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Care, Guidance & Support Policy

Approved by: Jillian Fairclough

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Contents

1. Legal framework 3

2. Roles and responsibilities..... 3

3. School culture 4

4. Pastoral care 4

5. SEND support 5

6. Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) 5

7. Educational support and guidance 6

8. Careers guidance 6

9. Safety and supervision 6

10. Behaviour..... 7

11. Monitoring and review 7

Statement of intent

This Is My Education prides itself on promoting a positive environment which prioritises social, emotional and mental health (SEMH), educational attainment, wellbeing and good behaviour. The school ensures, through a robust system of care, guidance and support, that all students thrive and achieve their best educational and social outcomes.

1. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and statutory guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

Children Act 2004

Equality Act 2010

DfE (2015) 'Behaviour and discipline in schools'

DfE (2018) 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'

DfE (2023) 'Careers guidance and access for education and training providers'

DfE (2023) 'Keeping children safe in education 2023'

DfE (2023) 'Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) Policy

Behaviour Policy

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy

Data Protection Policy

Child-on-child Abuse Policy

Careers Policy

2. Roles and responsibilities

The governing body will be responsible for:

- Ensuring that care, guidance and support for students is integrated throughout the school's operations.
- Ensuring there is high-quality pastoral support available for students.
- Ensuring that educational support interventions are implemented for students who need it.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the care, welfare, behaviour and progress of all students, including the day-to-day implementation of this policy.
- Supporting staff to carry out their duties in line with this policy.
- Overseeing the outcomes of interventions on students' education and wellbeing.
- Liaising with potential future providers of education, such as FE colleges, to ensure that students and their parents are informed about options and smooth transitions are facilitated.

The mental health lead will be responsible for:

- Overseeing the whole-school approach to mental health.
- Ensuring that the school engages students and parents with regards to students' mental health and awareness.
- Liaising with other schools, educational psychologists, health and social care professionals, and independent or voluntary bodies.

The DSL will be responsible for:

- Acting as a source of support and advice for, and liaising with, staff on matters of safety, safeguarding and welfare.
- Liaising with the mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- Working with the headteacher and other relevant members of staff to ensure care, guidance and support measures are inclusive for all students.
- Supporting all students to achieve their best educational and social outcomes.

Staff will be responsible for:

- Modelling productive and positive behaviour for students.
- Ensuring all instances of poor behaviour, bullying or peer-on-peer abuse are handled in line with the Behaviour Policy and Child-on-child Abuse Policy.
- Ensuring students are given helpful, unbiased and age-appropriate careers guidance to help them focus their learning.

3. School culture

The school adopts a whole-school approach to care, guidance and support for all students, and the governing board will ensure this is consistently integrated throughout all policies and procedures, as well as the curriculum. The governing board will ensure that staff are supported with their own mental health and wellbeing to ensure that support is integrated into all facets of the school's culture and that staff are well-placed to support students.

The headteacher, SLT and staff members will promote a positive environment within the school by modelling good behaviour, respectful and supportive communication and care for others. The headteacher will clearly communicate the school's ethos on student care, support and guidance to the whole school community.

Staff will ensure that students are aware that their health, wellbeing, safety and progress are of the highest priority to the school and that all students know where they can access support and guidance when they need it. The SLT will ensure that there are clear processes in place to reduce any stigma related to speaking out about their wellbeing and to make students feel comfortable enough to approach staff to discuss their wellbeing and progress.

The school's Behaviour Policy and Child-on-child Abuse Policy include measures to ensure that all students are treated with respect by their peers, and that any incidents of bullying or abuse between students are handled quickly, effectively and in line with procedures which take into account the influence of poor wellbeing and other vulnerabilities on abusive behaviour.

4. Pastoral care

The headteacher will ensure that pastoral care and support is implemented in all areas of students' school life with the aim of ensuring that they can consistently maintain their wellbeing at all times, in addition to times when they are experiencing specific problems.

The SLT will ensure that all teachers have a clear understanding of the needs of all students. The school will implement the following pastoral activities which help students to manage their own wellbeing and further their progress:

- School council
- One to one timetabled well-being sessions
- Drop-in sessions for students to discuss their wellbeing

Where students are encountering issues at school, whether these be related to their education, welfare or wellbeing, the school will offer care and support in a variety of ways. The mental health lead will work with students, and any other relevant members of staff, e.g. the SENCO or DSL, to develop a support plan suited to the specific needs of each student.

Support plans may include:

- School-based, one-to-one sessions
- Monitoring meetings with the school and the student's parents
- Engagement with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)

5. SEND support

The school is aware of its statutory duty to provide a broad and balanced curriculum and recognises that high quality teaching, which is differentiated for individual students, is the first step in responding to students who have or may have SEND.

The school will employ a graduated approach to meeting the needs of any students identified with SEND. Where higher levels of need are identified, the school will access specialised assessments from external agencies and professionals.

