Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

Newsome Academy

1. Policy Statement

Newsome Academy is committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing for all pupils, staff, and stakeholders. We recognise the importance of mental health in enabling pupils to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Our approach is inclusive, proactive, and responsive, ensuring timely support through early intervention, access to external services, and the use of evidence-based strategies.

2. Aims of the Policy

- To create a safe, supportive, and inclusive environment that promotes mental wellbeing.
- To identify and support pupils experiencing mental health challenges as early as possible.
- To implement evidence-based interventions tailored to individual needs.
- To work collaboratively with external services to provide holistic support.
- To equip staff with the knowledge and confidence to support mental health in the school community.

3. Scope of the Policy

This policy applies to:

- All pupils attending Newsome Academy
- All staff members
- Parents/carers and external partners engaging with the school

4. Promoting a Whole-School Approach to Mental Health

- Incorporating wellbeing education into the curriculum through PSHE, assemblies, and classroom activities.
- Promoting positive relationships and social connection across the school community.
- Encouraging healthy lifestyle habits including physical activity, nutrition, sleep, and digital wellbeing.
- Embedding mental health into staff development and professional practice.

5. Early Intervention

Key Principles:

- Recognising signs and symptoms of mental health issues early can prevent escalation.
- Early conversations and consistent support are critical.

Strategies:

- Staff are trained to notice changes in behaviour, attendance, academic performance, and social interaction.
- Regular check-ins with pupils through form tutors or pastoral staff.

- Use of screening tools and wellbeing surveys to identify emerging needs.
- Designated staff members (e.g., SENCO, Pastoral Lead, Mental Health Lead) coordinate referrals and monitor wellbeing.

6. Evidence-Based Interventions

Newsome Academy commits to using strategies supported by research and best practice. These may include:

- **Cognitive Behavioural Approaches (CBT):** Small group or individual support for anxiety, low mood, or behaviour management.
- **Social and Emotional Learning (SEL):** Structured programmes embedded into curriculum time.
- **Mindfulness and Relaxation Techniques:** To promote emotional regulation and focus.
- **Behavioural Interventions:** Positive reinforcement, self-monitoring, and goal-setting techniques.
- **Trauma-Informed Practice:** Approaches that recognise and respond to the impact of trauma.
- **Peer Mentoring and Support Groups:** Building safe, student-led support systems.

All interventions will be monitored for effectiveness, adjusted where needed, and delivered by trained staff or verified external professionals.

7. Accessing External Support

Where a pupil's needs exceed what the school can provide, referrals will be made to appropriate external agencies. These include:

- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)
- Educational Psychologists
- Local Wellbeing and Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs)
- School Counsellors and Therapy Services
- Social Care, Youth Services, and Family Support Workers
- Charities and Community Services (e.g., Kooth, YoungMinds, NSPCC)

The school will:

- Maintain strong relationships with local providers.
- Support families through referral processes.
- Attend multi-agency meetings and contribute to care planning.

8. Staff Training and Support

- Annual training on mental health awareness for all staff.
- Targeted training for key staff in mental health first aid, suicide prevention, and trauma-informed approaches.
- Access to professional development and peer support networks.
- Promotion of staff wellbeing through workload management, staff surveys, and access to Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs).

9. Roles and Responsibilities

- **Headteacher:** Overall responsibility for the implementation of this policy.
- **Mental Health Lead:** Coordinates strategy, training, and interventions; acts as a liaison with external partners.
- **Pastoral Team/Form Tutors:** First point of contact for pupils; monitor wellbeing.
- **All Staff:** Promote mental health, refer concerns, and model positive behaviour.

10. Monitoring and Evaluation

- The policy will be reviewed annually.
- Data from interventions, surveys, and attendance/behaviour logs will inform improvements.
- Feedback will be gathered from pupils, staff, and parents to evaluate the school's mental health provision.

11. Assessment and Progress Tracking: The Boxall Profile

To ensure targeted and effective support, Newsome Academy uses the Boxall Profile as part of our mental health and wellbeing assessment process. This allows for a structured approach to identifying pupil needs, planning interventions, and measuring progress.

Pre-Assessment:

- The Boxall Profile is used as an initial diagnostic tool to assess a pupil's social, emotional, and behavioural functioning.
- It is typically completed with input by a class teacher, teaching assistant, or pastoral staff member who knows the pupil well.
- The profile helps to identify underlying needs that may not be immediately evident through academic performance or behaviour alone.

Intervention Planning:

- Results are used to inform personalised support plans, including targeted intervention strategies and group work.
- Goals are clearly defined based on the areas of greatest need, such as emotional regulation, social skills, or self-perception.

Post-Assessment:

- A follow-up Boxall Profile is completed after a defined intervention period (typically 6–12 weeks).
- This post-assessment provides measurable outcomes and helps to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.
- Adjustments to support plans are made based on progress and remaining areas of need.

Ongoing Use:

- The Boxall Profile can also be used to assess the general needs of a cohort or to support transition planning, e.g. moving between key stages or returning from exclusion or prolonged absence.
- Data from Boxall assessments contribute to whole-school wellbeing tracking and reporting.

Confidentiality and Inclusion:

- Assessment outcomes are treated with confidentiality and used sensitively to support inclusion.
- Pupils and families are involved in discussions around assessments and intervention plans.

12. Policy Review

Review Date: 15.05.26

Next Review Due: 15.05.27

Policy Owner: Jill Brook, Mental Health Lead & DDSL, and Anna Hall, Senior Assistant Headteacher & DSL