SHARE POLICY & PROCEDURE
Student Mental Health and Wellbeing – Secondary

Version	6.0
Name of policy writer	J Carr
Date of last review	September 2026
Date of next review	September 2027
Approved by Trustees or Delegated Authority	21.9.26

1. Policy statement

1.1 SHARE MAT believes in 'Valuing People, Supporting Personal Best.' Caring for the mental health of the people who make up our community is a vital part of achieving this overarching aim.

1.2 SHARE MAT academies aim to promote and support positive mental health and wellbeing for their whole school community (pupils, staff, and families) - recognising that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can significantly affect their ability to learn and achieve.

1.3 We pursue this aim using both universal/core whole school approaches, and where required, we use specialised, targeted approaches.

1.4 The World Health Organisation's defines mental health as: "a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the normal stresses of life, realise their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community.

1.5 The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: "in order to help their children succeed; academies have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy."

1.6 At SHARE MAT our role is to help children:

- Manage times of change and stress
- Feel supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it
- Understand what they can do to maintain positive mental health and make sense of what can affect their mental health
- Recognise how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues
- Identify where they can get help and support.

1.7 SHARE MAT remains committed to ensuring effective mental health and wellbeing support is offered to all pupils and staff. We have committed to appointing and training a Designated Mental Health Lead (DMHL) in each academy, ensuring that the safeguarding of pupils' emotional wellbeing is a priority.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching staff and volunteers – outlining Thornhill Community Academy's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

3. Legal and statutory framework

3.1 Schools have a legal duty to promote the welfare of their pupils, which includes their mental health and wellbeing, and this is guided by statutory guidance and frameworks.

3.2 Mental health is an integral part of safeguarding responsibilities as set-out in the statutory guidance for schools in Keeping Children Safe in Education. Mental health concerns may also be safeguarding concerns. Difficulties such as self-harm, eating disorders, suicidal ideation or significant emotional distress may indicate that a

child is at risk of harm, abuse, neglect or exploitation and should be considered through the academy's safeguarding procedures.

3.3 The SEND Code of Practice states that schools must provide adequate support for pupils with special educational needs, including those related to mental health.

3.4 Mental health forms part of the statutory curriculum for Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education.

4. Policy aims and objectives

4.1 SHARE MAT is committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, staff and other stakeholders. This policy focuses on pupils' mental health and aims to:

- Set out the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health.
- Ensure that mental health concerns are identified early and responded to appropriately through safeguarding, pastoral and SEND pathways where required.
- Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' metal health and wellbeing.
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers, including access to help, support and resources.

5. Role and responsibilities

5.1 All staff have a responsibility to support pupil mental health and wellbeing:

Role	Responsibilities	Contact
All staff (Including teachers, TAs, wider support roles and volunteers)	Promote positive mental health, create a safe and inclusive environment, and be aware of the signs of mental health challenges, supporting pupils as appropriate. Report concerns following academy procedure/practice. *Staff are not expected to diagnose mental health conditions but are expected to identify concerns, record concerns appropriately and follow academy safeguarding and referral procedures.*	
Pastoral staff	Provide direct support to pupils, often acting as the first point of contact for those experiencing difficulties.	
Designated Mental Health Lead (DMHL)	Facilitate and monitor support for individuals, provide training and liaise with external services.	Claire Keen
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and SENDCo	Monitor and evaluate the approach to supporting mental health – checking the quality and impact of support provided. Support the DMLH.	Claire Keen

Headteacher		Matthew Burton
Trust Improvement Lead	Write and update this policy, support Headteachers to review the quality of its implementation in supporting pupils with their mental health and wellbeing.	Danny Glover, Kelly Piling (nee Starkey)
Executive Leadership Team	Report to the Trust Board.	Jenny Carr
Trust Board	Review this policy and evaluate reports about academies' plans for raising awareness of mental health issues and for helping pupils maintain good levels of mental health.	Pupil Committee

6. Procedures and implementation

6.1 Mental health issues come in many forms and manifest themselves in a wide range of ways including:

- Resilience, self-esteem and confidence worries
- Stress, anxiety and depression
- Eating disorders
- Self-harm
- Suicidal ideation

6.2 Support for mental health and wellbeing sits in four layers:

Prevention:

- Creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely.
- Improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population.
- Equipping pupils to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively.

