



Physical health and mental wellbeing

Tees Valley Education Trust

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Introduction

At Tees Valley Education Trust, all curriculum policies are developed in close communication with academy and trust stakeholders and support the overall trust policies. All policies are shared between academies to ensure cohesion and continuity while allowing each individual academy to personalise these in order to best support the unique learning journey of their pupils.

The following policy has been written to support the ethos, vision and values of both Discovery Special Academy and Tees Valley Education Trust. As a special school, the policy reflects the unique character of the academy and needs of the pupils while continuing to uphold the overall identity of the Trust.

Every child deserves a champion, an adult that will never give up on them, who understands the power of connection and insists they can become the best they can possibly be. (Rita F. Pierson)

Mental health is now specifically included as part of the definition of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. At Tees Valley Education, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community (children, staff, parents and carers), and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health. We have a supportive, inclusive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

Within the Trust, we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's responsibility and that we all have a role to play.

Our role in school is to ensure that children are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We also have a role to ensure that children learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

In addition to children's wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

AIMS

This policy aims to:

- Develop an open culture where it's normal to talk about physical and mental health
- Foster an environment in which everyone feels safe, secure, feels valued and where each person is treated fairly and respectfully
- Ensure all staff know the expectations of promoting positive physical and mental wellbeing
- Promote positive physical and mental health in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common physical and mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers by enabling access to appropriate support

Objectives:

- Ensure children, parents and staff have a sense of belonging
- Promote self-esteem, self-discipline, good health and positive relationships
- Prepare children for adulthood
- Develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems
- Teach children social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health
- Help children to develop social relationships, support each other and seek help when they need it
- Provide opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others understanding how to keep physically healthy
- Promote pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Promote self-esteem and ensure children understand their importance in the world
- Help children to be resilient learners and to manage setbacks
- Provide workshops for parents and carers on physical and mental health

Roles and Responsibilities

The Mental Health Lead, has the following responsibilities:

- To lead the bi-annual review of the physical health and mental wellbeing policy.
- To ensure that resources used are relevant and appropriate to the needs of the children.
- To lead on the evaluation of physical health and mental wellbeing policy and programme.
- To ensure that staff have the necessary skills, confidence, knowledge, and resources in order to deliver effective physical health and mental wellbeing education.

The Safeguarding, SEND and Inclusion Officer and PSFA has the following responsibilities:

- To lead on advice on mental health working with the academy Mental Health Lead
- To be the first point of contact with mental health services making individual referrals
- To process any safeguarding concerns from staff making individual referrals

Trustees have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that an up-to-date physical health and mental wellbeing policy is in place and is made available to parents and for inspection.
- To ensure that the physical health and mental wellbeing policy is in line with the DfE Statutory Guidance 2021.
- To ensure that the policy and programme reflect a whole academy approach particularly in relation to consultation.

Teachers have the following responsibilities:

- To ensure that they, or anyone working in their classroom to deliver/support physical health and mental wellbeing education, is doing so in line with the academy's physical health and mental wellbeing policy, and other relevant academy policies.
- To contribute to the evaluation of the programme.
- Assessing children's progress against the agreed learning outcomes.

Working with Parents/Carers

We recognise that parents/carers are key partners in our delivery of a comprehensive physical health and mental wellbeing programme for pupils at the academy. The physical health and mental wellbeing education we deliver is designed to support the important role of parents in this area. To support parents and carers we will be:

- Organising workshops and presentations on mental health, anxiety, resilience and wellbeing. Provide information online on mental health issues and local wellbeing and parenting programmes.
- Sharing ideas about how parents and carers can support positive mental health in their children.
- Making our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents.
- Keeping parents informed about the mental health topics taught in PSHERE and share ideas for extending and exploring this at home.

If parents/carers have concerns about any of the content to be covered, we ask that these are addressed to the headteacher/head of academy.

We recognise that parents and carers will also need support in these areas at times, and are committed to offering signposting support, advice and guidance at an appropriate level.

Working with specialist services.

As part of our targeted provision the academy will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing. Your child may be referred to one of the following services for additional support.

- CAMHS
- Healthy Young Minds in Herts.
- School Nursing Service
- Children's Services.
- Therapists
- Family support workers.
- Educational psychology services.
- Counselling services.

Equal Opportunities

Discovery Special Academy encourages respect for all regardless of gender and gender identity, ethnicity, ability, faith, culture, sexuality, sexual orientation, disability, home background or other personal circumstance. Within our provision of physical health and mental wellbeing education, we will ensure that resources used and teaching styles employed reflect and support the diversity of our pupils and wider society. All members of the academy community will feel safe, valued and respected (see Equality Policy).

