** **

# Mental and Emotional Wellbeing: Engaging Young People in Planning Provision

## Secondary school briefing for school staff and governors

### Rationale

With half of all diagnosable mental health disorders established by the age of 14, there is a strong case to promote children and young people’s mental health. Evidence tells us that the learning environment plays an important and valued role in helping protect and promote student mental wellbeing.

The aim of this work is to use the findings of the Cambridgeshire Secondary Health Related Behaviour Survey (or other similar tools) to work with our young people to explore ways of promoting their mental and emotional wellbeing. The process outlined below will involve young people in identifying self-help opportunities and ways in which school and community provision could further enhance their mental and emotional wellbeing. It will help us (school and college leaders) make use of school and college level data to identify the mental wellbeing needs of students and to determine how best to address these. We believe that our efforts to promote the physical and mental health of our student population creates a virtuous circle, reinforcing attainment and achievement that in turn improves student wellbeing.

The focus is on universal provision and early intervention needs. However, issues of particular relevance to more vulnerable young people, e.g. signposting of services, may well emerge and be identified by the school for further action.

### HEALTH RELATED BEHAVIOUR SURVEY (HRBS)

As a Cambridgeshire secondary school we have undertaken the Schools Health Education HRBS with Year 8 (12/13 year olds) and Year 10 pupils (14/15 year olds) every two years since 2008. The questionnaire includes key questions on the mental and emotional wellbeing of young people resulting in data and information on their worries, life satisfaction, self-esteem, adults they trust and resilience.

A range of other tools available for this purpose are referenced in the Cambridgeshire Toolkit Mental and Emotional Wellbeing: Engaging Young People in Planning.

### Aims

* To use the HRBS (and /or other tools) as a basis to explore with our young people their mental and emotional wellbeing needs, identify self-help opportunities and ways in which school and community provision could further enhance their mental and emotional wellbeing.
* To provide an opportunity for the young people to feed back their views, and ideas to school leaders and staff.
* To develop an action plan to address some of the needs identified by the young people and to take their proposals forward as appropriate.

### Outcomes

* Increased knowledge and understanding of young people’s universal and early intervention needs in relation to mental and emotional wellbeing including opportunities for self-help.
* An action plan and changes implemented based on the views and ideas of the young people.
* Young people are listened to and are involved in school development planning in relation to mental and emotional wellbeing.

### Recruitment

* We will recruit up to 20 Year 10 pupils who completed the HRBS in Year 8. It is important that we limit the numbers to ensure that we have sufficient time for discussion, full participation and involvement in the feedback session. (If an alternative tool to assess the mental and emotional wellbeing needs of pupils is to be used, this may require some preparation /preliminary work to establish baseline data).
* The school identifies a means (e.g. assembly, tutor time, PSHE lessons) to promote the programme to Year 10 pupils who will self-select to take part. Young people who have not experienced mental health challenges are welcome to participate as the focus is on universal provision.
* The application form for young people available in the Cambridgeshire Toolkit ‘Mental and Emotional Wellbeing: Engaging Young People in Planning’ will be used for recruitment.
* A letter/information for parents and a consent form also available in the Cambridgeshire Toolkit ‘Mental and Emotional Wellbeing: Engaging Young People in Planning’ will also be used.
* We will select pupils to participate ensuring that there is a diverse mix of young people from a range of social groups.
* Young people will receive written notification whether successful or otherwise (see draft letters in the Cambridgeshire Toolkit ‘Mental and Emotional Wellbeing: Engaging Young People in Planning’).

### The Programme

* The sessions will take place in a space that allows for open discussion and group work, preferably not in a classroom which will reinforce that this is not a lesson but an opportunity for young people to share their views and ideas freely.
* Two 2 hour sessions will be facilitated using the programme and resources provided in the Cambridgeshire Toolkit Mental and Emotional Wellbeing: Engaging Young People in Planning.
* A third session of 1.5 hours will be facilitated to enable the young people to reflect on the outcome of the first two sessions and to prepare to feedback to school leaders, staff and governors.
* A fourth session of 1 hour will involve the pupils sharing the outcomes of their work with school leaders, staff and governors. An example of how this may be achieved is included in the Cambridgeshire Toolkit ‘Mental and Emotional Wellbeing: Engaging Young People in Planning’.
* Each young person is provided with a certificate (see example in the Cambridgeshire Toolkit ‘Mental and Emotional Wellbeing: Engaging Young People in Planning’) to confirm their participation in the programme for inclusion in their personal portfolio.

### Action Planning

* School leaders, key staff and governors will meet to discuss the outcomes of the work and to develop an action plan for school development based on the views and suggestions of the young people as appropriate.
* Young people are informed of the proposed actions and changes.
* Young people are involved in reviewing the changes introduced.

### Timescale

This work will be prioritised and the schedule outlined and maintained to ensure commitment and sustainability.

*(Signed*

*Named Lead in School)*