

The Aylesbury Vale Academy Trust



The Aylesbury Vale Academy

RESPECT | ASPIRATION | RESILIENCE

Student Wellbeing

Policy Reference:	AVA.160
Description:	This policy provides a framework to explain the Academy's expectations for the wellbeing of its students.
Status:	
Policy Audience:	Staff, Students & Parents/Carers
Academy Contact:	Academy Principal/Primary Headteacher
Other related AVA policies and procedures:	Child Protection Policy Behaviour Policy Curriculum Policy RSE and PHSE Policy
Governor Committee:	Governing Body
Approved by the Governing Board on:	22.01.2025
Latest Date for Next Review:	22.01.2026
Version + Schedule of Amendments:	New Policy - December 2022 V2
Signed:	
Date of Signature:	22.01.2025

In reviewing this policy, the Governing Board has had regard to the Equality Act 2010 and carried out an equality impact assessment. It is satisfied that no group with a protected characteristic will be unfairly disadvantaged by this policy.

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Annex A. Graduated Response to those with Mental Health and Wellbeing at Aylesbury Vale Academy.

1. Policy statement

At Aylesbury Vale Academy we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

2. Scope

This policy is intended to:

- Set out our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across our school
- Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which pupils feel able to talk about their experiences of mental health
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Inform pupils and their parents/carers about the support they can expect from our school in respect of pupils' mental health and wellbeing

Read this policy in conjunction with:

- SEND Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Child Protection Policy

3. Policy aims

Promote positive mental health and wellbeing across the whole school

Create a culture of wellbeing and inclusion

Foster a positive atmosphere in school, where pupils feel able to discuss and reflect on their own experiences with mental health openly

Celebrate all of the ways pupils achieve at our school, both inside and outside the classroom

Allow pupils to participate in forming our approach to mental health by promoting pupil voice

Give pupils the opportunity to develop their self-esteem by taking responsibility for themselves and others

Spread awareness of the varieties of ways mental health issues can manifest

Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues

Provide support for staff working with pupils with mental health issues

Provide support and access to resources to pupils experiencing mental ill health alongside their peers, their families and the staff who work with them

4. Legal basis

This policy was written with regard to:

[The Equality Act 2010](#)

[The Data Protection Act 2018](#)

