Mulberry
Academy Hastings

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Approval Body	Principal
Approval Date	20.7.2026
Implementation Date	1.9.2026
Review Date	31.8.2026

Version Control

Version	Reviewed	Changes Since Last Version
No. 1	20.7.2026	NA

Contents

1.0 Policy statement

2.0 Scope

3.0 Policy aims

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

5.0 Individual Care Plans

6.0 Teaching about mental health

7.0 Signposting

8.0 Sources of support

9.0 Warning signs

10.0 Targeted support

11.0 Managing disclosures

12.0 Confidentiality and information sharing

13.0 Whole-school approach

13.1 Working with parents and carers

13.2 Supporting parents and carers

14.0 Support peers

15.0 Training

16.0 Policy review

Mulberry Academy Hastings is part of the Mulberry Schools Trust which is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (Company No. 10035860).
Company's registered office: Mulberry Schools Trust, Richard Street, Commercial Road, London E1 2JP

1.0 Policy statement

At Mulberry Academy Hastings, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all students, staff, families and governors. We aim to create an open, inclusive culture in which students feel heard, concerns are identified early and appropriate support is available.

Through clear procedures, effective pastoral practice and strong safeguarding arrangements, the academy will provide a safe and supportive environment for anyone affected, directly or indirectly, by mental health or emotional wellbeing concerns.

2.0 Scope

This policy applies to all academy staff, including teaching and support staff, volunteers, governors and those working on behalf of the academy. It also explains the academy's approach for students, parents and carers.

It should be read alongside the academy's safeguarding and child protection policy, behaviour policy, SEND policy, attendance policy, equality policy and any other relevant procedures.

3.0 Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing across the academy community.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health concerns.
- Enable staff to recognise and respond appropriately to early warning signs.
- Ensure staff understand how and when to seek advice or specialist support.
- Provide timely, proportionate support for students experiencing mental health difficulties.
- Ensure students and their parents or carers know where and how to access further support.
- Develop resilience, emotional literacy and healthy coping strategies.
- Promote a culture in which staff wellbeing is recognised, discussed appropriately and supported by leaders.

4.0 Roles and responsibilities

Promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing is a shared responsibility. All staff should contribute to a supportive environment, remain alert to changes in presentation or behaviour and follow the academy's safeguarding and reporting procedures.

Key staff and teams include:

- Senior Mental Health Lead
- Designated Safeguarding Lead and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Leads
- Pastoral staff and Heads of Year
- Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo)
- Mental Health First Aiders

Mulberry Academy Hastings is part of the Mulberry Schools Trust which is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (Company No. 10035860).
Company's registered office: Mulberry Schools Trust, Richard Street, Commercial Road, London E1 2JP

- PSHE lead
- School nursing and external support professionals, where involved

Where a member of staff is concerned about a student's mental health or emotional wellbeing, they should speak to the student's Head of Year or a member of the safeguarding team and record the concern on CPOMS in line with academy procedures.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm, the academy's child protection and emergency procedures must be followed without delay. Emergency services should be contacted where there is a serious or urgent medical risk.

5.0 Individual Care Plans

An Individual Care Plan should be considered where a student has an identified mental health need, has received a diagnosis, is receiving support from CAMHS or another agency, or where ongoing concerns require a coordinated response.

The plan should be developed collaboratively with the student, their parents or carers and relevant professionals, taking account of the student's age, understanding, wishes and best interests.

An Individual Care Plan may include:

- A clear summary of the student's needs, circumstances or diagnosis.
- Known triggers, early warning signs and protective factors.
- Reasonable adjustments, agreed strategies and any necessary precautions.
- Medication arrangements and relevant side effects, where applicable.
- Named staff responsible for support and review.
- Emergency contacts and escalation arrangements.
- The student's own views about what helps and what they would like staff to know.
- Review dates and agreed next steps.

6.0 Teaching about mental health

Students will be taught the knowledge and skills they need to support their own mental health and emotional wellbeing and to respond safely when they are concerned about others. This will be delivered through the assembly and tutor time programmes and the PSHE curriculum.

Teaching will be age-appropriate, inclusive and sensitive. It will promote emotional literacy, healthy relationships, resilience, help-seeking and safe coping strategies. Staff will use recognised guidance and resources when planning learning about mental health.

Lessons should make clear that students are not expected to take responsibility for managing another person's mental health and should always seek help from a safe adult when they are worried.

