THE HUB – SOCIAL, EMOTIONAL AND MENTAL HEALTH (SEMH) POLICY

Date of Policy: April 2026

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Introduction

The Hub is committed to providing a caring, supportive and inclusive environment in which every individual is valued, respected and able to thrive. We recognise that positive mental health is fundamental to learning, development, achievement and wellbeing. All children and young people have the right to be educated in an environment that actively promotes and protects their mental health, and all adults have the right to work in a setting that supports their wellbeing. We acknowledge that everyone experiences challenges that may affect their mental health, and at times may require additional support to maintain or develop emotional resilience.

Our provision aims to support the psychosocial development of all learners by raising awareness, increasing understanding of the world around them, and ensuring that The Hub is a place where children and young people feel safe, secure and able to experience success. Healthy relationships underpin positive mental health, and a consistent whole-school approach ensures that our ethos, environment and daily practice promote wellbeing across the entire community.

This policy is informed by statutory guidance including the Children and Families Act 2014, the SEND Code of Practice (2015), Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018), Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools (DfE 2023), Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance (2016), Behaviour in Schools Guidance (2022), the Equality Act 2010, the Prevent Duty (2015), and the Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (2023). It reflects our legal duties and our commitment to providing high-quality alternative provision that meets the needs of pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.

A Mentally Healthy Environment

The Hub strives to maintain an environment that respects every individual and responds to their needs. We promote a culture in which mental health is understood as everyone's responsibility, supported by a named Mental Health Lead who coordinates whole-school wellbeing practice. Children and young people are encouraged to participate in activities that foster belonging, to engage in decision-making that develops autonomy, and to celebrate both academic and non-academic achievements. Their unique talents and abilities are identified and nurtured, and they are supported to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others. They are entitled to an environment that is safe, clean and well cared for, and they are surrounded by adults who model positive behaviour, healthy interactions and appropriate ways of relating at all times.

Staff wellbeing is recognised as essential to sustaining a mentally healthy environment. The Hub ensures that staff needs are understood and responded to holistically by senior leaders and wellbeing support mechanisms. Staff have access to a range of wellbeing strategies, including named individuals to speak to, signposting to external support, and opportunities for self-help workshops. Their work-life balance is respected, their wellbeing is reviewed regularly, and they are valued for their contributions to decision-making processes. Staff are supported to carry out their roles effectively, provided with opportunities for professional development, and encouraged to reflect on their practice. They have access to proactive emotional support, including 24-hour access to a doctor and free counselling.

Parents and carers are recognised as significant contributors to children's mental health. They are welcomed, included and encouraged to work in partnership with The Hub and external agencies. They are provided with opportunities to seek help when needed, signposted to appropriate support, and offered regular workshops to strengthen their understanding of mental health. Their opinions are sought, valued and responded to, and their strengths and difficulties are acknowledged and addressed appropriately.

The whole school community contributes to promoting positive mental health and is valued for the role it plays. Our learning environment provides opportunities that support wellbeing through curriculum design and extended provision, including Forest Schools, TECK, differentiated learning activities, individual timetables, parent events and activities that challenge stereotypes.

Implementation of the Policy

The implementation of this policy ensures a cohesive and coordinated approach to mental health across The Hub. It underpins all policies and practices, raises awareness of how individuals can look after their own mental health and that of others, and helps to reduce stigma associated with mental health difficulties. It supports individuals to reach their potential, strengthens relationships, and provides opportunities for collaborative working. It lays foundations for lifelong learning and promotes resilience throughout the community, empowering everyone to face life's

challenges. We recognise our equal responsibility to vulnerable staff, pupils and parents, including those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.

Rationale

The Hub adopts a whole-rounded approach to SEMH to ensure consistency and effectiveness for all pupils. We maintain a Student Voice that represents all ages and meets regularly to ensure that pupils' perspectives inform our practice. This approach aligns with statutory expectations for alternative provision and supports early identification, intervention and reintegration.

