



## Mental Health Policy

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## ETHICAL LEADERSHIP

1. Thomas Tallis School Plan 2023 -24 has six aims.

1	A powerful curriculum
2	The best teaching and learning
3	Great achievement and progress
4	Excellent personal development
5	Behaviour for a strong community
6	A model for a better world

As part of aim 6 Thomas Tallis School has adopted the *Framework for Ethical Leadership in Education*. This means that we try to behave in a principled and correct manner in everything we do.

Schools and colleges serve children and young people and help them grow into fulfilled and valued citizens. As role models for the young, how we behave as leaders is as important as what we do. We therefore behave with **selflessness, integrity, objectivity, accountability, openness, honesty and leadership**. We demonstrate **trust, wisdom, kindness, justice, service, courage and optimism**.

## 1. Introduction

*Education to understand the world and change it for the better.*

- 1.1. Schools should support students, staff and their local communities to be resilient and mentally healthy. They should provide a safe environment that builds trust and belonging, creating a culture that both supports and nurtures mental health.
- 1.2. The Department for Education outlines eight principles for mental health good practice which Thomas Tallis School has adopted:
  - a) Leadership and management
  - b) Ethos and environment
  - c) Curriculum, teaching and learning
  - d) Student voice
  - e) Staff development, health and wellbeing
  - f) Identifying needs and monitoring impact
  - g) Working with parents, carers and families
  - h) Targeted support and appropriate referrals
- 1.3. Alongside these principles, we work within the following 4 remits:
  - a) PREVENTION: creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school community, and equipping students to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching students about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos.
  - b) IDENTIFICATION: recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.
  - c) EARLY INTERVENTION: helping students with access to early support and intervention.
  - d) ACCESS TO SPECIALIST SUPPORT: working together with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.
- 1.4. We are fully committed to supporting and promoting the emotional health and wellbeing of our students and staff.

## 2. Aims

- 2.1. We have a supportive and caring ethos. At Thomas Tallis we believe that who we are and how we treat each other is an essential part of preparing for a happy and success future, as well as achieving our best and flourishing now.
- 2.2. As a community we agreed on 5 core character traits which makes us the 'Tallis' we strive to be. We are:
  - Kind
  - Honest

- Fair
- Respectful
- Optimistic

- 2.3. We have a clear and up-to-date understanding of mental health and how that presents differently for everyone. We recognise that all children and young people need the foundation of positive mental health to benefit fully from the opportunities available to them, and that accessing different opportunities can have a positive impact on mental health.
- 2.4. Within Tallis, we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable at times, and that anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everyone's responsibility and that we all have a role to play. As professionals, we ensure we are up to date with current practice and are able to identify where additional support is needed.

### 3. Practices

3.1. THROUGHOUT OUR WORK, we will:

- a) acknowledge healthy relationships underpin and have a significant impact on positive mental health
- b) help our students to understand their emotions and feelings better
- c) help our students feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- d) help our students socially to form and maintain relationships
- e) promote self-esteem and ensure our students know that they are seen, known and loved count
- f) encourage students to be confident and be themselves
- g) help students to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks

3.2. WE WILL PROMOTE A MENTALLY HEALTHY ENVIRONMENT by:

- a) offering a clear ethos and culture that accords value and respect to all
- b) engaging with the ethos that mental health is everyone's responsibility
- c) encouraging a sense of belonging
- d) maintaining an environment that is safe, clean, attractive and well cared for
- e) ensuring students are surrounded by adults who model positive and appropriate behaviours, interactions and ways of relating at all times
- f) encouraging student voice and opportunities to participate in decision making
- g) celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements
- h) identifying and supporting students' unique talents and abilities
- i) providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth
- j) providing opportunities to reflect
- k) fostering strong links with external agencies to ensure access to appropriate available support that meets individuals needs including in house early intervention, therapeutic support and external agencies such as CAMHS and MHST (Mental Health in Schools Team).

#### **4. Training and Support for Students**

4.1. We will support the mental health of our community in the following ways:

- h) The Safeguarding Governor will strategically challenge to make sure that our policy and practice are very good
- i) All staff will receive umbrella Mental Health (MH) Training
- j) Senior Mental Health Leads (SMHL) will monitor MH support and regularly report to Governors
- k) SMHLs will seek to secure and ensure effective and efficient MH provision whether internally or externally
- l) SMHL will identify staff who are able to deliver key interventions and receive training (certified if possible)
- m) We will constantly strive to ensure we promote positive emotional wellbeing in our classrooms in line with Local Authority networks.
- n) Staff will identify students who need support and refer to the multi-disciplinary team or Head of Year.
- o) Weekly reporting on MH to all staff through briefing and the high needs and Trauma Informed Practise section in the staff bulletin
- p) Reports to all staff following the multi-disciplinary meeting every half term through the Learning Support Timetable
- q) Support for staff mental health through colleagues, line leadership and HR

