



Policy for Mental Health Concerns During the Covid 19 Pandemic

Policy updated on: 9th September

Date of review: Covid Interim Policy

Responsible person: Leadership Team

Introduction

As an employer of staff, The Boulevard Academy recognises the statutory responsibilities related to employment. Day-to-day management of staff is delegated to the Principal and line managers in The Boulevard Academy. Throughout this document, reference is made to the responsibilities held by the Principal for operational purposes. Ultimate responsibility rests with the board of trustees.

The Boulevard Academy and its Board of Trustees are committed to promoting positive mental, physical and emotional wellbeing and will provide suitable support for all members of staff and students. Acting to prevent ill health and promote good health makes good educational and business sense, as sickness absence carries high costs both in monetary terms and in terms of the impact upon performance, teaching and learning, morale and productivity, which may disrupt or compromise student progress.

Members of staff and our students are entitled to be treated fairly and professionally at all times. The Board of Trustees of The Boulevard Academy takes very seriously its duty of care as an employer to all members of staff and its safeguarding responsibility of our young people a number of policies and procedures have been made in relation to this duty.

This policy aims to provide a working environment which enables staff and students to work in a community in which their own wellbeing, and that of others around them, is effectively supported during this challenging time.

Mental Health of Staff and Students

On being alerted to deteriorating mental health in any of our staff or students, due to the Covid 19 pandemic, The Boulevard Academy will seek to implement the measures laid out in this policy at the earliest opportunity. We may be alerted to this by the behaviour of the individual, admission by the individual, from observations from other staff or students or from information provided by a friend or family member. The Academy's Health and Wellbeing Policy outlines how important it is for staff to pass on information if they are made aware that a colleague is struggling, it also outlines the needs for discretion and professionalism in circumstances such as these.

Individuals who are suffering from poor mental health should be encouraged to discuss the matter with a line manager, wellbeing member of staff, HR or the Principal as the Academy will be unable to implement additional measures to protect these members of our community until we are made aware, in some capacity, of the situation. Any information of this nature

will be treated in the strictest confidence, wherever possible, with only essential parties being privy to these details.

As part of the Academy's duty of care towards an Employee or student who is suffering specifically from Covid 19 related mental health issues, the Principal/HR will arrange a workplace health and safety risk assessment prior to them returning to site.

This policy applies to all students and staff at The Boulevard Academy and should be followed alongside the current Health and Wellbeing Policy.

PPE

Staff and students diagnosed with Mental Health conditions, in relation to Covid 19, will be offered basic PPE such as face masks, gloves and visors should they feel more comfortable in using these provisions. This will be in addition to the sanitising stations and equipment disinfectant procedures that are already in place for all staff and students. These members of our community may decide to wear their own PPE which will be permitted at the discretion of the Principal, in line with safeguarding guidelines.

Wellbeing reviews

Staff or students suffering from Mental Health Conditions relating to the Covid 19 pandemic will be allocated a wellbeing mentor of either the HR lead, Wellbeing Lead, Relevant Wellbeing Staff or Line Manager, whichever supports them in feeling more comfortable. Weekly 'check-ins' will be scheduled with this colleague and the Academy will ensure that these can take place during the working day. Staff/students should use this opportunity to raise any concerns, worries or queries moving forward so that the Academy can best support them. Basic minutes will be logged from each meeting and shared with HR.

Counselling and Mediation

Counselling can be provided, where appropriate, through Health Assured. This is a confidential, independent service using professionally qualified counsellors. Staff can access the Counselling Service by contacting Health Assured's Employee Assistance Programme, which has been fully funded for all staff by The Boulevard Academy.

Counselling can be provided initially for students through our in-house wellbeing team. Should further referral be required to outside agencies such as Headstart and Hull Young People's Mental Health, then the safeguarding lead and wellbeing staff will complete this referral whilst continuing to support the student on site.

In addition to the Counselling Service there is also mediation procedures in order to assist employees to return to normal working relationships. Where these procedures are

appropriate they will be discussed with the employees affected by the situation. Students are entitled to a similar process through The Boulevard Academy's wellbeing team.

Further Support for Staff

The Teacher Support Network is a group of independent charities and a social enterprise that provides practical and emotional support to staff in the education sector and their families. Information, support and coaching is offered to all staff. The Teacher Support Network provides over 1000 factsheets covering a wide range of issues including money advice, how to cope with bereavement, mental health, diet and nutrition and how to manage stress. To access the free support line, staff can call 08000 562 561, or for more information go to <http://teachersupport.info/>

The Academy/School has free access to Corozon Occupational Health provider. This will enable an employee to discuss any concerns about their health and wellbeing with a nurse or doctor trained in occupational medicine. This is an opportunity to discuss any health condition and get feedback about managing or improving that condition to help an employee to carry out their duties or return to work. The information given is entirely confidential and will not be shared with the Board of Trustees or members of staff within The Boulevard Academy.

Further Health and Safety

Where a potential risk is identified, reasonable temporary adjustments to the work/working conditions and/or working hours may be considered, as appropriate, and be decided upon by the Principal. Where the risk cannot be reduced to an acceptable level the Employee will be offered suitable redeployment on her existing terms and conditions of employment. In exception circumstances if there is no suitable redeployment, the Employee will be granted sick pay in line with the Academy's Sickness Absence Policy. Employees suffering with Mental Health Conditions should raise any concerns relating to their own Health & Safety with the Principal as soon as possible.

Where the Principal has concerns about the Employees health, the advice of an OH advisor or Doctor may be sought to clarify whether there is a risk to health and determine if it in the Employee's best interests to be at work as well as possible workplace adjustments that could be considered. All decisions will be made through regular communication and consultation with staff and their trade union representatives on health and safety matters.