In planning the physical health and mental wellbeing programme (through PSHERE) we have used learning outcomes from the DfE Guidance (July 2020). Planning has taken account of the diverse needs of pupils and sessions will be differentiated as appropriate.

We want all staff to be confident in their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing and to be able to promote positive mental health and wellbeing, identify mental health needs early in children and know what to do and where to get help.

Early identification

We aim to identify children with mental health needs as early as possible to prevent things from getting worse. Changes in patterns may indicate warning signs indicating that a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. Teaching and support staff are responsible for reporting concerns about individual children to designated adults within the school. Possible warning signs include;

- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Abusing drugs or alcohol

Curriculum and delivery

Physical health and mental wellbeing are planned and delivered through PSHERE, Physical Education, DT and Science.

Content is delivered in a stage appropriate manner. Appendices 1 and 2 outline the DfE content for primary and secondary, however, pupils at Discovery will focus on content from this that is most appropriate for them as outlined in the curriculum overviews and personalised learning plans. This means they may not have completed content at the end of the age-appropriate key stage and will continue to develop their skills and knowledge so they know more, can do more and remember more over time.

Resources

Resources reflect the needs of children within the academy. We will remain flexible in our choice of resources and teachers will adapt resources to fully address the needs of all children within their class.

Answering Children's Questions

Children are naturally curious and we believe that if a child asks a question they require an honest and factual answer. This is true of questions asked in all curriculum areas and at other times during the academy day.

All staff in the academy will answer children's questions around relationships issues in line with the following guidance:

- Questions will be answered in a factual manner without any personal bias and with reference to the age and understanding of the child / children.
- If the answer to a question isn't known the class teacher will suggest that the class do some research to find out the appropriate information

- In some situations, staff will sensitively turn the question back on the pupil to establish what they already know, for example “that’s a very interesting question, I wonder why you are asking that” or ask the rest of the class whether they know the answer “Does anyone else know the answer to that question?”
- If it is felt that it is not appropriate to answer a question in a whole class setting the teacher will explain this sensitively and will give an answer to the child individually at the end or refer the child to their parents.

Assessment, recording and reporting

Assessment of physical health and mental wellbeing will be evident through the assessment of PSHERE, Physical Education, DT and Science in curriculum books and electronic learning journals.

A range of methods, including class learning journals, have been produced to record pupils’ responses and development within the different areas. Where appropriate and dependent on the topic, photographs and pupil statements will reinforce these. As part of the child’s annual report the activities covered and progress made are reported to parents through the relevant areas of the curriculum.

Monitoring and evaluation

At the end of appropriate lessons, teachers will use a range of informal methods to give pupils the opportunity to reflect on their learning and development.

A range of methods will be used to assess the extent to which pupils are achieving the intended learning outcomes outlined in academy assessment routes in relevant curriculum areas.

Staff development

Staff training on physical health and mental wellbeing education is co-ordinated by the DHoA. Training requirements will be identified through the policy review process or through a teacher expressing individual needs to the DHoA. Appropriate training will then be sought to fulfil the needs of the staff member. Anybody who attends training will be required to provide an outline of any relevant information to other staff members via a future staff meeting.

Additional information relevant to physical health and mental wellbeing

The Trust employs academy counsellors who support children and families in times of need.

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils, all academies have staff with a specific, relevant remit including

- Safeguarding Leads
- SENDCo
- Mental Health Lead
- Lead Carer
- Pastoral Lead
- SLT

Safeguarding children, confidentiality and child protection

All staff members at Discovery have a duty to safeguard the well-being of children.

At Discovery we recognise that the open discussion associated with physical health and mental wellbeing may lead to children making disclosures about things that they are worried about or about abuse. There may also be occasions when a teacher may hear things or observe activity/behaviour that may raise

concerns of a child protection issue. In these situations, the teacher will consult the academy's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL). DSL will then work in line with the relevant academy policies in terms of any further action that may be taken. This includes the mandatory reporting duty regarding Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). Staff should use safeguarding procedures if they suspect a child is at risk and should personally report to the police cases where they discover an act of FGM appears to have been carried out. FGM is illegal under the FGM Act 2003 and is a form of child abuse. Under Section 5B of the 2003 Act (as inserted by Section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015) a mandatory reporting duty was introduced for Teachers to report 'known' cases of FGM from 31st October 2015 – please see the Child Protection Policy for more information.

Where a staff member has to disclose information to another party, this will be done following discussion with the pupil if this is possible and appropriate. Sensitive information is only disclosed internally or externally with careful attention to the rights and needs of individuals.

For more detailed information on the processes for child protection please consult the academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding policies which are available on the academy website.

Information for parents

It is hoped that pupils will feel able to approach parents or staff with any concerns or worries that they may have regarding the teaching of physical health and mental wellbeing. Academy staff will always encourage pupils to discuss issues with parents.

