

Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy



Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Policy

Blakedown Church of England Primary School

Policy Statement

Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (World Health Organization)

At Blakedown, the roots of our vision is embedded in Psalm 139:14 - '**I will praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made,**' recognising the fact that we are all unique and made in God's image. In delivering the vision for the school it is important that all members of the school experience a sense of **joy** and are able to continue to use their skills in **service** of others, to **achieve** for themselves and be the best version of themselves they can be.

In addition, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using universal (whole school approaches), targeted and specialised approaches supported by the emotional health and wellbeing pathway. (See appendix 1, Emotional health and wellbeing interventions).

In addition to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing, we aim to recognise and respond to need as it arises. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health and wellbeing policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly, and indirectly by mental health and wellbeing issues.

Scope

This document describes the school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing in all staff and pupils
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of poor mental health and wellbeing
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health and wellbeing issues
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents/carers

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Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of pupils. Staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

Helen Beckford-Bond- Designated Safeguarding Lead & Thrive Practitioner

Aimee Nash-Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Dominique Low-Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead

Aimee Nash- Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead

Melanie Chance- Lead First Aider & Thrive Practitioner

Rebecca Marshall - Lead Mental Health First Aider & Thrive Practitioner

Aimee Nash-SENDCo & Mental Health First Aider

Helen Beckford-Bond - CPD Lead

Helen Beckford-Bond - PSHE Co-ordinator

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a pupil should speak to one of the Mental Health Leads in the first instance. If there is a fear that the pupil is in danger of immediate harm then the normal child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead staff. If the pupil presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by Helen Beckford-Bond and Aimee Nash. (See appendix 2, Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Pathway).

Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern or who receives a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

Teaching about Mental Health and Wellbeing

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge,

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understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance¹ to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. What support is available within our school and local community, who it is aimed at and how to access it is outlined in Appendix 3, Emotional wellbeing and mental health services.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of pupil help-seeking by ensuring pupils understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / 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
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- 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

¹ Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing URL= <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and> (accessed 02.02.2018)

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- Lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Managing disclosures

A pupil may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a pupil chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the pupil's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'

All disclosures should be recorded on CPOMs. This record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the mental health lead and DSL's who will monitor and decide what offer of support and advice should be provided for next steps. (See appendix 2, Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Pathway).

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If we consider it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a pupil on then we should discuss with the pupil:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a pupil without first telling them or their parent/carer. Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. Particularly if a pupil is in danger of harm.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with an appropriate colleague, usually the Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Lead, this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the pupil, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides

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an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the pupil and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

Parents should be informed if there are concerns about their mental health and wellbeing and pupils may choose to tell their parents themselves. We should always give pupils the option of us informing parents for them or with them.

If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues involving parents, then parents should not be informed, but the Designated Safeguarding Leads must be informed immediately.

Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents we should consider the following questions (on a case by case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face to face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen? At school, at their home or somewhere neutral?
- Who should be present? Consider parents, the pupil, and other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues and many may respond with anger, fear or upset during the first conversation. We should be accepting of this (within reason) and give the parent time to reflect.

We should always highlight further sources of information and give them leaflets to take away where possible as they will often find it hard to take much in whilst coming to terms with the news that you're sharing. Sharing sources of further support aimed specifically at parents can also be helpful too e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away as parents often have many questions as they process the information. Finish each meeting with agreed next step and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the child's confidential record.

Working with All Parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health. In order to support parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on our school website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child

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- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

Supporting Peers

When a pupil is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training in order to enable them to keep pupils safe.

We will host relevant information on our virtual learning environment for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.²

Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more pupils.

² www.minded.org.uk [accessed 02/02/18].

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Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the CPD Coordinator who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every 3 years as a minimum. It is next due for review in February 2026.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis. If you have a question or suggestion about improving this policy, this should be addressed with the Headteacher

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

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APPENDIX 1

Emotional health and wellbeing interventions

When planning to meet pupils' emotional health and wellbeing needs, the following strategies and approaches will be helpful in considering what is required.

Universal (for all pupils)

Culture, staffing and policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supportive, inclusive whole school ethos (everyone in school feeling included, accepted, listened to and respected) • Adherence to responsibilities described in the SEND Code of Practice (2015) and Equalities Act (2010) for students with special educational needs and disabilities and other protected characteristics • Meaningful opportunities for pupils to express their views and needs and to have these valued and acted upon • Partnership work with parents, carers and families in a respectful way that recognises and values diversity • A whole school curriculum to develop social and emotional skills that is the responsibility of all staff • A whole school curriculum which enables students to reflect on and make positive safe choices regarding social media, sex and relationships and substance use • Whole school positive behaviour policy which includes understanding of possible underlying causes of inappropriate behaviour • Inclusive environment to meet the needs of children and young people with a wide range of special educational needs and disabilities • Nurturing approaches which are embedded in the school ethos • A high level of staff competency in emotional health and wellbeing and access to effective and regular training • Flexible approaches and understanding for pupil needs incorporated into the environment and teaching • All staff trained in basic awareness of low mood, anxiety and attachment difficulties in pupils • Designated lead for emotional health and well-being in the school • Clear guidance understood by all pupils for what to do if they are worried about a friend's mental health or believe that they may harm themselves • Clear links between the emotional health and well-being support and behaviour management procedures in the school to counteract the higher risk of exclusion for children and young people with mental health difficulties • Information sharing protocols with external agencies and parents which are GDPR compliant • Effective anti-bullying policy