This layer of support can also be called the 'universal/core offer' and includes:

- Implementing a curriculum which promotes a culture of prevention and self-care
- Utilising Personal Development avenues, such as PSHE, Character curriculum, and assembly to discuss and promote mental wellbeing
- Teaching pupils about mental wellbeing through the statutory Relationships Education and Health Education curriculum, including emotional literacy, resilience, loneliness, bereavement, bullying, online wellbeing and help-seeking.
- Teaching pupils how online activity, cyberbullying, excessive screen time and harmful online content can affect wellbeing and where to seek support.
- Supporting pupils to understand that change, loss, bereavement and feelings of loneliness can affect wellbeing and that support is available.
- Upskilling families through sharing information, signposting external resources/courses and providing workshops.
- Providing safe spaces in school with accessibility to key adults.

Identification:

- Recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible - through a safeguarding concern, a change in behaviour or other concerns raised around attendance or punctuality.
    - Indicators may include significant behavioural change, social withdrawal, disrupted sleep patterns, reduced engagement in learning, changes in attendance, self-neglect or signs of self-harm
    - Discussions with families, teaching staff and SEND/Pastoral teams would take place to determine the level of mental health need and whether the pupil requires intervention beyond the 'universal/core offer' of support.
- Staff should submit a referral to the SEND team so that the information can be triaged and the appropriate level of support agreed.

Early support:

- Helping pupils to access evidence based early support and interventions. This could be through:
    - Daily/regular check-ins with a key adult
    - Support from the DSL and/or a Pastoral Support Worker – either through informal interactions or through targeted and specific interventions
    - In-school emotional and wellbeing (EWB) support through a group or 1:1 series of sessions.
    - Discussion with family and friends about how they can support the pupil
- Where concerns may also meet a safeguarding threshold, staff must report these immediately to the DSL or Deputy DSL in accordance with the academy Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy.

Access to specialist support:

- Where a pupil continues to experience difficulties despite targeted support, or where there are concerns about the pupil's safety or wellbeing, the academy may work with the pupil, family and relevant professionals to consider whether additional specialist support is required. This may include:
    - The development and implementation of a pupil passport, safety plan and/or risk assessment, informed by the pupil's needs, strengths and views. Where mental health needs have an impact on learning, attendance, behaviour or wider participation in school life, these arrangements may be incorporated into a My Support Plan.
    - Working collaboratively with families and external agencies to secure timely advice, assessment and support. This may involve seeking specialist input where needs are increasing, where existing support has not achieved the intended outcomes, or where there is an immediate concern about the safety or wellbeing of the pupil or others. See Appendix I for details of external agencies with which we regularly work.
- **Where there is an immediate risk of harm or a medical emergency, 999 or Accident and Emergency services should be contacted immediately. Where urgent mental health support is required but there is no immediate emergency, support should be sought through NHS 111 alongside academy safeguarding procedures.**

6.3 Pupils will be encouraged to seek support for themselves or others by:

- Talking to a trusted friend, family member or adult about how they are feeling

- Identifying the main worries or problems they are facing and considering how to effectively manage those feelings
- Seeking support from staff in school where this is needed. In the first instance this support, and guidance could come from their class teacher, or Pastoral Team - this will most likely be a member of staff who they are comfortable talking to
- Share concerns using the Tell us Something facility on the school's website
- Access online support through websites such as:
    - Young Minds
    - West Yorkshire Night Owls Helpline
    - Childline
    - Samaritans
    - Shout
    - NHS 111 (if medical help is required)
    - Papyrus (suicide prevention 'Hopeline')

6.4 The Special Educational Need or Disability (SEND) Code of Practice states that, "Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder."

Under the Equality Act (2010) it legislates that schools should make reasonable adjustments to avoid children with disabilities being disadvantaged, including providing extra support, aids and services and not directly or indirectly discriminate against, harass or victimise children with disabilities through school practice. At SHARE MAT, we know that it is important a pupil's SEND need is understood and this forms part of a wider understanding of that individual pupil's Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) needs to avoid discriminating a pupil with a SEND need from accessing appropriate mental health and wellbeing support.

