



The Milford Academy

Social, Emotional and Mental Health Policy

(SEMH)

(This policy should be read in conjunction with the Anti-Bullying Policy and Positive Behaviour Policy)

Document Information			
School:	The Milford Academy	Version Date:	Autumn 2025
Approved by: (if applicable)	Governing Body	Owner:	Joe Turner
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Rationale:

At The Milford Academy, we seek to create an environment which encourages and reinforces an understanding of mental health and how to support positive mental health.

It is a primary aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. We are a caring community, whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all.

We strive to provide an effective and enjoyable teaching and learning environment, where everyone feels happy, safe and secure and able to learn. We aim to promote mental and physical health and emotional wellbeing for us all. Wellbeing is at the forefront of the school's curriculum and promoting good mental health is a priority.

The Milford Academy's Definition of Mental Health:

Mental Health is a state of mind- how we feel, think and act- and is the basis of how we steer through everyday life and respond to everyday ups and downs.

Statement of Intent:

At The Milford Academy, we are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of our whole school community (children, staff, governors, parents and carers) in an inclusive and respectful environment. Our values, which are at the core of our curriculum and which underpin everything we do, prepare and guide our children into the next stage of their lives: making positive life choices, supporting them in becoming lifelong learners and developing these values which encapsulate the role of becoming confident and happy citizens who contribute positively to the community and society. We are committed to making a difference and being active participants in our pupils' lives who can and do make a difference.

We strive to create a supportive and caring ethos throughout school where our approach is respectful and kind and where each individual and contribution is valued. Our pupils stay at the centre of every conversation in relation to effective mental health. We pride ourselves in building strong, positive relationships with staff, pupils and parents. These relationships with our children are vital in order for them to feel valued, safe and secure. For many children this can be achieved by simple acknowledgement of the child, and the child having the knowledge that you have them in your mind, care about them as a person and care about what they are doing.

We endeavour to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress and aim to ensure that they are supported to reach their potential or to access help when they need it. We will develop an awareness of mental health in the school and teach the children how to recognise their own mental health and their peers.

We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health by preparing them with supportive strategies to limit risk aversion, understanding what

affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and less emotionally resilient. At any time, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play. At Milford Academy, we value the importance of an open-door policy where all stakeholders (staff, pupils, parents and governors) feel they are listened to and can share their ideas, worries and concerns.

Teaching about Mental Health:

At The Milford Academy, we take a whole school universal approach to promoting positive mental health, aiming to help children become more resilient and persevere when faced with their own challenges, feel happy and successful and know how to work in a proactive way to avoid problems arising. We believe that every child has the ability to achieve and succeed. We do this by:

- Creating and applying a consistent ethos, policies and behaviours that support mental health and well-being.
- Adhering to a positive, restorative approach to behaviour management.
- Helping children socially to form and maintain relationships.
- Helping children to feel comfortable about sharing any concerns or worries.
- Teaching children emotional skills and an awareness of mental health so that they understand their emotions and feelings better.
- Promoting self-esteem and ensuring children understand their importance in the world.
- Helping children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks.
- Embedding the school's values across the curriculum to promote a positive mindset.
- Identifying children who have mental health challenges and planning support to meet their needs, including working with the school counsellor, specialist services, parents and carers.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and their own resilience.
- Developing an open culture where it's normal to talk about mental health.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging where everybody feels connected, heard, valued and understood.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making (i.e., School Council, Subject Monitoring).
- Morning greetings to all children.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
 - Individual and class rewards systems.
 - Sharing success with parents (i.e., Dojo messages and emails).
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others.
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Enabling access to appropriate support.
- Mental Health and PSHE for all year groups.
- Access to information around the school.

We pursue our aims through:

- Universal, whole school approaches.
- Support for pupils going through recent difficulties including bereavement.
- Selective and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at pupils with more complex or long-term difficulties including attachment disorder.
- Nurture groups/ SEMH interventions to focus on mental health, resilience and wellbeing.

Within our teaching, we will teach the children the skills to rationally respond to situations and develop an ethos, for both pupils, staff and parents, that it is okay if we cannot solve every problem alone and we may need support and help from another source.