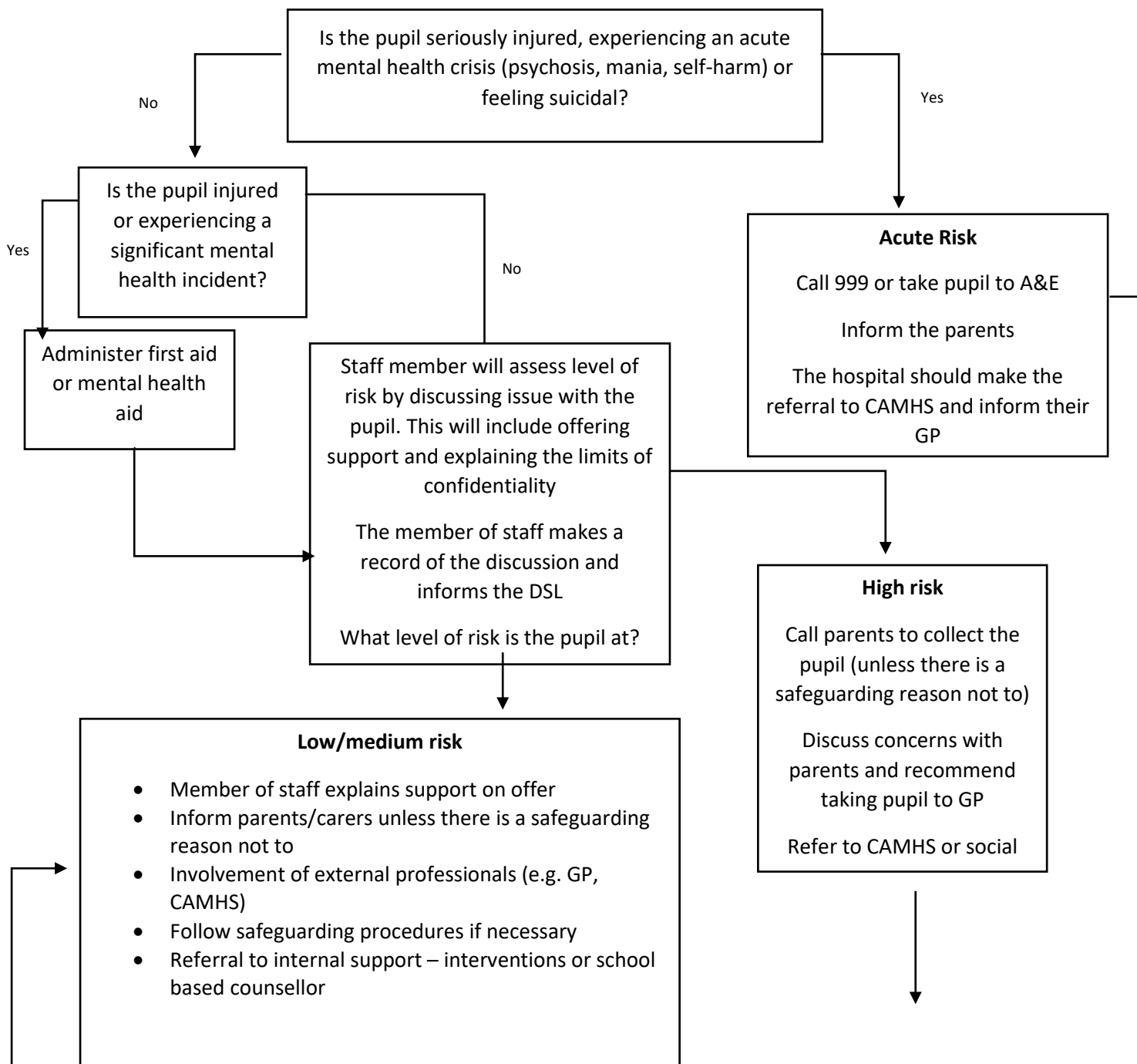
5. Roles and responsibilities

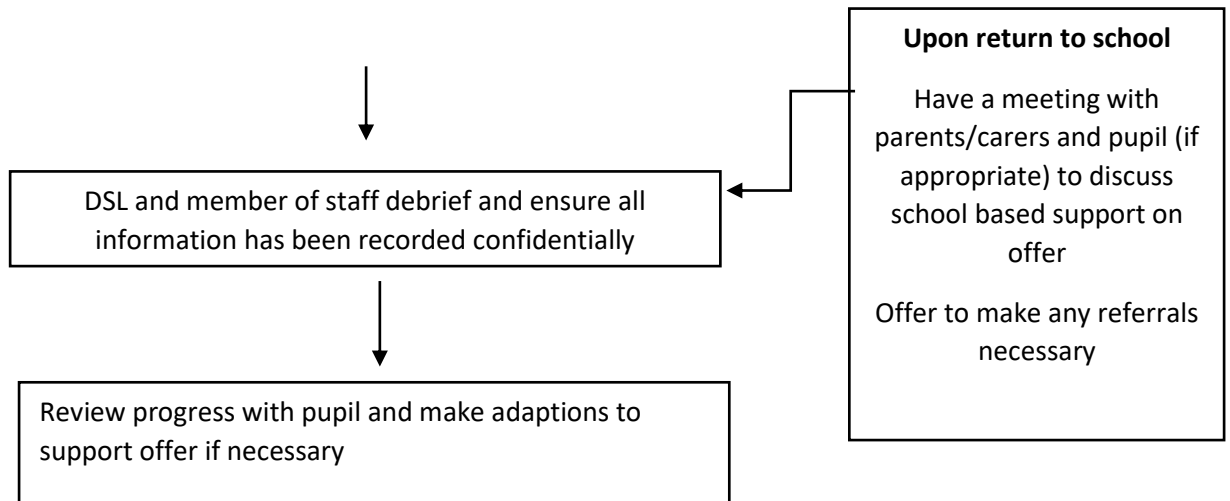
All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the mental health lead and log their concern on CPOMS (the platform used for logging Safeguarding concerns).

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Gavin Gibson, Principal
- Caroline Baughan, Primary Head Teacher
- Catherine Fleetwood, Mental Health Lead and Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- Ben Currier, Special Educational Needs and Disability Co-ordinator
- La'Rhone Vassell, Lead LSA for Social, Emotional, Mental Health and Well-Being

6. Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis





7. Warning signs

All staff will be on the lookout for signs that a pupil's mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- Changes in mood or energy level
- Changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- Changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- Changes in level of personal hygiene
- Social isolation
- Poor attendance or punctuality
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- Abuse of drugs or alcohol
- Weight loss or gain
- Secretive behaviour
- Covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- Refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- Physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- Physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide

8. Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way ~~or offering advice.~~

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the designated safeguarding lead. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file.

