Developing Our Mental Health Awareness Strategy. A priority at SMWCA !

Young people's mental health is something we take very seriously at St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy. Over the last 3 years we have placed a priority on raising the staff and student's awareness of this very important area.

Statistics reveal that:

- 75% of mental illnesses start before a child reaches their 18th birthday.
- 50% of mental health problems in adult life start before the age of 15.
- 10% of school children have a diagnosable mental illness. This means that,
- in a class of 30 students, three will have a mental health problem.
- 75% of young people with a mental health problem aren't receiving treatment.
- 51% of young people feel embarrassed about mental illness.

Furthermore, the children's charity NSPCC report that they delivered more than 3,000 counselling sessions on exam stress in 2017. Of this number, 22% called in May – the month when deadlines and exams are looming.

What are the Issues Affecting Young People in 2018?

A number of factors contribute to poor mental health in young people, including:

- **Exam pressures.** The overwhelming pressure and number of exams can have a significant effect on students' mental health. The old modular style of GCSEs has been scrapped to make way for more tough and challenging GCSEs, where testing is almost exclusively through end of course exams. Students

are stressed by the amount of information they need to know and the pressure to succeed. Most are also fearful that a poor grade will ruin their future.

- **The modern technological world.** Young people now spend much more time indoors online rather than outside. A game of football in the park is being replaced by online games. Furthermore, young people are at a number of risks online, including exposure to upsetting content and cyber bullying that will all affect their mental health.
- **Growing social media.** Social media platforms are evolving and growing in popularity daily. Sites such as Instagram produce feelings of inadequacy as teens compare themselves and their lives to those of their peers. Social media also leads to reduced communication skills and reduced human interaction with friends.
- **LGBTQ+.** Students who identify as being LGBTQ+ often find it difficult to tell their friends and family about themselves. This could lead to feelings of loneliness, isolation, and worry as they try to remain true to themselves.
- **Demands on young people.** As well as the heavy pressure of exams, students often have further responsibilities that contribute to a growing amount of stress and worry. For example, there are around 700,000 **young carers in the UK** and 80% of this number miss out on childhood experiences. This commonly leads to exhaustion and puts these children at risk of various mental health difficulties.

How Can We Further Promote Positive Mental Health at St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy?
We believe that our staff have a responsibility to promote mental health in school. Often, even small changes can go a long way in helping a young person feel better.
We encourage time to talk to others
We encourage students to talk to their form tutors in form time. Many other staff are available for the students to share a problem with.
Attend lunchtime clubs or participate in extra curricular activities
Our students have opportunity to take their mind off things at lunch and after school by attending clubs and activities. These clubs could be for any activity – arts and crafts, baking, drama clubs, sports clubs, dance clubs, etc. The sense of community will help students feel included and will relieve the pressure of work for a while.

We Have an Open-Door Policy
It is essential that our students know they can come and talk to any member of staff about any issues or concerns they have. We communicate this to our students so they know that we are always there to listen to them.

Making Mental Health Known at St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy

Sadly, mental health is still seen as a bit of a taboo subject and something that sufferers feel embarrassed to talk about. Many young people also feel judged if they explain their problems. As a result, we have made mental health a strong focus in school. We have discussed it in mental health awareness lessons in all year groups, addressed it in assemblies, and celebrate awareness days, like world mental health day, to let students know they're not alone. Our sixth formers offer support and mentoring sessions to any student who would like to talk to them privately and need additional support

We have organized special activities to raise awareness and support Mental Health

- **We encourage connections** – students can to talk to each other and interact with people they wouldn't usually talk to.
- **Sports/activities days** – exercise is known to boost endorphins, so make use of this. Our students and staff get involved in a range of activities
- **Give to others** – We organise charity events, such as a bake sales, raffles and the Talent Show. Giving to others is known to reduce stress and improve emotional wellbeing.

If you would like further information or support with any issue relating to mental Health issues please do not hesitate to seek further support in school from:
 Mrs Pritchard, Mrs Holdcroft, Mrs Rider , Mrs Brown or Mrs Farrer.

