/carers of issues involving the mental health of young people, in particular with low self -esteem, self harm, emotional regulation, anxiety, depression, loss and bereavement
- To detect and address problems in the earliest stages where they exist in thinking and attitudes to self/image, self-esteem and self-control
- To implement the appropriate level of support in school available to learners with mental health issues and also in partnership with outside health agencies and child support groups
- To continue to promote positivity around mental well -being
- To reduce the stigma associated with mental health
- To ensure all staff are alert to their responsibility to ensure the well-being and welfare of all learners, progress and achievement in school depends on this

Supporting learners with Mental Health at Pierview Academy

Identification.

A staff team that knows every learner well and can spot where poor or unusual behaviour may have a root cause that needs addressing.

Effective use of data so that changes in learners' patterns of attainment, attendance or behaviour, are noticed and can be acted upon.

If there are concerns about a learner's well-being and possible self-harming the school will support the individual very closely and liaise with parents/carers and multi-agencies to ensure that they receive the support they need.

Staff should follow the normal procedures for medical emergencies for any serious incidents of self-harming.

The school also has a Suicide Prevention Policy.

Support

This includes:

- A whole school approach to promote the emotional health and wellbeing of all learners
- A clear Behaviour Policy (including anti-bullying culture)
- A clear Anti-bullying Policy and Procedure
- A clear Suicide Prevention Policy with a nominated staff member that trains in suicide awareness
- A clear PSHE/PSD Policy to support all aspects of a child or young persons' personal, social development and well-being
- Culture within the school that values all learners, allows them a sense of belonging and makes it possible to talk about problems in a non-stigmatising way
- Continuous professional development for all staff
- SMT visiting homes and meeting families in school to support emotional well-being and aim to liaise with families about SEMH interventions and support available in school
- School based counselling from a qualified therapist with nationally recognised professional registration
- Peer mentoring with Behaviour Specialist
- Working with outside agencies to provide interventions for learners with health problems
- Referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

Supporting staff who are working with learners with mental health issues.

Pierview Academy acknowledges that staff who are working closely with distressed learners exhibiting mental health problems issues can themselves be placed under emotional strain.

All staff are welcome to approach their line manager, HR or other senior leaders where appropriate.

Contacts

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