



“TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER”

## Dorrington Academy Mental Health Vision Statement

One in ten children and young people have a clinically diagnosed mental health disorder and / or emotional and behaviour problems. Around one in seven has less severe problems that interfere with their development and learning.

Anti-social behaviour and conduct disorder affect over five per cent of children, particularly boys, while anxiety and depression affect four per cent.

Social media and cyberbullying are increasingly suggested as part of the cause for the rise in emotional disorders. Attachment disorder, which gives rise to problems with connection, trust and relationships, is on the rise as families increasingly fracture and fail and more children join the care system. Many problems are multiple and many remain undetected and untreated unless agencies, such as schools, take an active role.

'Social and emotional well-being' refers to a state of positive mental health and wellness. It involves a sense of optimism, confidence, happiness, clarity, vitality, self-worth, achievement, having a meaning and purpose, engagement, having supportive and satisfying relationships with others and understanding oneself and responding effectively to one's own emotions.

The emotional health and wellbeing of all members of Dorrington Academy (including staff, students, parents and carers) is fundamental to our philosophy and ethos 'Together we are Stronger.

## Aims:

- To ensure that through the promotion of positive emotional health and wellbeing, children and young people are helped to understand and express their feelings, build their confidence and emotional/academic resilience and therefore their capacity to learn;
- To increase the awareness and understanding and reduce stigma amongst students, staff and parents/carers of issues involving the emotional health and wellbeing of young people and to provide support at an early stage to any student who is or appears to be suffering from mental health issues;

## Promoting Positive Emotional Health and Well-Being

- The culture at Dorrington Academy promotes students' positive emotional health and wellbeing and avoids stigma by:
- Having a whole-school approach to promoting positive emotional health and wellbeing within an ethos of high expectations and constant support.
- Having a committed staff community that sets a whole school culture of positive emotional health and wellbeing, support and value.
- Having a robust regime of continuing professional development (CPD) for staff.
- Having a student council that considers emotional well-being and mental health
- Working closely with pupils, parents, carers and multi-agencies.
- Whole school promotion of building individual resilience and tenacity

## Supporting students

Emotional health and wellbeing is a very varied and complex area and there are no quick fix solutions. Maintaining every day, regular routines wherever possible, such as, attending school and lessons whilst working towards managing mental health is key. School offers a range of services to help students develop positive mental health and wellbeing and support those experiencing mental health issues.

These are:

- The staff team lead and support positive emotional health and wellbeing across school. Each student has a class teacher they can go to for support, in addition some students also have an 'learning mentor'. The school also signposts further support external to the school (e.g. School Nurse, Forward Thinking Birmingham, etc.)
- Staff are well placed to spot changes in behaviour that might indicate a problem and offer support and guidance. Many things can cause a change in mental health including traumatic events (e.g. loss or separation, life changes, abuse, domestic violence or bullying).
- PSHE curriculum includes mental health topics in order to raise awareness and understanding and provide strategies for developing positive emotional health and wellbeing and managing mental health.
- PSHE has the flexibility to focus on developing children's resilience, confidence and ability to learn. We link this to UNICEF Rights of the Child
- Constructive links with outside support and specialist agencies (e.g. school nurse, Forward Thinking Birmingham) to provide interventions for those with mental health problems.

## Referrals

Any member of staff, student, parents / carers concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a student should speak to the student's class teacher about their concerns. All concerns are closely monitored and additional support provided where appropriate.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) should also be informed of concerns and where necessary the DSL will make referrals to obtain support.