**Post**: Head of Mental Health

Location: Home based with regular travel`

Function/Department: Inclusion

Grade: To be evaluated

Responsible to: Director of Inclusion

Responsible for: Mental Health Leads

Date Created: May 2022

Status/Contract Type: Permanent

Hours/Days/Weeks: 36.5 Monday to Friday all year

**Core Purpose and Scope:**

The Head of Mental Health is accountable for ensuring that all academies have the expertise, advice, guidance, and support needed for all pupils with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs to succeed at school. The postholder will be a source of advice and expertise, directly leading and supporting the wider team of academy based Mental Health Leads (MHLs) and their teams, so that they can provide timely and effective support for the mental health concerns of children and young people in school.

**Main duties and responsibilities:**

**Strategic Leadership:**

* Provide trust-wide leadership in SEMH across all OAT academies.
* Work with the Director of inclusion to create and implement a strategic trust wide plan for SEMH, which identifies key contextual priorities and accommodates individual academies’ needs.
* Work with the Director of inclusion to devise and disseminate a whole academy approach to SEMH that can be adopted by all academies in the trust.
* Lead the co-production of a regularly updated SEMH policy.
* Ensure that relevant OAT policies and processes (e.g. safeguarding, SEND, attendance, behaviour, exclusions) are connected so everyone is working together to support children’s mental health.
* Champion and promote an ethos and conditions that support positive mental health and well-being so that OAT academies are emotionally secure and safe environments.
* Ensure and communicate a positive, values-based approach and promote openness and understanding to normalise mental health and its fluctuations throughout school life and beyond.

**Leading and supporting staff:**

* Ensure that all academies have an appropriately trained Mental Health Lead (MHL) and establish an OAT MHL network to provide support and share best practice.
* Provide one to one regular support, guidance and advice to MHLs, including on site academy support and advice on individual complex cases.
* Ensure that academies are compliant with the statutory elements of the SEND Code of Practice in relation to SEMH and conduct bi-annual reviews of essential information on academy websites.
* Provide induction support to new MHLs, including facilitating mentor links with experienced MHLs.
* Commission and/or deliver on-going professional development to MHLs and SENCOs on all aspects of SEMH.
* Support MHLs and SENCOs to identify critical training for academy staff so that all staff can recognise and understand how to respond to mental health concerns.
* Commission and/or deliver professional development on SEMH to other OAT staff as and when required.
* Support leadership and inclusion teams with mental health action planning and the evaluation of provision. This may also include advising on Academy Development Plan priorities and delivering feedback at Strategic Progress Boards.
* Provide guidance and training on SEMH to the governance team.

**Curriculum teaching and learning:**

* Develop, with other relevant OAT teams (e.g. PSHE, physical education, enrichment) a cross curricular approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing.
* Ensure that academies recognise the links between physical and mental health and provide guidance on how to promote this in school.
* Provide guidance and advice to academies on how to support pupils during times of potential vulnerability e.g. transitions, exams, and during exceptional events e.g. death of student or staff member.

**Identifying need and monitoring impact:**

* Audit current SEMH provision and gather regular information from academies on provision, practice and impact. This information should be used to support academies with their own action planning and to provide intelligence to Education Directors at a strategic level.
* Ensure that information and data is used effectively to inform any commissioning decisions at a strategic level.
* Provide guidance and support to MHLs and Education Directors on the effective use of standardised measures of social and emotional well-being e.g. GL assessment PASS
* Agree with the Director of Inclusion trust wide approaches to support pupil mental health and well-being e.g. trauma informed, and oversee their implementation through commissioning of services and training.
* Develop a toolkit of validated assessment tools that can be used by all MHLs and SENCOs for identifying SEMH needs.
* Work with the SEND Lead practitioners to ensure that academy staff can identify and appropriately assess co-occurring needs e.g. cognition and learning with mental health needs.
* Collate and analyse the outcomes and destinations of all pupils categorised as SEMH.
* Regularly analyse attendance, behaviour and exclusions data and use this to further refine and improve the trust wide approach to SEMH.

**Targeted support and interventions:**

* Provide guidance and advice on school-based counselling: ensure all academies have access to an on-site counsellor, provide on-going training and networking opportunities as appropriate and monitor and evaluate their impact.
* Develop and provide academies with tiered pathways of support and services from academy based early intervention and prevention to referral to specialist services.
* Provide complex case and crisis management advice and support direct to academies or working with the wider Inclusion Team as required.
* Develop a toolkit of evidence-based interventions that can be used by MHLs to provide early support to pupils with emerging mental health needs.
* Provide advice and guidance on meeting the needs of pupils who have an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) for SEMH.
* Provide guidance and advice on emotionally based school refusal and support for academies who have pupils who are persistent absentees due to SEMH needs.
* Work with the wider Inclusion Team to provide academy staff with the skills and resources to support potentially ‘vulnerable’ groups with their mental health e.g. looked after children, children known to Children’s Services, young carers, pupil premium etc.
* Work with the Safeguarding Team to advise academies on how to respond to potentially increased safeguarding concerns of pupils with mental health needs.
* Monitor and quality assure the risk assessment process in relation to pupils’ mental health, including suicide ideation, self-harm, forensic and other behavioural or developmental risks.
* Provide advice, guidance and support on effective working with a range of external services and agencies e.g. local authority Mental Health Teams, education psychologist service, CAMHs, Children’s Services, Youth Offending Teams, voluntary and community partners etc.