7.0 Signposting

The academy will ensure that students, staff, parents and carers know what support is available and how to access it. Information will be shared through appropriate channels, including displays, the academy website, newsletters, assemblies and direct communication.

Information should explain:

- What support is available.
- Who the service is intended for.
- How to access the service.
- When it may be appropriate to seek help.
- What is likely to happen after contact or referral.

8.0 Sources of support

School-based support

- Heads of Year and pastoral staff
- Teachers and tutors
- Safeguarding team
- Mental Health First Aiders
- Peer Mentors
- School nursing service
- Mental Health Support Team – Me and My Mind
- Social workers and other professionals, where involved

Local and national support

The academy may signpost students and families to local and national organisations who can offer support.

- Your local GP
- Sussex CAMHS
- Eggtooth
- Mind
- i-Rock Sussex
- NHS 111
- Samaritans
- Health in Mind
- Papyrus - Prevention of Young Suicide
- National Autistic Society - mental health guidance
- ADHD Aware
- Black Minds Matter UK
- MindOut - LGBTQ Mental Health Service
- Allsorts Youth Project - LGBTQ+ support
- FSN - Support for young people experiencing poverty, disadvantage, neglect or abuse

Mulberry Academy Hastings is part of the Mulberry Schools Trust which is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (Company No. 10035860).
Company's registered office: Mulberry Schools Trust, Richard Street, Commercial Road, London E1 2JP

- Child Bereavement UK

Neurodevelopmental conditions such as autism and ADHD are not mental health conditions. However, neurodivergent young people may experience mental health difficulties and may require adapted, accessible or specialist support.

9.0 Warning signs

Staff may notice changes that suggest a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing difficulties. Warning signs must be considered in context and should always be taken seriously. Any concern should be shared promptly with the student's Head of Year or a member of the safeguarding team and recorded on CPOMS in line with academy procedures.

Possible warning signs include:

- Repeated or unexplained physical injuries, particularly where they appear non-accidental.
- Significant changes in eating or sleeping habits.
- Withdrawal from friends, family or usual activities.
- Marked changes in mood, behaviour, activity or presentation.
- A sustained decline in attendance, punctuality, engagement or academic progress.
- Talking or joking about self-harm, suicide, hopelessness or feeling worthless.
- Misuse of alcohol, drugs or other substances.
- Changes in clothing that may be intended to conceal injuries.
- Secretive behaviour or reluctance to change for physical education.
- Repeated physical symptoms, such as pain or nausea, without an identified medical cause.
- Increased emotional dysregulation, anxiety, distress or risk-taking behaviour.

10.0 Targeted support

The academy recognises that some children and young people may be at increased risk of poorer mental health. This may include children in care, previously looked-after children, young carers, students with SEND, students who have previously accessed CAMHS, those living with parental mental ill health and those affected by abuse, neglect, bereavement, poverty or domestic abuse.

Support will be based on individual need rather than assumptions about a particular group. The academy will work with students, families, school nursing, CAMHS and other agencies to identify concerns early and provide coordinated support.

The academy will seek to:

- Identify students who may benefit from early or targeted intervention.
- Assess concerns using appropriate safeguarding, early help and SEND processes.
- Discuss concerns and options with the student and their parents or carers, where appropriate.
- Agree clear outcomes, support strategies and review arrangements.

- Provide evidence-informed pastoral or therapeutic interventions within the academy's capacity.
- Refer to specialist services where needs exceed the support the academy can safely provide.
- Ensure students know where and how to seek help.
- Build trusted relationships, particularly with students who may find it difficult to ask for support.
- Identify and support young carers in line with statutory duties.

11.0 Managing disclosures

When a student reports a concern about themselves or someone else, staff should respond calmly, listen carefully and avoid judgement. Staff should not investigate, ask leading questions or make promises they cannot keep.

The member of staff should:

- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing by speaking.
- Explain that the information may need to be shared with safeguarding staff so that appropriate help can be arranged.
- Clarify only the information needed to understand the immediate concern and level of risk.
- Record the concern on CPOMS as soon as possible, using the student's own words where appropriate.
- Take urgent action where there is an immediate risk of harm by reporting directly to the safeguarding team in line with academy procedures.

The CPOMS record should include:

- The name and role of the staff member.
- The date and time of the disclosure.
- The main points of the conversation and the student's words, where relevant.
- Any observations that may be important.
- Action taken, people informed and agreed next steps.