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguarding systems and procedures are clear and effective • Active promotion of materials, activities and messages which reduce the stigma of mental health difficulties • Teaching assistants are effectively deployed to support access to learning and provide support during unstructured times • Effective and inclusive rewards systems • Well established relationships where children feel open to talk to an adult or peers • Rest/exercise breaks provided during the day • Opportunities provided for home work to be done during the school day • Inclusive and accessible games / activities provided on the playground at break times • School trips and extra-curricular activities planned so that they are inclusive and accessible • Importance of staff emotional health and well-being recognised and supported • Resources which reflect diversity displayed around the school and used across the curriculum • Clear classroom rules agreed by all students • Use of respectful language in classroom by staff and children • Supportive transition arrangements between classes and phases • Family groupings / vertical tutor groups • Designated quiet area (not used for sanctions)
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Specific approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional logic (whole class) • Themed weeks e.g. anti-bullying • Circle time • Mentoring • Buddy systems • Mindfulness

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Targeted (for some pupils)

Culture, staffing and policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional transition arrangements and programmes for vulnerable pupils • Drop in sessions available with professionals such as the school nurse, counsellor, mentor or other key adult. • Targeted use of play leaders and /or teaching assistants at social times • Designated areas and /or clubs which appeal to children and young people, which aim to reduce stress and have a higher adult: child ratio • Robust 'assess plan do review' processes for pupils with emotional health and wellbeing difficulties • Targeted extra-curricular activities on offer e.g. cycle club to provide and exercise to promote positive mental well-being and socialisation • Personalised home/school books to establish effective communication between home and school • Pre and post teaching sessions to address curriculum needs and allow access to curriculum • Physical environment and policies which take account of the needs of pupils questioning their gender identity and/or sexuality • Risk management procedures which ensure the safety and full inclusion of children and young people with recognised emotional health and well-being need
Specific approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interventions targeting emotional development e.g. Thrive, • Programmes and opportunities to build resilience • Reach4Wellbeing group intervention for pupils with anxiety • Nurture groups and programmes • Targeted buddy systems • Nurture groups • Emotional Logic (intervention) • Learning mentors • Lego Build to Express

Specific approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cognitive behavioural approaches. • Sensory checklist e.g. https://www.sensorysmarts.com/sensory-checklist.pdf • Invitation to 'target' clubs e.g. book club, cycle club • Talkabout • Circle of Friends • Time to think/talk programmes • Input for pupils on how to deal with exam stress • Signposting to kooth.com for online support

Specialist (for a few pupils)

Culture, staffing and policy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific emotional health and well-being policy in place outlining support available for children and young people with recognised emotional health and wellbeing needs which require individual and/or specialist intervention with links to the following policies: Self harm, bereavement, safeguarding, critical incident, anti-bullying, behaviour management and equalities • Co-production in planning processes involving parents/carers, pupils and staff • Consent for counselling accepted from pupils where they are Gillick competent • Promotion and advertisement of external support services such as The Samaritans and Childline • Support for staff working with children and young people with recognised emotional health and well-being needs through regular supervision and problem solving sessions with a suitably trained and experienced professional • Targeted work with parents of children and young people with recognised emotional health and well-being needs through support groups, family support workers and signposting • Signposting for parents when they also have mental health needs • Knowledge of specialist services and provision available and the pathways to accessing this support

