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# COVID-19 SEMH Policy Addendum

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ORCHARDSIDE SCHOOL



# Vision

Orchardside understands that the return to school will be a difficult experience for many young people after Covid. However, we feel that social interaction with peers, parents and teachers will benefit their overall wellbeing. Our SEMH strategy will aim to specifically support our young people to readjust to school life and support our students with their transition to school who may be reluctant. We are planning to support our learners with impact of the pandemic on their mental wellbeing and recovery. We aim to dedicate time in our school day and in the curriculum to contextualise anxiety from the stress, low mood, and depression as normal responses to this abnormal situation. We also aim to identify our students who may be showing signs of more severe anxiety or depression

## Strategic Priorities

1. Support young people to understand feelings around the impact of the pandemic
2. Signposting students and parents to external services
3. Identify students showing more severe signs of anxiety and depression
4. Prompt and efficient referral procedure to external agencies e.g. CAMHS
5. Day to day support for children with SEMH needs

## Operational Management

The vast majority of pupils that attend Orchardside school have social, emotional and mental health needs which may have been overlooked or undetected during their time in mainstream school. Our vision at Orchardside is to provide a service which encompasses the “whole” being in the young people we teach and work with so that all their needs are met fully from the moment they start attending.

Pupils that access our counselling service are usually referred through Orchardside’s weekly Wellbeing (safeguarding) meeting. During these meeting students are identified based on behaviour patterns that they display, signs of trauma and family dynamics which are affecting their progress at school. These meetings explore the interrelated factors that may be co-occurring in their lives that could be impacting on their learning needs and in particular their social, emotional and mental wellbeing. Fortunately, this is a multi-agency meeting attended by Local Area colleagues in Police, Social Care and Health. Pupils can also self-refer for SEMH support using Kooth an online and telephone mental health support service. Our school therapist works hard to engender an open door drop-in culture to empower our young people to become support seeking.

As soon as a pupil is deemed to have SEMH needs, we aim to use a graduated response process which will:

- assess and establish a clear analysis of the pupil’s needs;
- plan to set out how the pupil will be supported;
- regularly review to assess the effectiveness of the provision which may lead to changes where necessary.

Once information has been gathered regarding the issues being raised with the pupil the school therapist will then decide which level of support the pupil requires. In the first instance all pupils see the school therapist for three sessions on arrival to Orchardside before seeing any other professionals. These sessions will take place over a three-week period to allow the

pupil to settle in and become aware of how they are feeling regarding the transition to Orchardside school. A decision is then made, during the weekly inclusion meeting on which service suits the individual pupil, be it time limited counselling (6 to 12 weeks) with the school therapist, psychotherapy (ongoing sessions – no time limit) with the school therapist, or a direct referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services for more complex and serious cases.

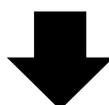
Orchardside now also offer pupils access to an online and telephone therapy service which is confidential and they can use this whilst at home during their own time. The calls to the service are free, and can help support the students with emotional difficulties and an online journal that they can use to record their thoughts.

### Social, Emotional and Mental Health Identification Pathway

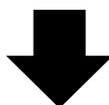
Pupil has a series of three sessions (over a three-week period) with School Therapist to assess level of need. Depending on the level of need required, the pupil will then receive one of the following interventions



Individual learner's needs are analysed and triaged during the weekly inclusion team meeting with the school therapist and Special Educational Needs Team using data from Pupil Attitude to Self and School Induction Assessment



Staff can use the Orchardside's digital safeguarding system **EdAware** if they feel a learner needs social, emotional and well-being support. This is located under **quick links** on **Orchardside School's Website** .  
The concern is automatically shared with safeguarding team



Time limited counselling sessions (6 to 12 Weeks) or  
Psychotherapy sessions (on going sessions)



Direct referral to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

# Reporting

Our school therapist generated an impact report for SEMH interventions that are conducted in school. The data used to track impact is calls P.A.S.S

## The 9 P.A.S.S. Factors Intervention

This assessment is useful to identify any inter-related factors that may be impacting and/or exacerbating their needs. It is an attitudinal assessment we administer called Pupil Attitudes to Self and School. This highlights other potential factors impacting on their learning needs that may need to be addressed by different forms of intervention that may be more therapeutic in nature rather than simply a literacy and/ or speech, language and social communication program.

There is a strong correlation between student success and belief that they are in control of that success. To understand how 'in control' students believe they are, we use GL Education's Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS). This psychometric measure helps us unpack students' internal perceptions of themselves as learners as well as their attitudes to external factors, such as their attitudes to the curriculum provided by the school and to what extent they feel part of the school community. It provides professionals not only with an indication of student wellbeing but also with a clear indication of attitudinal barriers to learning that might be getting in the way of the student reaching their full academic potential.