Peer Mentors must immediately pass any disclosure or safeguarding concern to a member of staff. They have received training for their role and know not to attempt to manage serious concerns independently.

12.0 Confidentiality and information sharing

Staff must never promise confidentiality to a student. Information will be shared only with those who need it in order to safeguard the student, provide support or meet legal and professional responsibilities.

Where it is safe and appropriate to do so, the student should be told who will be informed, what will be shared, why it needs to be shared and what will happen next.

Where there is a safeguarding concern, risk of harm or child protection issue, the academy's safeguarding procedures take priority. Parents or carers may not be informed immediately where doing so could place the student or another person at greater risk. Decisions of this nature will be made by the safeguarding team.

Mulberry Academy Hastings is part of the Mulberry Schools Trust which is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (Company No. 10035860).
Company's registered office: Mulberry Schools Trust, Richard Street, Commercial Road, London E1 2JP

Staff wellbeing must also be protected. No individual member of staff should carry sole responsibility for a student's support. Appropriate information sharing supports continuity, safe decision-making and access to professional advice.

13.0 Whole-school approach

The academy will promote mental health and emotional wellbeing through leadership, curriculum, pastoral systems, staff development, student voice, inclusive practice and partnership with families and external services.

13.1 Working with parents and carers

Parents and carers will usually be involved when concerns arise, unless there is a safeguarding reason why this would not be safe or appropriate. Communication should be respectful, clear and focused on the student's needs.

Before meeting or contacting parents or carers, staff should consider:

- Whether a face-to-face meeting is appropriate.
- Who should attend, including whether the student wishes or needs to be present.
- The purpose of the discussion and the desired outcomes.
- What information can be shared lawfully and appropriately.
- What support, signposting or follow-up may be needed.

Staff should recognise that hearing concerns about a child's mental health may be upsetting. Parents and carers should be given time to process information, ask questions and understand the proposed next steps.

A clear record of the discussion, decisions and agreed actions should be added to CPOMS. An Individual Care Plan should be created or updated where appropriate.

13.2 Supporting parents and carers

Families play an important role in children's emotional development and wellbeing. The academy will work in partnership with parents and carers by:

- Sharing accessible information about mental health, emotional wellbeing and early help.
- Signposting families to appropriate local and national services.
- Providing opportunities for parents and carers to seek advice or discuss concerns.
- Offering or signposting to parenting support, workshops or group programmes where available.
- Considering practical barriers to engagement, including timing, transport, childcare, language and accessibility.
- Working with family support and other agencies where additional help is required.

14.0 Supporting peers

Mulberry Academy Hastings is part of the Mulberry Schools Trust which is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (Company No. 10035860).
Company's registered office: Mulberry Schools Trust, Richard Street, Commercial Road, London E1 2JP

A student's mental health difficulties may also affect their friends. Peers may want to help but may not know what is safe, appropriate or helpful. Support will be considered on a case-by-case basis and will protect the privacy and wishes of the student concerned.

Where appropriate, peers may be supported to understand:

- What information it is appropriate for them to know.
- How they can offer safe, practical support.
- What they should avoid saying or doing.
- Warning signs that mean an adult should be contacted immediately.
- Where they can seek support for themselves.
- Healthy ways to manage difficult emotions or worry.

Students must be reminded that they are not responsible for keeping a friend safe on their own and should always involve a safe adult.

15.0 Training

All staff will receive regular training on recognising and responding to mental health and emotional wellbeing concerns as part of the academy's safeguarding training and Continuing Professional Development Programme.

Selected staff will receive Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent role-specific development. Additional training will be provided where emerging needs, policy changes or identified gaps require it.

Staff seeking further guidance should speak to their line manager, the Senior Mental Health Lead or the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Relevant resources may also be made available through the academy's staff systems and recognised professional learning platforms.

16.0 Policy review

This policy will be reviewed annually. The next scheduled review date is 01 September 2027.

The policy may be reviewed sooner where required by changes to legislation, statutory guidance, local services, academy procedures or identified need. The Designated Safeguarding Lead and Senior Mental Health Lead are responsible for coordinating updates.

Changes to named personnel, contact details or operational arrangements should be updated promptly and do not need to wait for the scheduled policy review.

Mulberry Academy Hastings is part of the Mulberry Schools Trust which is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (Company No. 10035860).
Company's registered office: Mulberry Schools Trust, Richard Street, Commercial Road, London E1 2JP