



Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy for SPaCE

Introduction

At SPaCE, we recognize that mental health and wellbeing are fundamental to our pupils' success, personal development, and overall quality of life. As such, we are committed to fostering a supportive environment that promotes positive mental health and wellbeing for all members of our school community, including pupils, staff, and families. This policy outlines our approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing in accordance with relevant legislation and best practices, while being trauma-informed to ensure that we support individuals who have experienced trauma or adverse experiences in their lives.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing for all members of the SPaCE community.
- Provide a clear framework for identifying, addressing, and supporting mental health issues.
- Ensure the provision of mental health services and interventions that are trauma-informed.
- Foster a collaborative approach to mental health and wellbeing, involving staff, pupils, parents, carers, and external professionals.
- Comply with relevant legislation and policies regarding mental health in educational settings.

Scope

This policy applies to:

- All pupils at SPaCE, including those with identified mental health needs.
- All staff members, as their mental health and wellbeing are also essential to the success of the school environment.
- Parents, carers, and the wider community as partners in supporting mental health and wellbeing.

Definition of Mental Health

Mental health refers to a person's emotional, psychological, and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel, and act, and influences how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health is important at every stage of life, from childhood and adolescence through adulthood.

Trauma-Informed Approach

A trauma-informed approach recognizes the widespread impact of trauma on individuals and is based on an understanding of the prevalence and effects of trauma on mental health. Trauma can result from a variety of experiences, including abuse, neglect, violence, loss, or chronic stress. A trauma-informed approach at SPaCE focuses on creating a safe and supportive environment that fosters trust, choice, and empowerment for individuals who have experienced trauma.



Legislation and Legal Framework

This policy is underpinned by the following key pieces of legislation:

- **Children and Families Act 2014:** This act outlines the duty of schools to support the mental health and wellbeing of children, ensuring access to services and interventions that address both physical and mental health needs.
- **The Equality Act 2010:** This act ensures that pupils are protected from discrimination, including discrimination based on mental health conditions or disabilities. Schools must make reasonable adjustments to support pupils with mental health conditions and disabilities.
- **Mental Health Act 1983 (updated 2007):** This legislation governs the care and treatment of individuals with mental health issues and provides a framework for supporting those in crisis or requiring specialist intervention.
- **The SEND Code of Practice (2015):** This statutory guidance outlines the provision of special educational needs, including the mental health and wellbeing needs of pupils with SEND.
- **Health and Social Care Act 2012:** This act promotes the integration of health and social care services, including mental health services, which is relevant to providing holistic support for pupils with mental health needs.
- **The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006:** This legislation highlights the importance of safeguarding and the duty of care towards vulnerable children, including those with mental health needs.

Aims of the Policy

- To promote positive mental health and wellbeing throughout the SPaCE community.
- To ensure that mental health support is accessible and provided in a timely manner for those in need.
- To create a safe and supportive environment that recognizes the impact of trauma and offers effective interventions.
- To equip staff with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to identify and support pupils with mental health issues.
- To ensure collaboration with external agencies to provide specialized mental health services when required.
- To reduce stigma around mental health and create an environment where mental health is openly discussed and supported.

Principles of Mental Health and Wellbeing Support at SPaCE

1. **Early Intervention:** We will identify and address mental health issues early, through monitoring, assessment, and open communication. Early intervention is key to preventing mental health problems from becoming more serious.



2. **Inclusive and Holistic Support:** We take a holistic approach to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our pupils. This includes providing tailored support that meets the individual needs of each pupil and ensuring that all pupils have access to the resources and support they require.
3. **Person-centred and Trauma-Informed Care:** We understand that each pupil is unique, and our mental health and wellbeing support is personalized to reflect their experiences, strengths, and challenges. A trauma-informed approach ensures that we prioritize safety, trust, and emotional regulation in our support.
4. **Staff Support and Training:** We recognize that staff mental health is equally important. We provide staff with training on mental health awareness, recognizing signs of mental health issues, and supporting pupils effectively. Staff are encouraged to seek support for their own wellbeing, and we provide a supportive work environment.
5. **Collaboration with Families and External Agencies:** We work closely with parents and carers to ensure that pupils receive consistent support both with SPaCE and at home. We also collaborate with external mental health professionals, such as counsellors, psychologists, and local mental health services, to provide comprehensive support.

Identification and Assessment of Mental Health Needs

Mental health issues may manifest in a variety of ways, and it is important to recognize early signs of distress. Teachers and staff are trained to observe and report concerns related to:

- Changes in behaviour (e.g., withdrawal, aggression, mood swings).
- Declining academic performance.
- Signs of anxiety, depression, or emotional distress.
- Difficulty concentrating or making decisions.
- Unexplained physical symptoms (e.g., headaches, stomach aches).
- Risky behaviours (e.g., self-harm, substance abuse, suicidal thoughts).
- Absenteeism or social isolation.

When mental health concerns are raised, we adopt a **graduated approach:**

1. **Assessment:** Teachers and the designated mental health lead will gather information from the pupil, parents, and staff. This may involve informal observations and formal assessments to understand the pupil's mental health needs.
2. **Support Plan:** An individualized mental health support plan will be developed in collaboration with the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals. This plan may include adjustments to the school environment, additional support (e.g., counselling), or referral to external services.
3. **Review:** Regular reviews will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of the support and make adjustments as needed.



Support and Interventions

SPaCE provides a range of interventions and support strategies to address the mental health and wellbeing needs of pupils, including:

- **Mindfulness and Wellbeing Programs:** These programs aim to promote resilience, stress management, and emotional regulation skills among pupils.
- **Peer Support:** Peer support programs may be used to encourage positive social interactions and provide a network of support for pupils.
- **Trauma-Informed Practices:** Staff will incorporate trauma-informed teaching practices, which include creating safe, predictable environments, establishing positive relationships, and providing emotional regulation strategies for pupils who have experienced trauma.
- **External Referrals:** Where necessary, referrals to external mental health services (e.g., CAMHS - Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) will be made to provide specialized support.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Designated Mental Health Lead:** This staff member will oversee the implementation of the policy, ensuring that mental health and wellbeing needs are met and that support is provided. They will also coordinate with external agencies and lead staff training.
- **Teachers and Support Staff:** Teachers and support staff play a vital role in recognizing mental health needs, providing initial support, and working with the Mental Health Lead to implement appropriate interventions.
- **Parents and Carers:** Parents and carers are key partners in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils. We encourage open communication and collaboration between home and school.
- **External Agencies:** When required, external professionals (e.g., counsellors, psychologists) will work in partnership with SPaCE to provide expert mental health support.

Monitoring and Review

The effectiveness of this policy will be regularly monitored through:

- Feedback from pupils, staff, and parents.
- Regular reviews of mental health support plans.
- Ongoing training for staff to ensure awareness of mental health issues and trauma-informed practices.
- Annual policy reviews to ensure alignment with legislation and best practices.

Conclusion

SPaCE is committed to providing a supportive environment that promotes mental health and wellbeing for all members of our community. We take a trauma-informed, person-centred



approach to mental health, ensuring that every pupil is supported and empowered to thrive emotionally, socially, and academically. This policy is in accordance with current legislation and best practices, and it will be regularly reviewed to ensure it meets the evolving needs of our pupils.

Issued 01/10/2024

Review 01/10/2025

Signed Dene Terry *DBTerry*

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