



inspiring the journey for
independence together

Promoting Positive Mental Health in Rivermead Inclusive Trust Schools for Staff, Learners and their Families

Non-Statutory

Reviewed Yearly

Signed:  (Chair of the Trust)

Date: December 2022

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1. Mission Statement

We promote a caring, supportive environment in which each individual is valued and respected. We have high expectations for all and aspire to achieve excellence.

The Rivermead Inclusive Trust recognises that all children and young people need the foundation of positive well being and mental health to benefit fully from all of the opportunities available to them. The Rivermead Inclusive Trust also prioritises the Mental Wellbeing of their staff, as they recognise that this has a huge impact on the ability to promote learner wellbeing in turn.

‘Research evidence shows that education and health are closely linked; so, promoting the health and wellbeing of pupils and students within schools and colleges has the potential to improve their educational outcomes and their health and wellbeing outcomes.’

Everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable. At times, anyone may need additional support to maintain or develop good mental health.

- 1 in 10 children and young people aged 1 – 15 years have a clinically recognisable mental disorder in any one year
- 1 in 4 adults will experience mental health difficulties; at least half of these difficulties can be traced back to childhood

(What new statistics show about children's mental health, 2018)

The mental health of children and young people, adults in schools, parents and carers and the wider whole school community will impact on all areas of development, learning, achievement and experiences.

All children and young people have the right to be educated in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody. All adults have the right to work in an environment that supports and promotes positive mental health for everybody.

Rivermead Inclusive Trust recognises these needs and rights. It is committed to raising awareness, increasing understanding and ensuring that all schools can and do make a difference by providing a place where all children and young people feel safe, secure and able to achieve and experience success and well-being.

The Rivermead Inclusive Trust recognises that Mental Health is now explicitly included in the definition of safeguarding within the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022 document, which states that safeguarding includes “preventing impairment of children’s

mental and physical health or development". All staff employed by the Rivermead Inclusive Trust undertake a range of safeguarding CPD every year and are fully aware of these recent updates.

2. What we promise to provide in our schools:

All schools should offer a learning environment that promotes and enhances positive mental health. A consistent approach means that the school environment and school ethos all promote the mental health of the whole school community.

Healthy relationships underpin positive mental health and have a significant impact.

A mentally healthy environment has:

- A clear and agreed ethos and culture that accords value and respect to all
- A commitment to being responsive to children and young people's needs
- Clearly defined mental health links in school policies
- Clear guidelines for internal and external referrals
- Strong links with external agencies to provide access to support and information
- A named lead for mental health promotion with the expectation that there is support and involvement and an ethos that 'mental health is everyone's business'

A mentally healthy environment is a place where children and young people:

- Have opportunities to participate in activities that encourage belonging
- Have opportunities to participate in decision making
- Have opportunities to celebrate academic and non-academic achievements
- Have their unique talents and abilities identified and developed
- Have opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Have opportunities to reflect
- Have access to appropriate support that meets their needs
- Have a right to be in an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for
- Are surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours, interactions and ways of relating at all times

A mentally healthy environment is a place where staff:

- Have their individual needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way
- Have a range of strategies that support their mental health, e.g. a named person to speak to, signposting
- Have recognition of their work-life balance

- Have the mental health and well-being of the staff looked after with a Wellbeing Lead in each provision that sits on the Wellbeing Working Party for Staff. This party to meet regularly to discuss how to support staff across the Trust
- Staff have access to 'Care First', a service provided by the Rivermead Inclusive Trust to enable an outlet for individuals who feel as though they may need support from mental health professionals.
- Staff have a direct line to the Trust Human Resources Manager who will support and guide staff with any concerns they may have. This may include signposting them to more appropriate and specialised support.
- Staff have access via a referral system to occupational health support when needed
- Feel valued and have opportunities to contribute to decision making processes within their provisions
- Celebrate and recognise success
- Are able to carry out roles and responsibilities effectively
- Are provided with opportunities for CPD both personally and professionally
- Have their unique talents and skills recognised and opportunities are provided for development
- Have time to reflect
- Can access proactive strategies and systems to support them at times of emotional needs in both the short term and the long term

A mentally healthy environment is a place where parents/carers:

- Are recognised for their significant contribution to children and young people's mental health
- Are welcomed, included and work in partnership with schools and agencies
- Are provided with opportunities where they can ask for help when needed
- Are signposted to appropriate agencies for support
- Are clear about their roles and expectations of their responsibilities in working in partnership with schools
- Opinions are sought and valued and responded to
- Strengths and difficulties are recognised, acknowledged and challenged appropriately

A mentally healthy environment is a place where the whole school community:

- Is involved in promoting positive mental health
- Is valued for the role it plays in promoting positive mental health
- Contributes towards the ethos of the school

A healthy learning environment provides opportunities that promote positive mental health, through the standard curriculum and extended provision.

The implementation of the policy for promoting positive mental health in schools:

- Will give schools a cohesive and coordinated approach to mental health
- Should underpin all policies and practices currently used in schools
- Will raise awareness as to how the whole school community can look after their own mental health and that of others
- Will help to de-stigmatise mental health
- Will support people and provide opportunities that enable everyone to reach their potential
- Will strengthen relationships and provide opportunities for different ways of working
- Will provide foundations for life-long learning
- Will promote and strengthen resilience throughout the whole school community and empower everyone to face life's challenges

This policy promotes positive mental health. It is a working document and has been developed in consultation with the Rivermead Inclusive Trust community.

This policy must be reviewed every two years.

3. Measuring Impact

This policy offers opportunities to measure the impact in a variety of ways:

- School policies
- The individual school's ethos
- Child/Staff/Volunteer well being
- Staff/Governor/class and school council meetings
- Feedback from the whole school community via questionnaires and verbally, formally and informally
- Training and development internally, for example through our Mental Health Working Party which contains Mental Health Leads, Mental Health Champions and Mental Health Lead for the Trust
- Induction and professional development of Staff and Volunteers

The promotion of positive mental health for children and young people is everyone's business

4. References

Mental Health Foundation. 2018. *What New Statistics Show About Children's Mental Health*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/blog/what-new-statistics-show-about-childrens-mental-health>> [Accessed 8 September 2020]

Read in conjunction with:

Keeping Children Safe in Education 2022
School Development Plans
Behaviour Policies
Child Protection Procedures
Individual provision handbooks