

Policy statement

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to her or his community. (World Health Organization)

At Stewards Academy we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of the student body. We take a whole school approach towards the mental health of our students. This means working with parents and carers and with other agencies and partners, where necessary.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant, and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for our students.

We promote a 'mind to be kind' culture through our pupil voice groups, peer mentors and assemblies, and embed the principles of kindness, respect and living without harm. We encourage students to be open and we want each student to have their voice heard. At our school we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that each of us may need help to cope with them sometimes. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support. At our school, positive mental health is everyone's responsibility. We all have a role to play.

Policy Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff, including teaching staff, governors, and non-teaching staff. It outlines our approach to promoting student mental health and wellbeing. It should be read and understood alongside our other relevant school policies.

Policy Aims

The aim of our policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health of our students.

At our school we will:

- Help students to understand their emotions and experiences better
- Ensure our students feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- Help students to form and maintain positive relationships
- Encourage students to be confident and help to promote their self-esteem
- Help students to develop resilience and coping strategies

We will encourage a positive, healthy environment by:

- Promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all students
- Celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging and community
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth and to reflect
- Promoting our students' voices and giving them the opportunity to participate in decision making
- Celebrating each student for who they are and making every student feel valued and respected
- Adopting a whole school approach to mental health and providing support to any students that need it
- Raising awareness amongst staff and students about mental health issues and their signs and symptoms
- Enabling staff to respond to early warning signs of mental-ill health in students
- Ensuring all students are aware of the 'open door' policy we encourage

Key Staff Members

All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students. However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process. These are:

- The Safeguarding Team
- Designated Mental Health Leads
- Mental Health First Aiders
- Pastoral Staff
- SEND Team

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a student, in the first instance they should speak to the Safeguarding Team. A concern should be raised on Classcharts.

If a child presents as a medical emergency, then relevant procedures will be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

Teaching About Mental Health

Our tutor time, Safeguarding Community Briefings, Ethics & Values lessons, and Curriculum Days are developed to give students the skills, knowledge and understanding they need to keep themselves mentally healthy. This includes resilience techniques and training.

We will regularly review our curriculum content to ensure that they're meeting the aims outlined in this policy.

Support at School and in the Local Community

We have an additional range of support available in school for any student struggling, as listed below:

- Place 2 Be Counselling
- Mind In West Essex support (Mind & Mood)
- Emotional wellbeing / self-esteem interventions
- Tutor support / Morning Prep
- Peer Mentors
- Referrals to appropriate outside agencies (e.g., CAMHS, Alternative Education opportunities)
- Essex Young Carers
- School Nurse
- Signposting to various Mental Health apps

Support for Parents / Carers

We will always aim to extend our support to parents and carers as part of our holistic approach. This could be by signposting to: outside agencies and organisations; our in-house Place 2 Be counselling; support information; advice about supporting their child; online parenting support courses and contact details of relevant staff in school.

Staff Awareness

Staff receive training to help identify concerns around various behaviours and changes and how to report any concern via Class Charts. This is then followed up by the Safeguarding Team.

If a student discloses a concern about themselves or a friend, the staff member will raise a concern via Class Charts, have an immediate conversation with the Safeguarding Lead / Team if considered urgent who will contact parents where appropriate.

Training

All staff will receive regular training in child mental health so that they can recognise and respond to mental health issues. This will form part of their regular safeguarding training and is a requirement to keep children safe.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every year. This is so that it remains up to date, useful and relevant. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local and national policy changes.