Staff Roles and Responsibilities, including those with specific responsibility:

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Named Mental Health Lead – Laura Barker (SENCo)

ELSA – Jennifer Vaughan

SEMH Governor

Our Mental Health Lead will:

- Lead and work with all staff, particularly the PSHE subject coordinator, to coordinate whole school activities to promote positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Work with the PSHE subject coordinator re: teaching about mental health using the help of the SCARF programme.
- Provide advice and support to staff and organise training and updates.
- Liaise with mental health services and make individual referrals to them.

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum (SCARF).

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we're teaching but we will also use the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner.

Targeted Support:

The school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Circle time approaches or 'circle of friends' activities;
- Targeted use of SEMH resources;
- Managing feelings resources e.g., 'worry boxes', 'emotion charts,' and 'worry monsters';
- Managing emotions resources;

- Daily emotional check-ins;
- Primary Group Work/ Mental health and wellbeing groups/ Counselling sessions;
- Therapeutic activities including art, Lego and relaxation and mindfulness techniques.

The school will make use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including:

- Whole school SEMH Inclusion Document;
- Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire;
- Routes to Inclusion (R2i Resources);
- Positive Programmes.

Signposting:

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of what support is available within our school and how to access further support.

Early Identification and Warning Signs:

All staff will be vigilant in identifying a range of possible difficulties that may be contributing to a pupil's poor mental health, including:

- Attendance;
- Punctuality;
- Relationships;
- Low Self- Esteem;
- Approach to learning;
- Physical indicators;
- Negative behaviour patterns;
- Family circumstance;
- Recent bereavement;
- Withdrawal/ Isolation;
- Health indicators.

School staff may also become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the designated safeguarding leads, mental health lead or the school counsellor as appropriate.

Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating/ sleeping habits;
- Becoming socially withdrawn;
- Changes in activity and mood;
- Talking about self-harm or suicide;
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope;
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause;
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.

The Milford Academy will use all possible opportunities to promote the importance of good attendance and punctuality. The Senior Leadership Team will work together to support in the removal of barriers to good school attendance. The foundation for good attendance is a strong partnership between the school, parents and the child.

The school will:

- Provide and promote a welcoming and positive atmosphere so that children feel safe, and know that their presence is valued.
- Raise awareness of the importance of full attendance and punctuality, using newsletters and other communications to parents; making attendance a high priority.
- Employ a key member of staff with responsibility for monitoring, improving and evaluating school attendance. At The Milford Academy, this role is fulfilled by Louise Butler: our achievement and attendance lead.

Assessment, Interventions and Support:

All concerns are reported to the designated adults within school and needs are assessed through a triage approach with the senior leadership team, class teachers and SENCo to ensure the child gets the support they need, either from within the school or from an external specialist service, as quickly as possible.

Working with Specialist Services:

As part of our targeted provision, the school will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Children may be referred to one of the following services for additional support:

- INclude Support Team;
 - Educational Psychology Services;
 - CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service);
- Be U Notts;
- Partnership Service;
 - Therapists;
 - Mental Health charities such as Young Minds and Heads Up;
 - Supporting Families;
 - Counselling Services.

Working with Parents and Carers:

Parents or carers can approach their child/ children's class teacher if they have mental health concerns. This will be cascaded to the Mental Health Lead (SENCo) and/ or ELSA for assessment.

To support parents and carers we will:

- Provide information online on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.

- Share ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.
- Organise workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience and steps to wellbeing.

When a concern has been raised, teachers or the Mental Health Lead/ SENCo will:

- Contact parents to discuss the outcome of any assessment (although there may be cases, parents and carers cannot be involved due to child protection issues).
- Discuss any relevant referrals to external agencies and attend meetings in support of these referrals.
- Signpost parents to further information or provide resources to take away.
- Create a chronology of actions and events and keep notes up to date.
- Agree mental health care where appropriate including clear next steps.
- Discuss how parents can support their child through strategies or signposts to parenting support groups.

Training:

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular safeguarding training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe. This also includes ACEs training for all staff. 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 considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

Links to other Policies:

This policy links to our Attendance Policy, Safeguarding Policy, Anti Bullying Policy, Local SEND Offer (SEND Information Report) and our Positive Behaviour Policy.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

The Mental Health Policy will be published on the school website - hard copies are available on request.

The policy will be reviewed every year.

If you have any further questions, then please contact the school and we will be more than happy to help.

Telephone: 0115 9152951

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