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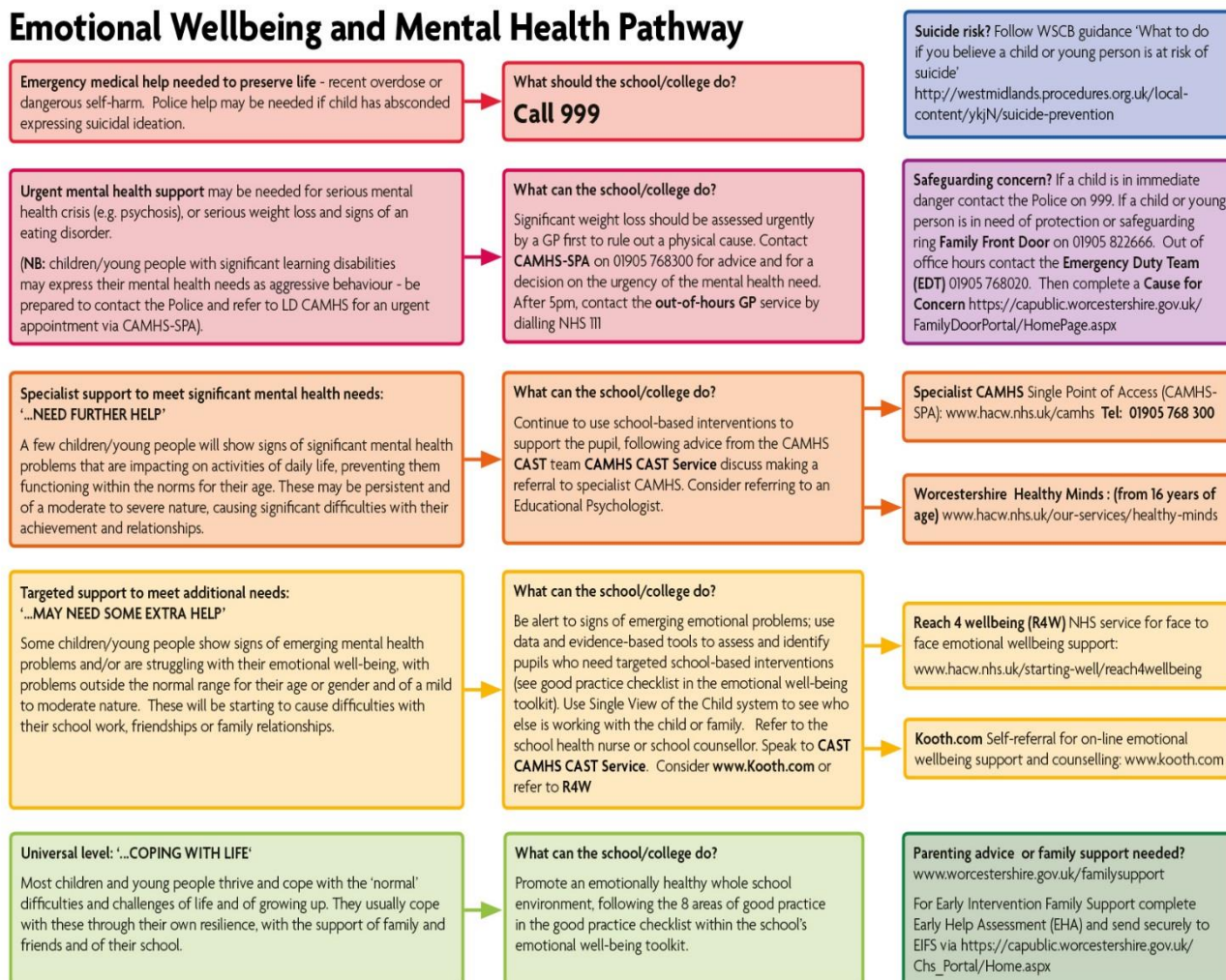
Culture, staffing and policy

- Intervention with pupils on how to support a friend with recognised emotional health and well-being needs
- All professionals employed by school providing support and intervention for pupils with recognised emotional health and well-being needs are qualified, regulated and supervised
- Risk assessments in place for children and young people who self-harm and/or maybe at risk of suicide

Specific approaches

- Evidence based therapeutic support and intervention in school for example:
- cognitive behavioural approaches for students with anxiety or depression
 - play therapy,
 - music therapy
 - Lego based therapy
- Individual counselling
- Learning mentor, family support worker and/or parent support advisors through targeted support and daily check-ins
- Referral to and partnership working with external professionals for support, advice and/or intervention
- Alternative provision or Medical Education Team involvement for short periods when pupil unable to attend school

Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Pathway



Emotional wellbeing and mental health services

Parenting and family support

Parents and carers can access the following website for practical information and support including on-line guides, parenting courses and group support available in their area: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/familysupport

Early intervention family support

To access the EIFS service schools should complete an Early Help Assessment (EHA) and upload it to the Schools Portal under the Secure Communications Tab

https://capublic.worcestershire.gov.uk/Chs_Portal/Home.aspx This should then be sent to EIFS. More information is available here: www.worcestershire.gov.uk/familysupport

Safeguarding concerns

Information for schools and other professionals is available here:

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/causeforconcern or call the Family Front Door (01905 822 666).

Kooth

Kooth.com website is open to children and young people in Worcestershire aged 11-19. The site is staffed by fully trained and qualified counsellors and is available until 10pm each night, 365 days per year. It is free, safe, confidential and provides a non-stigmatising way for young people to receive counselling, advice and support on-line.