4.2. Action on individual mental health needs:

- a) Students identified to receive key staff input with targeted intervention
- b) Parents and carers informed of the process (as appropriate)
- c) Staff monitor individuals' mental health interventions and review regularly

4.3. We understand, as a team, that students will present their mental health challenges in a number of ways and as such we will be vigilant in our observations. This can include:

- a) monitoring attendance
- b) monitoring punctuality
- c) discussions around relationships (both internal and external)
- d) changes in approaches to their learning
- e) physical indicators including any evidence of self-harm
- f) increase in negative behaviour
- g) changes in family circumstances
- h) changes to personal health

#### **5. Working together:**

5.1. We work with a variety of external agencies to promote and support mental health. These include:

- a) School therapeutic team
- b) CAMHS
- c) Education Psychology
- d) FASS (Early help)
- e) School Nurse
- f) Specialist Mental Health Support networks (including MHST)
- g) Children's Social Care
- h) Charlton Athletic

## 6. Mental Health and the curriculum:

6.1. The promotion of students' positive mental health at Tallis starts from first principles, building up an environment in which students can feel a sense of belonging and flourish in a variety of ways. These include:

- a) PSHCE lessons that focus on a variety of personal development issues, and that provide students with a range of strategies for dealing with different situations in their lives
- b) Ways to Change the World tutorial sessions and Community Days to promote belonging, community, understanding of context and links with current issues and the wider world
- c) strong co-curricular offer, including in-school events and a range of social clubs and activities, providing opportunities for students to pursue their interests and feel successful beyond the academic curriculum
- d) Student Voice opportunities to know and understand that their views are valued and that they can make a difference.
- e) the Tallis Futures CEIAG programme that helps students to feel confident and excited about their future options
- f) celebrating and recognising success in a variety of areas

6.2. Tallis offers extensive communication both in house and via social communication. These include:

- a) workshops
- b) support groups
- c) parent emails
- d) tallis newsletter
- e) social media channels
- f) opportunities for parent feedback
- g) posters

6.3. We also invite our community to take note of any changes they may witness or feel and communicate this to us. These may include:

- h) changes in eating or sleeping
- i) becoming socially withdrawn
- j) changes in mood or activity

- k) talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- l) expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- m) repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.
- n) increased use of screen time or social media usage

6.4. Parents and carers in particular are given support to keep track of the above and we will continue to do everything we can to support and gain help.

## **7. Identifying and responding to student need:**

7.1. We have already played a part working with other schools and agencies in identifying the needs of our students on their entry to Thomas Tallis via:

- a) admission procedures
- b) SEND consultations and students' EHCPs
- c) home and school visits
- d) the FAP (Fair Access Panel) which includes all external agencies

7.2. We strive to ensure that student data is up to date so we can offer the best support, looking at possible wider elements of need.

7.3. Further, through the developing, monitoring and tracking of student access to the co-curriculum we will be able to identify issues early. This may be seen through refusal to engage, being apathetic or uninterested, or avoidance of participation. These behaviours may indicate a lack of self-esteem or other underlying issues and can be identified and addressed through the co-curriculum tracking system.

## **8. Identifying and responding to staff need**

8.1. We will support staff by making sure they:

- a) have their needs recognised and responded to in a holistic way
- b) have a range of strategies to support their mental health via line management and HR to support them at times of emotional need in both the short and long term
- c) have a recognition of their work – life balance
- d) have the mental health and wellbeing of staff reviewed regularly including staff unions
- e) ensure staff feel valued and have opportunities to contribute to decision making processes
- f) celebrate and recognise success in a professional manner
- g) ensure staff are able to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively
- h) are provided with opportunities for CPD
- i) recognise unique talents and skills and provide opportunities for development
- j) have time to reflect

- 8.2. We will ensure that our teams are well trained and their MH knowledge is up to date. As a minimum, staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their safeguarding training in order for them to keep students safe.
- 8.3. Staff who work with complex mental health issues will be offered support via line leadership and HR. In some instances external supervision will be offered to ensure key staff are equipped to manage the emotional impact this work can bring.

## **9. Supporting parents and carers**

- 9.1. We will support parents and carers by making sure they
  - a) are recognised for their significant contribution to children and young people's mental health
  - b) are welcomed, included and work in partnership with the school and other agencies
  - c) are provided with opportunities where they can ask for help at any time
  - d) are informed of appropriate agencies for support
  - e) are clear about their roles and expectations of their responsibilities in working in partnership with us
  - f) know that their opinions are sought, valued and responded to
  - g) know that their strengths and difficulties are recognised, acknowledged and challenged appropriately

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