Aims

The Hub aims to increase awareness and understanding among staff and parents of issues affecting young people's mental health, including low self-esteem, self-harm, emotional dysregulation, anxiety, depression, loss and bereavement. We aim to detect and address problems at the earliest stage, particularly those relating to thinking, attitudes to self-image, self-esteem and self-control. We are committed to implementing appropriate levels of support for pupils with mental health needs, both internally and in partnership with external health agencies and child support groups. We aim to promote positivity around mental wellbeing, reduce stigma, and ensure that all staff understand their responsibility to safeguard and support pupils, recognising that progress and achievement depend on their wellbeing.

Supporting Pupils with Mental Health Needs

Early identification is central to effective SEMH support. Staff at The Hub know pupils well and are able to recognise changes in behaviour that may indicate underlying mental health concerns. We make effective use of data relating to attendance, attainment and behaviour to identify emerging patterns and intervene promptly. Where a pupil has seriously self-harmed, staff follow established medical emergency procedures without delay.

The Hub follows the graduated response outlined in the SEND Code of Practice. Needs are assessed through observation, data analysis and multi-agency information. Plans are developed collaboratively with pupils, parents and professionals, including SEMH support plans, risk assessments and safety plans. Interventions are implemented through counselling, mentoring, therapeutic programmes, curriculum adjustments and trauma-informed practice. Support is reviewed regularly to evaluate impact and adjust provision accordingly.

Our support framework includes a whole-school approach to emotional health and wellbeing, a clear behaviour policy that promotes an anti-bullying culture, and a provision ethos that values all pupils and encourages open discussion of difficulties without stigma. Staff receive continuous professional development to strengthen their understanding of SEMH needs. Directors visit homes and meet families to support emotional wellbeing and ensure that parents are fully informed about available interventions. The Hub provides counselling and peer mentoring delivered by specialists, works with external agencies to support pupils with health problems, and makes referrals to CAMHS where appropriate.

Reintegration

As an alternative provision, The Hub ensures that SEMH support contributes to reintegration into mainstream education, specialist settings or post-16 pathways. Reintegration plans include clear targets, therapeutic interventions, attendance strategies and multi-agency collaboration. These plans are reviewed regularly to ensure that pupils are supported effectively and that transitions are safe, appropriate and sustainable.

Multi-Agency Working

The Hub works collaboratively with CAMHS, Social Care, Early Help, Educational Psychologists, Youth Offending Teams, school nursing teams, GPs and Local Authority SEND services. This multi-agency approach ensures that pupils with complex SEMH needs receive coordinated support in line with Working Together to Safeguard Children (2018).

Crisis and Risk Management

Risk assessments are completed for pupils with SEMH needs, including self-harm risk assessments, behaviour risk assessments and individual safety plans. Where a pupil experiences a crisis, staff follow emergency procedures, involve the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately, contact parents or carers, and notify external agencies where appropriate. A review meeting is held promptly to reassess needs and adjust support.

Supporting Staff Working with Distressed Pupils

The Hub acknowledges that supporting distressed pupils can place emotional strain on staff. Staff are encouraged to seek support from their line manager, HR or senior leaders. This reflects the expectations of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2024), which emphasises staff wellbeing as a safeguarding factor.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The Hub monitors attendance, behaviour, attainment, engagement, emotional wellbeing and the impact of interventions. Data is reviewed weekly, half-termly, termly and annually. Findings inform practice, support planning and leadership decisions, and are shared with directors, the Local Authority (where required) and Ofsted during inspection.

Prevent Duty

The Hub recognises that pupils with SEMH needs may be more vulnerable to exploitation or radicalisation. Staff are trained to identify concerns and follow Prevent procedures. Safeguarding practice ensures that pupils are protected from harm and supported to develop resilience.

Equality and Protected Characteristics

The Hub is committed to promoting equality and eliminating discrimination. We recognise our responsibility to support vulnerable staff, pupils and parents, including those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. We ensure that reasonable adjustments are made to enable pupils with SEMH needs to access learning and participate fully in provision life.