

# Chiron OEP Mental Health Policy

Policy implemented: September 2023  
Last reviewed: New Policy  
Next review due: September 2024

## 1. Summary

At Chiron OEP, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and governors. Our open culture allows students' voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues.

This policy is a guide to all staff (including non-student-facing roles) outlining Chiron's OEP approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

### **The aims of this policy are:**

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

## 2. Document Control

|   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Initial purpose and scope of the new policy/procedure agreed by:            | Ayesha Allen, Virtual School Head |
| Technical review carried out:   | Michael Alberro, September 2023   |
| Final quality check carried out:  | Arjun Singh, September 2023       |
| Date implemented:   | September 2023                    |
| Version Number:   | 1.0                               |
| Date of the next review:  | September 2024                    |
| Department responsible:   | Education                         |
| Job Title of Lead Person:   | Ayesha Allen, Virtual School Head |
| Author / Main Contact, including their job title (if different from above): | -                                 |

In addition to this policy, local authorities and other commissioners may have their own policies, procedures and guidance which Services must comply with. These policies should complement this policy.

However, there may be additional requirements put in place by local authorities and other commissioners and these must be adhered to. Changes must not be made to Salutem's policies and procedures without corporate approval but, where needed, local procedures should be developed to accompany these.

### EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STATEMENT

The Salutem Group is committed to the fair treatment of all in line with the Equality Act 2010. An equality impact assessment has been completed on this policy to ensure that it can be implemented consistently regardless of any such factors and all will be treated with dignity and respect.

## 3. Headings

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This policy must be brought to the attention of all employees.  
The controlled version of this policy and its associated documents are available on the Blink Hub. Printed or downloaded copies are uncontrolled and may not be up to date.

## 4. Content

### **Key Beliefs**

- Many of our students come to us with pre-existing mental health issues and others may be experiencing situations which make their mental health particularly vulnerable. We therefore have a particular duty to create a culture that supports mental health and to have robust processes and procedures around mental health.
- A culture that enables children to feel safe, promotes healthy choices, encourages discussion, treats people with respect and refuses to tolerate hate enables good mental health.
- All children should understand how to report if they are struggling with their mental health. They should also trust that their concerns will be taken seriously and that they will be guided to appropriate support where possible.
- Working remotely presents a challenge with regards to engaging with local services. We therefore need to work hard to understand the national and local picture for each child.
- Accurate recording and reporting through our safeguarding policies and procedures is essential where there are concerns around mental health.

### **Modelling healthy mental health choices**

At Chiron OEP we believe that in order to make healthy choices for our mental health we need to see these actions modelled in our community. We expect staff to behave with empathy and kindness to themselves, their colleagues and the professionals that they work with. We also encourage staff to set healthy and clear boundaries and encourage them to share these in a way which is both firm and kind. For example;

“I would love to have a look at your creative writing, but I am busy this evening. Please could you email it to me? I’ll get some feedback on it over to you by the end of next week. I’m really excited to read it! Thanks for sharing.”

“That social media account sounds really interesting but I can’t share my social media handle with you as it’s important for me to keep that part of my life separate and it’s not appropriate for me to have contact with students on social media. If you want to email the link to my email address, I’d be interested to have a look.”

“I can’t meet over lunch today as I need a gap between lessons. It’s important for me to get out of the house briefly to reset and take a break from my screen. Are you free at 3pm?”

Where a student is making healthy choices this should be praised and encouraged using the “high fives” system to record the progress and share success with carers and families.

In order to ensure that staff are able to model positive mental wellbeing all staff have access to the Saludem Extras Wellbeing portal which includes support helplines, resources and tips to support staff in building and maintaining mental health.

## Creating an open culture

We want to encourage students to feel able to talk about their mental health. We build this culture by:

- modelling the positive, clear and open interactions between staff,
- using check-ins at the start of lessons and following up where we have concerns,
- Celebrating the great work and great progress of both students and teachers nth our community (with the permission of the student where appropriate)
- Sharing channels for referral with families, carers, staff and students.
- Ensuring that all requests get a response.