Contact details: <https://kooth.com>

Reach 4 Wellbeing (R4W)

This service is commissioned to provide therapeutic CBT-based group work for children and young people with mild to moderate emotional and mental health difficulties that have not responded to school or setting based prevention and emotional wellbeing support. Typically their difficulties will be starting to impact on their functioning in the home or school setting, but their difficulties are not yet severe enough to require referral to specialist CAMHS. R4W is not a counselling service, but one to one support is available where group work is not appropriate.

R4W accepts referrals for children and young people aged 5-19 years, where there is a reasonable description that suggests that the child/young person may have an emotional wellbeing issue and they are registered with a Worcestershire GP and/or live in Worcestershire or attend a Worcestershire school.

Settings such as schools or colleges who are able to commission services directly need to show evidence that they have tried setting-based interventions, for example by following guidance in the Schools'/Colleges' Emotional Wellbeing Toolkit. Professionals can refer children/young to

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the R4W team using the Professionals and Agencies Referral Form which is downloadable from the R4W weblink below. Completed referral forms can then be sent to the R4W team by secure email via the WCC Children's Services Portal

https://capublic.worcestershire.gov.uk/Chs_Portal/Home.aspx All referrals need to have consent from the child/young person, and/or family before submitting the referral form.

Contact details: <http://www.hacw.nhs.uk/starting-well/reach4wellbeing/>

ChatHealth

Young people aged 11-19 years can text their school health nurse with any questions around health and wellbeing and for confidential advice and support. Text 07507 331750

CAST (Consultation, Advice, Support and Training)

CAST sits within Worcestershire CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services). They work directly with professionals who are working with children and young people experiencing or at risk of experiencing mental health difficulties, this can include: School Nurses, Teachers, GPs, Health Visitors, Social workers, Family support workers... but this list is not exhaustive. Any professional who is working with a young person about whom they have mental health specific concerns is welcome to contact the team. The service offers consultation, advice, support and training which can be specifically tailored to suit the professional seeking the service.

To request a consultation, or to make a training request, professionals should use the downloadable forms on the CAST weblink below. Settings such as schools or colleges are expected to evidence interventions tried and any current work, for example following guidance in the Schools'/Colleges' Emotional Wellbeing Toolkit. Completed forms can be sent to the CAMHS CAST team by secure email via the Children's Services Portal

https://capublic.worcestershire.gov.uk/Chs_Portal/Home.aspx

Contact details: <http://www.hacw.nhs.uk/our-services/childrens-community-health-services/camhs/cast/>

CAMHS

Worcestershire CAMHS is a specialist mental health service for children and young people under the age of 18, where the young person is presenting with moderate to severe mental health problems that are impacting on activities of daily life and preventing them functioning within the norms for their age. Their problems may be persistent and causing significant difficulties with their achievement and relationships.

Where symptoms are displayed mainly through behaviour, the referral should include information on what strategies and interventions have been put in place by other services and agencies prior to referral, in order to explain why the need is felt to be one related to the mental health of the child, rather than other factors in their life and environment.

Examples of mental health problems seen include moderate to severe depression, anxiety, symptoms suggesting psychosis, eating disorders, suicidal ideation and significant self-harming

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behaviour that is affecting daily living activities. Referrals may be accepted where there is co-morbidity of a high level mental health need with another issue such as a learning disability, neurodevelopmental disorder or substance misuse. Where a young person is referred following trauma, it is important to ensure that the young person is safe from further trauma and living in a containing environment.

Some referrals may be accepted for a consultation approach rather than face to face intervention. These may include emotional responses to environmental issues (e.g. bullying at school, violence within the family).

It is not expected that referrers will have made any formal diagnosis prior to referral and the referral form helps to highlight areas of functioning and need which will guide decision making about a referral. Referrers can also speak to their CAST contact <http://www.hacw.nhs.uk/our-services/childrens-community-health-services/camhs/cast/> who will help their decision making. Referrers wishing to discuss a specific referral in greater depth will be able to contact the single point of access, CAMHS-SPA, where they can speak with a CAMHS clinician for advice. CAMHS-SPA triages all referrals and clinic appointments are made according to level of urgency and mental health need.

If an emergency Mental Health Act assessment is required for acute psychotic illness or imminent suicide risk, the young person's GP would need to request this from the duty AMHP coordinator (Approved Mental Health Professional coordinator). Alternatively speak to the duty clinician at CAMHS-SPA for advice.

Contact details www.hacw.nhs.uk/CAMHS CAMHS-SPA: 01905 768300

Worcestershire Healthy Minds: Mental health services for over 16s and adults: Healthy Minds supports people aged 16 or over who are experiencing problems such as stress, low mood, anxiety or depression. The service offers short courses, talking therapies and self-help information.

Contact details <http://www.hacw.nhs.uk/our-services/healthy-minds/>