For further information about our Entitlement Mental Health Policy please continue to read:

St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy and SASCAL Mental Health & Well-being Pupil/Student Entitlement 2019-19

Introduction

The proportion of children and young people saying that they have a mental health condition has risen six fold in England over the past twenty years. In 1995, just 0.8% of 4-24 year olds reported having a long-standing mental health condition, by 2014 this had risen to 4.8%. Since 2014, the numbers affected continue to grow at an alarming pace. data published by the Office on National Statistics in 2017 indicate that 20% of young people indicate signs of depression or anxiety.

Partnership Rationale

The purpose of an agreed entitlement is to recognise that this is a priority across the Partnership and that this is fundamental in fulfilling the Partnership aim of improving student outcomes and life chances. Furthermore, a statement of a common approach will also:

- raise awareness of the issues and potential solutions to improve pupil mental health and well-being
- help to ensure that young people are supported so that they are receptive to learning
- provide a collegiate approach to staff training and development, ensuring a consistent structure is delivery in each school/college across the Partnership
- enable the development of a network of expert practitioners drawn from each institution within the Partnership
- provide further opportunities to ensure coherent linkage with the Local Authority team
- provide further opportunities to lever external funding or link with external agencies.

Scope

This document describes our approach to promoting positive mental health and well-being of all pupils and students, it is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

This policy should be read in conjunction the following school/college policies as appropriate to the individual institution:

- ***Safeguarding & Prevent***
- ***Anti-Bullying and Harassment***
- ***Equality & Diversity***
- ***SEN***

Aims:

At St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy we aim to promote positive mental health for young person. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school/college approaches and specialised, targeted approaches as appropriate to individual need.

In addition to promoting positive well-being, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective strategies we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by:

- Promoting positive well-being and mental health in all and students.
- Increasing understanding and awareness of positive well-being and mental health.
- Alerting staff to the early warning signs of mental ill health.
- Providing support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Providing support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers.

Lead Members of Staff

All staff have a responsibility to promote the well-being and mental health of students, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- The Head Teacher
- Designated Safeguarding Officer Mrs Pritchard
- Mental Health Leads   Mrs Pritchard, Mrs Rider, Mrs Farrer, Mrs Holdcroft
- Health and Well Being Manager Mrs Brown
- First Aid team
- Pastoral Team
- Family Support Worker   Ms Khan

Possible Signs

The staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional well-being issues. These warning signs should **always** be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the school mental health and well-being lead.

Referral Routes

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the mental health lead in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the designated child protection office of staff or the head teacher. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the designated safeguarding officer.

Empowering Staff & Students: Well-being & Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe should be embedded within an inclusive curriculum delivery. Schools and colleges encourage students to self-refer and ensure that appropriate support is provided.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. Details of what support is available within our school and local community will be made available via a link on the school web site.

Confidentiality & Managing Disclosures-
Please refer to the Child Protection and safeguarding Policy (Website)

Working with Parents, Carers and Families

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues 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 own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- 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

Empowering Staff

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular and relevant 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.

We will provide relevant information for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be acknowledged and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more students.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the CPD Coordinator who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Resources (ref AoC publication 'Supporting Student Mental Health & Well-being')

Leadership and management

- A key recent policy document is the Department of Health (DH) [Future in Mind: Promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and well-being (2015)](#) which has led to a range of initiatives to further support young people's mental health and wellbeing.

- Staff from the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families and the Tavistock and Portman NHS Fund Trust have developed [THRIVE](#) – a new concept model for Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) through which need is measured in five categories: thriving, getting advice, getting help, getting more help and getting risk support

Ethos and environment

- Universities UK developed [guidance](#) in 2015 for members on the promotion of mental wellbeing across higher education institutions (HEI). It has several sections relevant to schools & colleges and is unusual in having a section (Annexe 2), which considers the legal implications of mental health issues for education institutions. This suggests that it is helpful to review policies and procedure which may be needed to successfully support and manage students with mental health issues.

Curriculum

- Schools and colleges are increasingly recognising the need to hold sessions which help to develop student resilience in using social media. Young Minds has produced a positioning paper [Resilience for the Digital World](#).

- Charlie Waller Memorial Trust has produced two booklets:
  - ➢ [How can I ask for help?](#)
  - ➢ [Wellbeing Action Plan](#): this could form a good basis for wellbeing tutorial work.