It is our policy to answer children's questions as they occur, naturally and at a level appropriate to the child. Consideration is given to the needs of individual pupils regarding their cultural and/ or religious background.

Complaints

If you have a question regarding the delivery or content of physical health and mental wellbeing, please speak to your class teaching team in the first instance.

For all complaints regarding relationships education, please refer to the trust complaints policy which can be found using the following link.

<https://www.teesvalleyeducation.co.uk/policies>

Equal Opportunities

All children have equal access to the curriculum regardless of their gender, ethnicity or learning difficulty. This is monitored by analysing pupil performance throughout the school to ensure that there is no significant disparity between groups.

Links to other relevant policies

The relationships education policy links to the following academy policies:

- Equality
- PSHERE
- Safeguarding (Including Child Protection)
- Curriculum
- Trust general complaints policy

Appendix 1

Physical health and mental wellbeing content for primary schools (DfE 9th July 2020)

Mental wellbeing

- that mental wellbeing is a normal part of daily life, in the same way as physical health
- that there is a normal range of emotions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, fear, surprise, nervousness) and scale of emotions that all humans experience in relation to different experiences and situations
- how to recognise and talk about their emotions, including having a varied vocabulary of words to use when talking about their own and others' feelings
- how to judge whether what they are feeling and how they are behaving is appropriate and proportionate
- the benefits of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation, voluntary and service-based activity on mental wellbeing and happiness
- simple self-care techniques, including the importance of rest, time spent with friends and family and the benefits of hobbies and interests
- isolation and loneliness can affect children and that it is very important for children to discuss their feelings with an adult and seek support
- that bullying (including cyberbullying) has a negative and often lasting impact on mental wellbeing
- where and how to seek support (including recognising the triggers for seeking support), including whom in school they should speak to if they are worried about their own or someone else's mental wellbeing or ability to control their emotions (including issues arising online)
- it is common for people to experience mental ill health. For many people who do, the problems can be resolved if the right support is made available, especially if accessed early enough

Internet safety and harms

- That for most people the internet is an integral part of lives and has many benefits
- About the benefits of rationing time spent online, the risks of excessive time spent on electronic devices and the impact of positive and negative content online on their own and others' mental and physical wellbeing
- How to consider the effect of their online actions on others and know how to recognise and display respectful behaviour online and the importance of keeping personal information private
- Why social media, some computer games and online gaming, for example, are age restricted
- That the internet can also be a negative place where online abuse, trolling, bullying and harassment can take place, which can have a negative impact on mental health
- How to be a discerning consumer of information online including understanding that information, including that from search engines, is ranked, selected and targeted □ Where and how to report concerns and get support with issues online

Physical health and fitness

- The characteristics and mental and physical benefits of an active lifestyle

- The importance of building regular exercise into daily and weekly routines and how to achieve this; for example, walking or cycling to school, a daily active mile or other forms of regular, vigorous exercise
- The risks associated with an inactive lifestyle (including obesity)
- How and when to seek support including which adults to speak to in school if they are worried about their health

Healthy Eating

- What constitutes a healthy diet (including understanding calories and other nutritional content)
- The principles of planning and preparing a range of healthy meals
- The characteristics of a poor diet and risks associated with unhealthy eating (including, for example, obesity and tooth decay) and other behaviours (e.g. the impact of alcohol on diet or health)

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

The facts about legal and illegal harmful substances and associated risks, including smoking, alcohol use and drug-taking

Health and Prevention

- How to recognise early signs of physical illness, such as weight loss, or unexplained changes to the body
- About safe and unsafe exposure to the sun, and how to reduce the risk of sun damage, including skin cancer
- The importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and that a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn
- About dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including regular check-ups at the dentist
- About personal hygiene and germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread and treated, and the importance of handwashing
- The facts and science relating to allergies, immunisation and vaccination

Basic First Aid

- How to make a clear and efficient call to emergency services if necessary
- Concepts of basic first-aid, for example dealing with common injuries, including head injuries

Changing adolescent body

- Key facts about puberty and the changing adolescent body, particularly from age 9 through to age 11, including physical and emotional changes
- About menstrual wellbeing including the key facts about the menstrual cycle

Appendix 2

Physical health and mental wellbeing content for secondary schools (DfE 9th July 2020)

Mental wellbeing

Pupils should know:

- how to talk about their emotions accurately and sensitively, using appropriate vocabulary
- that happiness is linked to being connected to others
- how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing concerns
- common types of mental ill health (e.g. anxiety and depression)
- how to critically evaluate when something they do or are involved in has a positive or negative effect on their own or others' mental health
- the benefits and importance of physical exercise, time outdoors, community participation and voluntary and service-based activities on mental wellbeing and happiness