**Pupil Voice:**

* Develop strategies at a trust and academy level to empower and involve pupils with SEMH needs in the decisions that impact them.
* Establish mechanisms by which to capture pupil voice e.g. SEMH pupil advisory group, surveys etc, so that policies and processes are co-produced.
* Identify opportunities for the appropriate use of pupil/student peer led well-being support.
* Support academies to access training for pupils/students to become Youth Mental Health First Aiders and provide on-going guidance and support to all trained YMHFAs.
* Provide a range of strategies for engaging pupils/students with different communication preference needs, including the use of assistive technologies.

**Working with parents and carers:**

* Establish mechanisms by which to capture parent/carer voice e.g. focus groups, surveys, questionnaire etc. and ensure that parent/carer views are represented in strategic decision making.
* Provide advice, guidance and support to MHLs and their teams for successfully engaging parents, families and carers in mental health, including when relationships are difficult or a parent, carer or child is distressed.
* Provide advice and guidance on how MFLs can support or signpost relevant evidence-based resources for parents, families and carers so they can develop skills and strategies to support both their child and themselves.
* Provide advice, guidance and support to MFLs on working with parents/carers who have their own mental health needs.

**Research and development:**

* Keep up to date with developments in all relevant fields by reading and researching, attendance at courses and participation in relevant professional networks.
* Maintain the Mental Health pages of the trust’s intranet, ensuring that MHLs have ease of access to all relevant information, proformas and training materials.
* When required, act as a spokesperson on behalf of the trust on any matters relating to SEMH.

**Other**

* Undertake other various responsibilities as directed by the Director of Inclusion.

**Contacts/Stakeholders:**

* Work directly with all academy MHLs and SENCOs and academy inclusion teams under the guidance of the Director of Inclusion.
* Work with OAT’s strategic Inclusion team (SEND, safeguarding, attendance, behaviour and exclusions) under the guidance of the Director of Inclusion.
* Work directly with the wider education team and principals under the guidance of the Director of Inclusion.
* Work with the CEO, National Directors and Trustees to help define and implement a trust vision for SEMH so that it is understood and acted on by all stakeholders.
* Work directly with pupils in some cases where modelling is needed in any of the areas pertaining to this remit.
* Key external contacts range from the DfE, CAMHs, Children’s Services and other relevant teams.

**Relationships:**

* This role demands good working relationships at all levels, from external organisations to internal relationships with staff and pupils.
* This role is expected to work independently, but as a key part of the Inclusion team.

**Management of People, Resources and Finances:**

* Management and oversight of academy MHLs as well as supporting academy SENCOs with SEMH.
* Overall responsibility for training and developing others In SEMH across the trust.
* Overall responsibility for meeting targets and expectations set by the Director of Inclusion in relation to any appropriate finance, ICT, estates, curriculum principles and resources and mandatory training appropriate to SEMH.

**Judgement, Decision-making authority:**

* This role is expected to set protocols, including the writing of policy, around SEMH as well as providing a range of guidelines to work within.
* It also always requires the use of discretion and judgement.
* There is a requirement to make decisions at a role level. This includes matters relating to safeguarding.
* The role influences the strategic direction of SEMH across the trust.

**Initiative, Independence Judgement & Complexity:**

* This role involves a high degree of complexity and sensitivity of work due to the nature of information being handled
* A high degree of planning is involved in this role both in terms of short and long term thinking, from daily decisions about high risk issues to ensuring that academy mental health plans are robust and aligned with the OAT five year strategy.

# **Person Specification: Head of Mental Health**

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|  | Essential | Desirable |
| Education and Qualifications | * Educated to degree level or equivalent in relevant discipline * Post graduate degree in clinical therapy/social work/clinical or educational psychology or another field appropriate to the role * Registered with a relevant professional body (BPS, HCPC, BACP, ACP, PTUK, UKCP, NCS) | * Recognised qualification in child/youth counselling * Qualification in leadership/management |
| Experience and knowledge | * At least five years’ experience of working within relevant field of expertise, preferable with children and/or young people * Evidence of driving change and developing high quality systems and procedures * In depth knowledge of statutory and independent mental health services at a local and national level * Experience of leading or managing teams to improve mental health outcomes for service users * Extensive experience of forming strong partnerships with local services and the wider community * Extensive experience of providing individual and/or group interventions for mental health needs * Knowledge of the mental health and well-being content in statutory health education guidance in schools (PSHE/RSHE) * Expert knowledge of safeguarding legislation and child protection procedures (KCSIE) * Knowledge of relevant legislation and national policy developments * Evidence of delivering training to a variety of stakeholders * Evidence of a clear understanding of the needs of pupils/students and their families from diverse social and cultural backgrounds | * Experience of working in schools to support children and young people with mental health needs either directly or at a strategic level * Experience of working with parents/carers with mental health difficulties * Experience in writing training packages * Experience of co-production |
| Skills | * Able to devise and deliver strategic short- and long-term plans * Outstanding and adaptable communication skills in all formats * Able to collate and analyse data * Strong organisational and management skills * Solutions focused with the ability to think creatively * Able to engage others in developing solutions and to inspire others to achieve desired outcomes * IT proficiency and willingness to embrace new technologies and innovations * Able to carry out own research and keep up to date with developments in field |  |
| Personal Qualities | * Passionate about improving the SEMH needs of children and young people * Able to build relationships and inspire trust * Able to work under pressure and manage complex and challenging situations * Can demonstrate flexibility, enthusiasm, innovative thinking, and self confidence * Able to work independently and be self-motivated * Able to work as part of a team and to lead others |  |

## **Other**

* This post is subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.

*Ormiston Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people in our academies. All successful candidates will be subject to an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.*