- Action for Happiness has produced [10 Keys to Happier Living](#) and also a highly endorsed [Key to Happier Living Toolkit](#) for schools which colleges might want to adapt for their own context.

Student voice

- Young Minds has produced a series of [short accessible booklets](#) written by and produced for young people which cover a range of topics related to mental health.

- Charlie Waller Memorial Trust has produced a [digital pack of three short films](#) on mental health reflecting their real-life experiences of self-harm made by and for young people.

Staff development and support

- Young Minds runs [courses](#) for teachers and support workers on a range of subjects, e.g. bullying, bereavement, self-harm, eating disorders etc.

Targeted support

- The Centre for Mental Health's recent publication [Missed Opportunities 2016](#) dedicates a chapter on conditions specifically affecting 16-25 year olds.

- Charlie Waller Memorial Trust has produced a very informative [booklet on depression](#) and how to deal with it.

- Mind has a very comprehensive [A-Z of mental health](#) conditions with a brief description of each and also links to sources of support.

- [Storm](#): enhancing skills, saving lives, offers training specifically in the area of self-harm.

Parents and carers

- Charlie Waller Memorial Trust has produced two short booklets for parents:
  - ➢ [A Parent's Guide to coping with self-harm](#)
  - ➢ [A Parent's Guide to Depression](#) and [extended guidance](#).

  They have also produced a [digital pack](#) including a [short video](#) for parents.

- Young Minds runs a [helpline for parents](#).

- Minded provides [free educational resources](#) on children and young people's mental health for adults. It has a specific section which gives advice and provides a host of useful links for families concerned about a young person's mental health.

External partnerships

- In 2016 the Independent Mental Health Taskforce to NHS England published [Five Year Forward View for Mental Health](#), an independent report which sets out recommendations for the transformation of NHS mental health services.

- Mind has a network of [local Mind groups](#) which include talking therapies, crisis helplines, drop-in centres, employment and training schemes, counselling and befriending. Several of these local groups have formed partnerships with FE colleges.

Useful organisations

Action for Happiness

Action for Happiness focuses particularly on wellbeing and how to lead a happier life. It has created courses and a schools toolkit based on its Ten Keys to Happier Living.

Anna Freud Centre

The Anna Freud Centre has a long history of working to improve the lives of children and young people with mental health difficulties. It does this through providing services, training, and carrying out cutting edge research.

Centre for Mental Health

The Centre for Mental Health has produced a long list of very well researched in depth publications on various aspects of mental health. Several of these look at issues related to mental health and the criminal justice system.

Charlie Waller Memorial Trust (CWMT)

Charlie Waller Memorial Trust was set up in memory of Charlie Waller, a young man who took his own life while suffering from depression. The organisation works in a variety of ways to support the mental wellbeing of young people. They have produced several very useful free booklets on various issues connected with mental health.

Learning and Work Institute

Learning and Work Institute has developed various mental health resources including a Mental Health and Family Learning Pack – a resource pack aimed at managers and practitioners in adult learning who want to develop or improve access to family learning for those experiencing mental health difficulties.

Mental Health in Further Education (MHFE)

MHFE provides a network particularly for those interested in adult education and mental health. It provides updates on recent research projects and also case studies of innovative practice.

Mind

Mind works in a variety of ways to support adults with mental health difficulties. As well as being a campaigning organisation it also has a range of useful information and publications. In addition there is a network of local Mind groups which have often worked in partnership with FE colleges.

MindEd

MindEd provides free educational resources on children and young people's mental health for adults. It has a specific section which offers advice and provides a host of useful links for

families concerned about a young person's mental health. It also provides on line training at different levels for professionals. (NB: listed above are links to MindEd training which has been specifically adapted for those working in FE).

Samaritans

Samaritans offer a helpline and a safe place for people to talk. Although best known as a suicide prevention organisation the Samaritans website clearly states that people do not have to be suicidal to make use of their helpline.

Young Minds

Young Minds reflects the voice of young peoples' mental health and wellbeing. It offers a range of publications by and for young people on various aspects of mental health and runs training courses for teachers and support staff. It also has a helpline for parents.