Internet safety and harms

Pupils should know:

- the similarities and differences between the online world and the physical world, including: the impact of unhealthy or obsessive comparison with others online (including through setting unrealistic expectations for body image), how people may curate a specific image of their life online, over-reliance on online relationships including social media, the risks related to online gambling including the accumulation of debt, how advertising and information is targeted at them and how to be a discerning consumer of information online
- how to identify harmful behaviours online (including bullying, abuse or harassment) and how to report, or find support, if they have been affected by those behaviours

Physical health and fitness

Pupils should know:

- the positive associations between physical activity and promotion of mental wellbeing, including as an approach to combat stress
- the characteristics and evidence of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle, maintaining a healthy weight, including the links between an inactive lifestyle and ill health, including cancer and cardiovascular ill-health
- about the science relating to blood, organ and stem cell donation

Healthy eating

Pupils should know:

- how to maintain healthy eating and the links between a poor diet and health risks, including tooth decay and cancer

Drugs, alcohol and tobacco

Pupils should know:

- the facts about legal and illegal drugs and their associated risks, including the link between drug use, and the associated risks, including the link to serious mental health conditions

- the law relating to the supply and possession of illegal substances
- the physical and psychological risks associated with alcohol consumption and what constitutes low risk alcohol consumption in adulthood
- the physical and psychological consequences of addiction, including alcohol dependency
- awareness of the dangers of drugs which are prescribed but still present serious health risks
- the facts about the harms from smoking tobacco (particularly the link to lung cancer), the benefits of quitting and how to access support to do so

Health and prevention

Pupils should know:

- about personal hygiene, germs including bacteria, viruses, how they are spread, treatment and prevention of infection, and about antibiotics
- about dental health and the benefits of good oral hygiene and dental flossing, including healthy eating and regular check-ups at the dentist
- (late secondary) the benefits of regular self-examination and screening
- the facts and science relating to immunisation and vaccination
- the importance of sufficient good quality sleep for good health and how a lack of sleep can affect weight, mood and ability to learn

Basic first aid

Pupils should know:

- basic treatment for common injuries
- life-saving skills, including how to administer CPR [\[footnote 2\]](#)
- the purpose of defibrillators and when one might be needed

Changing adolescent body

Pupils should know:

- key facts about puberty, the changing adolescent body and menstrual wellbeing
- the main changes which take place in males and females, and the implications for emotional and physical health

Appendix 3

Food during the school day

Our aim is to provide pupils with the knowledge to make food choices which support good health and to establish eating patterns and habits which support a healthy lifestyle now and in their future.

Food and drink provided in school should:

Be nutritious – provide vitamins and minerals

Be fresh – the use of processed foods should be limited

Not be high in sugar, fat or salt – see guidance

Not contain nuts or peanuts

Not include drinks with added sugar/flavours - water or milk will be the only drinks offered

EYFS

It is recognised that children in EYFS benefit from a mid-morning snack. Examples of appropriate snack items in EYFS:

Fresh fruit (dried fruit such as raisins are high in sugar and should be avoided)

Fresh vegetables

Plain, savoury rice cakes, crackers and bread sticks

All other year groups

In all other classes snack is not required. Pupils will be offered a piece of fruit and a drink (water) on arrival at school. Where it is identified that a child has not had breakfast at home and will need more than a piece of fruit, discreet arrangements will be made to provide a healthy breakfast away from their classroom.

Communication/PECS

Staff should avoid using food as a means of developing communication skills. Where staff feel food is a useful way to develop communication and use of PECS, it should be done so only using fresh fruit and water. This should happen at the start of the morning when fruit and water are available for all pupils. Staff should also explore and utilise other methods of developing communication and PECS use throughout the day.

Rewards

Food should not be used as a reward as this establishes behaviour patterns that are difficult to change. This applies to healthy food as well as unhealthy. Other means of motivating pupils should be explored.

Lunch time

Pupils should be encouraged to try a range of nutritious foods. It is understood that pupils may prefer the same foods each day and this is acceptable, however, staff should encourage the addition of new foods, particularly vegetables and salad, to attempt to broaden their diet. Only one main meal and one pudding should be offered, regardless of the age or appetite of the pupil. The SLT will work with the catering staff to ensure portion sizes are appropriate.

NHS guidance on assessing the fat/sugar/salt content of foods:

	High	Low
Total fat	More than 17.5g of fat per 100g	3g of fat or less per 100g
Saturated fat	More than 5g of saturated fat per 100g	1.5g of saturated fat or less per 100g
Sugar	More than 22.5g of total sugars per 100g	1.5g of total sugars or less per 100g
Salt	More than 1.5g of salt per 100g (or 0.6g sodium)	0.3g of salt or less per 100g (or 0.1g sodium)