The school recognises that students with SEND may be at a greater risk of abuse and maltreatment, and that additional barriers to recognising abuse and neglect in this group of students may be present.

Care will be taken by all staff, particularly those who work closely with students with SEND, to notice any changes behaviour or mood, or any injuries, and these indicators will be investigated by the DSL in collaboration with the SENCO.

The headteacher will work with the SENCO to ensure that students with SEND are given pastoral care which is sensitive to their specific needs, in line with the Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) Policy.

6. Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH)

The school recognises its duty in providing and ensuring a high quality of education to all of its students, including students with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) difficulties, and to do everything it can to meet the needs of students with SEMH difficulties.

The school will utilise various strategies to support students who are experiencing high levels of psychological stress, or who are at risk of developing SEMH problems, including:

Teaching about mental health and wellbeing through curriculum subjects such as:

- PSHE
- Counselling
- Positive classroom management
- Developing students' social skills
- Working with parents
- Peer support

The school's mental health lead will regularly collect student feedback related to the pastoral care system to gauge how well-supported students feel and whether there is anything the school could be doing to better meet students' needs.

The school is aware that some students are particularly vulnerable to SEMH difficulties and may be more likely to experience a range of adverse circumstances that increase the risk of mental health problems. Staff will be made aware of the increased likelihood of SEMH difficulties in students in vulnerable groups and remain vigilant to early signs of difficulties.

The school's pastoral care initiatives will be implemented in line with the Social, Emotional, Mental Health (SEMH) Policy.

7. Educational support and guidance

The school will ensure that all students are enabled to achieve the best possible outcomes through a supportive educational environment. Teaching staff will ensure that students' progress is appropriately tracked, and that any students who require additional educational support are identified and offered support tailored to their needs.

The headteacher will ensure that staff are deployed in such a way that facilitates one to-one educational support where necessary, and that teaching staff are prepared and supported to accommodate the specific needs of students inside and outside of the classroom.

The school implements the following measures for students who require additional educational support:

- Interventions led by a member of teaching staff
- Enrichment activities
- One-to-one tutoring

8. Careers guidance

The school's careers provision will:

- Prepare students for life post-education
- Develop students' understanding of different career paths and challenge stereotypes
- Develop students' understanding of the differences between school and work
- Inspire students to chase and achieve their dreams
- Help students to access information on the full range of post-16 education and training opportunities
- Support students after leaving school
- Offer targeted support for vulnerable and disadvantaged students
- Instil a healthy attitude towards work

The headteacher will ensure that students receive unbiased, helpful and age-appropriate guidance related to their future steps beyond school, e.g. FE and careers.

The school will tailor careers activities and educational goals to the needs of each student, taking into account their prior knowledge and skills, the choices they may face, and any additional support they may need to overcome barriers to progression.

A careers adviser will be appointed to support the careers leader and to provide individual, tailored careers guidance to students. The careers adviser is **Megan Baker**.

The school will ensure all advice, guidance and support is provided in line with the Careers Policy.

9. Safety and supervision

The school's priority will always be the safety and welfare of its students. The headteacher will ensure that students are adequately supervised during school hours, and that all necessary measures are taken to ensure the school fulfils its duty of care keep students safe.

The procedures laid out within the school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy will be followed in the event that there are any concerns about a student's welfare, and a member of staff will call the police immediately where it is thought that there is any immediate risk to a student's safety.

10. Behaviour

The school is committed to ensuring high behavioural standards for all students, and students will adhere to the Behaviour Policy at all times.

To promote acceptable behaviour the school will focus on implementing a range of prevention strategies with the aim of ensuring that students feel supported to:

- Behave appropriately
- Respect staff
- Trust that the school has their best interests at heart

The school acknowledges that behaviour can sometimes be the result of educational needs, mental health issues, or other needs or vulnerabilities, and will address these needs via an individualised graduated response.

All staff will be made aware of how potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, including abuse and neglect, can impact on a student's mental health, behaviour, and education. Where vulnerable students or groups are identified, provision will be made to support and promote their positive mental health.

A range of initial intervention strategies to help students manage their behaviour and reduce the likelihood of more severe consequences having to be used. Support will consider the student's specific needs and may be delivered outside of the classroom, in small groups or in one-to-one activities. A system will be in place to ensure relevant members of the SLT and pastoral staff are aware of any student that is:

- Persistently misbehaving
- Not improving their behaviour following consequences
- Displaying a sudden change in behaviour from previous patterns of behaviour

11. Monitoring and review

The policy will be reviewed on an tri-annual basis by Jillian Fairclough in conjunction with the governing body – any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all members of staff.

This policy will be reviewed in light of any serious incidents regarding student care, guidance and support.

The next scheduled review date for this policy is **June 2027**.