PASS breaks down student attitudes into nine main factors:

**Factor 1: Feelings About School** — develop feelings to combat loneliness and encourage integration in school e.g.

- Implement preventative anti-bullying programmes e.g. peer mediation, quality circles, assertiveness training.
- Individualise lesson plans as much as possible.
- Use collaborative and co-operative learning strategies.
- Encourage democratic processes in the classroom and school.
- Encourage students to engage in extra-curricular activity in school.

**Factor 2: Perceived Learning Capability** — increase sense of success in recent learning activities and challenges e.g.

- Peer Helpers program, which trains students in helping, communication, and problem-solving skills.
- Reinforce feelings that they have made a real contribution in terms of their learning.
- Treat students as special to develop their capacities for success. E.g. Student of the week.
- Develop peer tutoring amongst students.
- Move from Passive to Active Learning.
- Respond positively to student questions.

**Factor 3: Self Regard** — boost longer term deeper sense of self-worth as a learner e.g.

- Use comment to give messages of encouragement, belief and hope - 'I know you can do it'
- Ensure that the setting for praise and acknowledgement is 'right' for the student
- Teach students to self-praise/acknowledge their efforts and achievements
- Set realistic challenges for students
- Develop understanding of defensive behaviour
- Teach that mistakes are positive
- Encourage the view that gradual rather than continual success is how learning is judged

**Factor 4: Preparedness for Learning** — develop student study skills and self-knowledge in learning techniques e.g.

- Create a learning and studying area/environment
- Teach test skills and preparation
- Teach note taking strategies
- Work out priorities with students and teach prioritisation techniques
- Ensure Students have the correct equipment for study
- Develop cross-age peer tutoring of thinking skills

**Factor 5: Attitudes to Teachers** — build warm and supportive relationships with pupils e.g.

- Show an interest in the student's interests
- Hold discussions which focus on re-framing student's intellectual potential - value effort as well as attainment
- Empathise with students' thoughts, feelings, and age-related issues
- Use put ups and affirmations rather than put downs
- Build trust for one another
- Listen to student's voices
- Trust students with responsibilities.

**Factor 6: General Work Ethic** — target and support aspiration, purpose and direction in life e.g.

- Seek ways to demonstrate how motivation plays an important role in non-educational settings e.g. sport, workplace
- Show students that success is important. Recognise and acknowledge the variety of ways that students can succeed. Reward success in all its forms
- Develop a learning/subject/task/assignment-based dialogue with students on the question 'What's in it for me?' in order to makes links with current learning and future direction
- Involve parents in discussing the issue of motivation and develop partnerships in fostering it in their children
- Encourage students to focus on their achievements and efforts rather than compare themselves with peers - Encourage the notion of Personal Best
- Ensure that learners feel that they are in control
- Provide opportunities for choice and decision-making

**Factor 7: Confidence in Learning** — apply techniques to improve learner resilience and "stickability" e.g.

- Always communicate positive and realistic expectations to students
- Clearly state the requirements for successful task completion - Learning objectives and prerequisites • Avoid ambiguous instructions and statements
- Promote student reflection and self-assessment to identify strengths and areas for development
- Use 'backwards planning' with students to help determine time effort and pre-requisites needed for tasks
- Provide plenty of opportunity for learners to practice application of new knowledge and skills before moving on

**Factor 8: Attitudes to Attendance** -increase student motivation and desire to attend school e.g.

- Engage parents to explore issues and support school regarding potential non-attendance risk
- Consider the implementation of out-of-hours study support
- Check that the school is vigilant and vigorous in tackling bullying
- Make full use of any in-school learning support centre provision

- Engage mentoring support for young people at risk of non-attendance
- Review Pastoral Care policies and practice

**Factor 9: Response to Curriculum Demands-** increase relevance and motivational content of curriculum delivery e.g.

- Make learning more relevant by connecting it to existing skills or prior learning
- Increase learning relevance by clearly stating the current value of instruction and learning • Stress the future usefulness and relevance of learning - Ask students the 'What's in it for me?' question
- Allow students choice/flexibility to use different methods for task organisation/completion • Use extrinsic rewards sparingly and closely relate to the task accomplished
- Help students understand the success criteria for individual assignments
- Ensure academic success through differentiation, target setting and positive feedback

Our school therapist keeps internal records of all learners referred to CAMHS. She liaises closely with CAMHS colleagues who report back to the school about the progress of their Orchardside clients.