

# The ContinU Plus Academy



2021 -  
2022

**Mental health  
and wellbeing  
Policy**

This policy was written in consultation with staff, pupils, parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing.

### **Policy Statement**

At The ContinU Plus Academy, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our pupils and staff.

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. The students at our school are extremely vulnerable and may have experienced adverse childhood experiences. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play. It is often the case that our students will not engage with outside agencies, therefore the training and implementation of mental health support in school is vital.

### **At our school we:**

- help children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries □ Build excellent relationships with students and parents/carers □ help children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count.
- encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- help children to develop emotional resilience and to manage and overcome any adverse experiences.

### **We promote a caring environment through:**

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

### **We pursue our aims through:**

- Universal, whole school approaches
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long term difficulties including attachment disorder.

### **Scope**

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical policy and our SEND policy in cases where pupils mental health needs overlap with these. This policy should also be read in conjunction with policies for Behaviour and Anti-bullying, and SMSC policies. It should also sit alongside child protection procedures.

**Lead Members of Staff**

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Aimee Wootton – DSL/SENCo
- Sara Devo – Headteacher- Deputy DSL
- Luke Parrock – Pastoral lead
- Mark Venross – Deputy head

**Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to manage their emotional response in stressful situations are included as part of our developmental SMSC curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

**Targeted support**

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.
- SLT drop in sessions
- Access to key member of staff at point of need
- Daily staff meeting to discuss any safeguarding concerns
- Regular contact with the school nurse and vulnerability meetings
- Managing strong emotions interventions
- Anger management support
- Access to a counsellor at point of need
- Access to alternative provision activities; including horse-riding

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire
- Mcsherry questionnaire

**Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

**Identifying needs and Warning Signs**

All staff have completed the place2be mental health champion course. School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated child protection and safeguarding officer or the emotional wellbeing lead as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating / sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Changes in behaviour
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

### **Working with Parents**

In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents □ Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

### **Working with other agencies and partners**

As part of our targeted provision the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Behaviour support
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Counselling services
- Family support workers
- Therapists
- GP's

### **Training**

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep students safe.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils

**A copy of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy is published in its entirety on the CPA's website ([www.continuplus.org.uk](http://www.continuplus.org.uk)).**

**Date Policy Created: July 2021**

**Member of Staff Responsible: Aimee Wootton (DSL/SENCo)**

**Review Date: July 2022**

Signed:



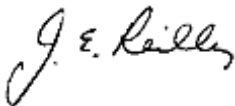
(Staff member responsible)

Signed:



(Headteacher)

Signed:



(Chair of Governors)