



## Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

| Document control table  |   |
|---|---|
| Title   | Mental Health & Emotional Wellbeing   |
| Date approved   | September 2024  |
| Approved by   | Director of Resources   |
| Date of next review   | April 2026  |
| Updates/revisions included:   | Legislation and links to other policies included<br>Included roles and responsibilities section |
| This is an OA central template, which should not be altered.  |   |
| Should you consider there needs to be a change to the policy please contact Edwina Andere<br><a href="mailto:edwina.andere@oliveacademies.org.uk">edwina.andere@oliveacademies.org.uk</a> |   |

### Table of Contents

|  |          |
|--|----------|
| <b><i>Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy</i></b> ..... | <b>1</b> |
| <b><i>Policy statement</i></b> .....                             | <b>2</b> |
| <b><i>Our aims</i></b> .....                                     | <b>2</b> |
| <b><i>Legal frameworks and relevant policies</i></b> .....       | <b>2</b> |
| <b><i>Individual risk assessments</i></b> .....                  | <b>3</b> |
| <b><i>Supporting our staff</i></b> .....                         | <b>3</b> |
| <b><i>Teaching about mental health</i></b> .....                 | <b>4</b> |
| <b><i>Signposting for Students and parents/carers</i></b> .....  | <b>5</b> |
| <b><i>Actions to support staff</i></b> .....                     | <b>5</b> |
| <b><i>Other Roles and Responsibilities</i></b> .....             | <b>6</b> |

## Policy statement

At Olive Academies, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and volunteers. Our open culture allows all voices to be heard and using effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

We recognise that mental health and emotional wellbeing are fundamental to ensuring members of the Olive community can participate fully in school, be that as a recipient or provider of education. We also recognise that mental health and emotional wellbeing of those around us at home contributes to our ability to engage at school.

Olive Academies provide education to children and young people who are at risk or who have been excluded from mainstream schools, and to those with complex additional needs. As a result of this, a focus on promoting positive mental health is at the heart of all our work.

## Our aims

In our academies, we aim to:

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from senior leaders that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing
- Instil a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around the academies.

## Legal frameworks and relevant policies

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974: [Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974](#)
- Employment Rights Act 1996: [Employment Rights Act 1996](#)
- Employment Relations Act 1999: [Employment Relations Act 1999](#)
- Equality Act 2010: [Equality Act 2010](#)
- The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999: [The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999](#)
- DfE (2024) 'Education staff wellbeing charter': [Education staff wellbeing charter](#)

- DfE (2024) 'Improve workload and wellbeing for school staff': [Improve workload and wellbeing for school staff](#)

The promotion of mental health and emotional wellbeing is embedded in our day-to-day work with our students. Guidance about identifying mental ill health and procedures for supporting students and staff with mental health issues are provided in several of our policies. these include:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Staff Absence Policy
- Induction Programme for staff and pupils
- Data Protection Policy
- Grievance Policy
- Dynamic Working Policy
- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- Anti-bullying
- ICT and Online safety
- PSHE and RSE

You can access trust policies [here](#) and each of the academy specific policies by going to these links: Olive AP Academy: [Cambridge](#), [Havering](#), [Nene Valley](#), [Suffolk](#) and [Thurrock](#).

### **Individual risk assessments**

On arrival to an Olive academy, a risk assessment is completed for every student. This risk assessment considers information from the child's previous school and any local authority services and is completed in partnership with the student and their parents and carers. Within this risk assessment, any mental health concerns are identified, and a bespoke package of support put in place for students. All students have a named tutor/coach who has individual contact with them every day and all staff are updated on any concerns or issues via daily review meetings and CPOMS, the safeguarding information storage system the trust uses.

Risk assessments are reviewed on a regular basis and support packages adapted as relevant. The type of support that can be put in place for our students includes:

- specialised therapy, e.g. art, music, cooking, sport
- counselling
- input from specialist providers, such as CAMHS workers

These risk assessments stored securely on a student's file alongside any medication plans.

### **Supporting our staff**

We recognise that promotion of positive mental health and wellbeing for staff is key to ensuring successful outcomes for our students as well as benefiting staff themselves. We maintain a focus on the

wellbeing of our staff on a day-to-day basis through building a collegiate culture, along with supportive line management.