## Peer and Student Self Reporting

Students are encouraged to speak to a member of staff if they are struggling with their mental health or have any other concerns about themselves or their peers. They can do this by speaking directly to a teacher at the end of a lesson, by raising the issue in a 1:1 check-in or by emailing a teacher. They can also raise an anonymous concern using the “I’m concerned about” button on the Chiron OEP website. This allows a student to send an anonymous concern directly to the DSL. Teachers will log all concerns raised on CPOMs to ensure that we are getting a full picture of any problems from a safeguarding perspective.

## Referrals

All concerns will be logged on CPOMs in line with our safeguarding policy. The DSL will collate this information and decide, in consultation with the other key staff, professionals and the family, what type of support is necessary. The following table outlines the types of interventions and support might be offered.

| Need   | Intervention and Support   | Monitoring  |
|--------|--|---|
| High   | CAMHS-assessment<br>School 1:1 regular check-in<br>Educational Psychologist involvement<br>External agency support | Support added to IEP<br>Parents/Carers updated<br>Strengths and difficulties<br>Questionnaire<br>Multi-agency meetings<br>Weekly staff briefing<br>update |
| Medium | School 1:1 check-ins<br>Small group interventions<br>Signposting to local support                                  | As Above  |
| Low    | Allocated staff champion<br>Signposted to resources and extra-curricular groups                                    | Staff champion to monitor<br>and refer if concerns<br>escalate  |

## 5. Areas of Governance

This policy has been written with expert contribution from appropriate stakeholders. The Information Governance team will monitor, reflect on and gain organisational learning from the implementation of this policy. This policy will be reviewed and updated two years from implementation unless legal changes demand a more timely amendment.

The application of this policy and its associated documents is mandatory for all services staff, volunteers, agency staff and all other Salutem representatives. Staff understanding of this policy and associated documents will be assured through training, assessment of competency and supervision.

Staff understanding of this policy will be assured through training and the delivery of awareness raising workshops as deemed necessary by Divisional Management. The people we support will be involved in the review to ensure it captures the important issues for them.

## 6. Areas of Responsibility

### Salutem Senior Leadership Team and Board

- Ensure availability of resources to ensure the implementation of this policy, completion of training and systems to ratify, communicate and review this policy.
- Ensure there are clear disciplinary and other measures for staff who do not adhere to this policy.
- Ensure the policy is monitored and organisational learning is enabled by systems of data collection and *analysis as appropriate*.

### Principal

- Ensure that all support staff including agency workers are trained, developed, and supported.
- Consult with specialists as needed to ensure staff and students are being supported in the most optimal way.

### DSL

- Ensure that the local service networks are understood and updated
- Ensure that the IEPs are up to date and that information is shared with students and their parents/carers appropriately
- Ensure that the resource banks are being regularly updated by staff

### Individual Staff

- Ensure that they are reporting concerns in accordance with our safeguarding policy
- Request appropriate support with regards to mental wellbeing
- Model positive mental wellbeing

## 7. Learning and Development

Salutem is committed to ensuring that all staff are aware of what is expected of them so that everyone is appropriately supported. Staff should speak to their line manager in relation to their learning needs using supervision and through the appraisal process.

In order to ensure that our staff are able to understand the contexts of our students, and have the best possible information available to them, all our staff undergo behaviour training with our Children's Services Quality Assurance team.

## 8. Associated Documents

- Curriculum Policy
- Local Safeguarding Policy
- Complains Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy and Procedure
- Whistle blowing Policy and Procedure
- Online Safety Guidance
- RSE Map on website

## 9. Useful Links

<https://www.salutemcareandeducation.co.uk/residential-mental-health/>

<https://educationhub.blog.gov.uk/2023/10/10/how-were-helping-look-after-the-mental-health-of-children-and-young-people/>

## 10. References

- Local Safeguarding Policy
- Complains Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy and Procedure

## 11. Version Control

This is a controlled document. As a controlled document, any printed copies of this document, or saved onto local or network drives should be actively monitored to ensure the latest version is always available.

| Version Number | Date           | Status | Changes    |
|----------------|----------------|--------|------------|
| V1.0           | September 2023 | New    | New policy |
|                |                |        |            |
|                |                |        |            |

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