A pupil's mental health and wellbeing needs will be assessed and supported as appropriate when behaviours exhibited cause disruption or risk of harm. Mental health needs will always be considered when deciding on whether to suspend/exclude a child – use of the behaviour policy may be adapted in light of need. Mental health needs will be evaluated and/or reviewed as part of reintegration processes.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

7.1 The policy will be reviewed every year to assess and evaluate its implementation and impact. Individual academies should include targets for measuring and improving the mental health of pupils as part of School Improvement Planning, the self-evaluation process and in reporting to the Executive Leadership Team and the Trust Board.

7.2 The policy will be promoted and implemented throughout the academy and can be seen in all aspects of school life from curriculum planning to pastoral support.

8. Training and awareness

8.1 All staff at SHARE MAT are supported to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing. The report of the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce recommends that staff working with children and young people in universal settings, including schools, should "receive training in children and young people's development and behaviours but should not be expected to replace specialist services." (PHE, 2015).

8.2 Some members of SHARE MAT school pastoral teams may be trained mental health first aiders who support and train the wider staff body to be able to identify mental health needs early in children.

8.3 Annually, through safeguarding (and wider) training, all staff are given information about mental health and wellbeing in pupils and are given the opportunity to ask questions and seek support. Training will include recognising the links between mental health and safeguarding, identifying early indicators of concern and understanding referral pathways within and beyond the academy.

8.4 Staff are reminded regularly to treat mental health and wellbeing issues seriously and report concerns immediately to the most relevant staff member.

8.5 Staff who deal with issues of mental health and wellbeing will also be offered adequate and regular supervision opportunities to mitigate the impact that this may have on them as a professional. This will also help to ensure that the right services and agencies have been considered with regards to the support offered to the pupil.

8.6 SHARE MAT DMHLs will receive training to strategically lead Mental Health and Wellbeing across the academy. They will network with other professionals across the local authority by taking part in local networks and training – key messages/training points will be disseminated to the wider team.

9. Equality and diversity statement

9.1 If a person's mental health condition meets the legal definition of a disability, they are protected from discrimination under the Equality Act 2010. SHARE MATs equality statement identifies the objective to advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic (in this case potential disability) and this who do not.

10. Linked policies

10.1 This policy is directly linked to and should be implemented in conjunction with:

- SHARE MAT Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy & Procedure
- SHARE MAT SEND P9olicy and Procedure
- SHARE MAT Behaviour Policy
- SHARE MAT RSHE Policy
- SHARE MAT Online Safety Policy
- SHARE MAT Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy

In addition to the following sources of guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Mental health and behaviour in schools

- Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools

11. Appendix

11.1 External agencies we work with include, but are not limited to:

- Kirklees Keep in Mind (Including - School nurse referral – Locala 0-19 Service)
- Locala Single Point of Contact (SPoC) – 0300 304 5555
- Kooth
- Families Together (Kirklees)
- Chat Health (Calderdale)
- Silvercloud | Open Minds (CAMHS) (Calderdale online counselling service)
- Openminds in Calderdale (MHST Calderdale)
- Youth Works (Calderdale)
- Invictus Wellbeing (West Yorkshire)
- CAHMs Crisis Line (for urgent help)
- Every Mind Matters - NHS (information for parents and children)
- Mind (support service)
- Papyrus (phone line)
- YoungMinds (support service)
- A range of apps, recommended here: Mental Health Apps | Wellbeing and mental health services for all | Kirklees SEND Local Offer
- Supporting parents or carers to organise a GP appointment

12. Schedule of Amendment

Version No	Amendment
5.0	Policy fully rewritten using the updated SHARE MAT Primary Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy as a foundational framework, ensuring consistency in structure, tone, and approach across all phases.
6.0	The policy has been updated to strengthen its alignment with the SEND Code of Practice, Inclusion guidance and KCSIE statutory requirements, with clearer wording around identification, staff roles, early support and access to specialist services. Updates also include refreshed RSHE and wellbeing references, clearer safeguarding escalation and parental involvement arrangements, clarification of staff training, and an expanded list of linked policies. Staff names have been updated, with responsibility for review and evaluation allocated to the Pupil Committee.