When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

The full name of the member of staff who is making the record

The full name of the pupil(s) involved

The date, time and location of the disclosure

The context in which the disclosure was made

Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff, along with responses from the pupil.

9. Confidentiality

Staff should not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret, instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing

The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school

Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question

Staff should always share disclosures with at least one appropriate colleague. This will usually be the DSL. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

Who they will share the information with

What information they will share

Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the child protection policy will be followed.

9.1 Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff is supportive
3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with DSL or safeguarding team.
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who you will share the information with and explain why you need to do this
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure and share the information with the chosen member of staff
6. The appropriate member of staff will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)

7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

10. Supporting pupils

10.1 Baseline support for all pupils

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, the school offers support to all pupils by:

Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, tutor time, PSHE and mental health awareness week

Signposting all pupils to sources of online support on the school website

Having open discussions about mental health during lessons

Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of the school that is negatively impacting their mental health during lessons

Offering pastoral support through Achievement Directors and Pastoral Support Assistants

Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing

Monitoring pupils' mental health through student voice questionnaires

10.2 Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, we will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to making an assessment and providing tailored support, further to the provision of the baseline support as detailed in section 10.1. The school will offer support in cycles of:

Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are

Plan to provide support

Action the strategies set out in the plan

Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

10.3 Internal mental health interventions

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes, but is not limited to, soft starts, nurture groups, ELSA, Drawing and Talking therapy, Lego Therapy, Anxiety Gremlins, Worry Club, Worth it Group, Zones of Regulation, Key Workers, Daily Wellbeing Checks, timetable adaptations, reduced timetables, phased reintegration, timeout card, safety plans, risk assessments, use of Hive 2 or Hive 5, counselling and play therapy.

10.4 Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer the school provides, the school will make, or encourage parents to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

GP or paediatrician

CAMHS

Mental health charities (e.g. [Samaritans](#), [Mind](#), [Young Minds](#))

Bucks Mental Health Support Team

Local counselling services

Online counselling services (Kooth)

11. Supporting and collaborating with parents and carers

We will work with parents and carers to support pupils' mental health by:

Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support

Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child

Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child

Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy

Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child

Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent forums)

Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face to face

These meetings can be difficult, so the school will ensure that parents are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record

If appropriate, a safety plan will be created in collaboration with parents/carers

12. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be extremely challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

Strategies they can use to support their friends

Things they should avoid doing/saying

Warning signs to look out for

Signposting to sources of external support

Regular check ins

13. Signposting

Sources of support will be displayed around the school and linked to on the school website, so pupils and parents are aware of how they can get help.

The safeguarding team and pastoral teams will share information on appropriate sources of support on a case by case basis.

14. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

14.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE

Pupils will be taught to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Keep themselves safe

For more information, see our PSHE curriculum.

14.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging pupils to share with someone if they think their mental health is deteriorating

15. Training

All staff will be offered training so they:

- Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

16. Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can be distressing for staff. To combat this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment
- Offer an Employee Assistance Programme

17. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board.

Graduated Response to Student Mental Health and Wellbeing at Aylesbury Vale Academy

STEP 1	STEP 2 (INTERNAL)	STEP 3 (EXTERNAL)
<p>Presents as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anxiety/worry • Increased attendance concern • Inability to go to or enter the classroom • Feigned pain or illness • Wandering • Isolating themselves/hiding 	<p>Presents as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All step 1 actions have been implemented and difficulties persist or worsen. 	<p>Presents as:</p> <p>Presenting behaviours remain despite all actions taken at step 1 and 2. Presenting concerns show little or no evidence of improvement.</p>
<p>Possible actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed time in the intervention room • Opportunity to explore feelings through discussion • Provision of supportive apps such as: Headspace (meditation sleep) Breath (Calming) Smiling mind (Mindfulness for staff/students/families) • Signpost to Kooth (online counselling provider) • Provision to complete classwork via MS Teams in a quiet environment • Communication with home 	<p>Possible actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As step 1 • Check support already in place • Resolve any identified issues that surface during discussion • Regular communication home • Undertake Boxall • Consider Time Out Card • Monitor responses to implemented support • Mindfulness Intervention • Zones of Regulation • Consider class change • Seating plan adaptations • Circulation of teacher advice • Reduced timetable • Referral to discussion with Academy Counsellor • Selection of the above as deemed appropriate for the individual student. 	<p>Possible actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blueprint Outreach • Family Resilience • CAMHS Referral • GP