There is an explicit focus on mental health and emotional wellbeing in several of our staff related guides and policies. These include:

- **Guidance on the staff intranet** – on how to access support as a staff member facing mental ill health
- **Dignity at work**- outlining our commitment to ensure that all should be treated with respect when at work
- **Alcohol, drug and substance misuse** – summarising support that will be put in place for staff as needed
- The Staff Wellbeing Charter

In addition, there are other initiatives which aim to support staff with their wellbeing, including:

- A well-being conversation that is an integral part of every **line management** meeting.
- A trust wide **career pathway** programme which enables staff to consider what options they would like to pursue in the future.
- A range of **HR initiatives** to support return to work after any period of ill health, e.g. phased return, risk assessments
- The **Employee Assistance Programme** – staff can access counselling and other types of support confidentially through this service
- **The wellbeing networks** within each academy – staff organising enjoyable activities to come together outside of work
- **A named Wellbeing Lead** within each academy

Trust and school leaders are also keen to promote the mutual support for each other whereby acknowledgement and appreciation is integral to the culture within the trust.

### **Teaching about mental health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE curriculum.

We follow the guidance issued by the PSHE Association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively. Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote students' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of students' own emotions as well as those of other people.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing students who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting students to support any of their friends who are facing challenges.

## **Signposting for Students and parents/carers**

We will ensure that students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services. Within the school (noticeboards, common rooms, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

## **Actions to support staff**

To positively impact wellbeing in the academies a trust wide approach is taken.

- Lead by example and encourage staff to be open if they feel stressed, to take breaks and to have a full life outside of work.
- Make the most of team bonding; using INSET days to build positive relationships, as feeling comfortable amongst colleagues will make discussing wellbeing easier.
- Assist with work and help to manage employees' workloads.
- Reach out to staff during difficult points in their personal lives, e.g. bereavement, allowing sufficient time off and supporting them when they return to work.
- Arrange a meeting with all members of staff in which the current working times and practices will be discussed.
- Research and implement an employee assistance programme relevant to the needs of all staff, regularly monitoring its effectiveness and impact on wellbeing.

To effectively address workload issues and support staff wellbeing, the headteacher, working with the SLT, will take the following actions:

- Measure staff wellbeing and identify workload issues by: Commissioning staff workload and wellbeing surveys on a termly basis and organising structured conversations about workload with staff.
- Conduct annual surveys to better understand the areas of work that have a negative effect on staff wellbeing
- Arrange workshops and drawing together a summary of outcomes from staff surveys and questionnaires.
- Analyse staff diaries and identify which members of staff are spending too much time on certain aspects of the job.
- Conduct impact graphing exercises to visually assess where workload issues lie and identify key areas of focus.
- Review the areas of workload that have been identified using a workload impact assessment matrix and producing an evaluation of the school's current workload to highlight the actions that will be taken.
- Address the workload issues that have been identified, e.g. by undertaking a data collection audit and action plan and developing an action plan.
- Implement a Staff Wellbeing Charter to outline the commitment and expectations between the AAB Members, SLT and school staff regarding the wellbeing and mental health.
- Review the impact of the actions taken on a termly basis, measuring staff wellbeing and identifying new workload issues to address during the next term.

The headteacher will ensure that all changes proposed as a result of the actions outlined above are communicated to all members of staff.

## **Other Roles and Responsibilities**

The Academy Advisory Board will monitor wellbeing through Head of Academy reports and visits to the academy.

The HR manager leads the wellbeing committee to ensure all staff are supported in their roles and that actions are implemented to mitigate stress in the workplace.

The Induction Leader will ensure that all new members of staff will be provided with a comprehensive induction and their duties regarding their own and their colleagues' wellbeing will be made clear.

OA will adopt a sickness plan which will promote a positive, caring strategy for staff who are returning to work following sick leave.

OA will ensure wellbeing is promoted and stress is prevented through good management practices, including the following:

- Recruitment and selection procedures
- Clear job descriptions and person specifications to ensure the right candidates are recruited
- CPD procedures to ensure all members of staff have the necessary skills and abilities to undertake the duties required
- Promotion and reward procedures
- Performance management procedures
- Capability and absence management – return to work procedures will ensure that individuals are supported back into work following illness
- Suitable adaptations for disability
- Harassment and anti-bullying resources
- Flexible working arrangements, in line with the Dynamic Working Policy

The school recognises that the Education Staff Wellbeing Charter can be used as an effective tool to foster positive wellbeing in the education sector. The school will consider showing its commitment to actively promoting mental health by signing up to the charter to create an enriching culture of mental wellbeing.

## **Monitoring and Review**

This policy will be reviewed and updated on an annual basis.