**Student**

**Practitioners**

**Placement**

**Handbook**



**February 2023**

Welcome to the McMullen Project.

The purpose of this handbook is to give you an overview of the McMullen Project, our ethos and what we hope to achieve with your support, expertise and help.

It will also give you some insight into administrative procedures you will be expected to follow during your placement, where you gain support, advice and a little helping hand and also explain any additional policies and procedures.

It also has some paperwork you will need along the way!

***Our Mission***

*To help families grow, reduce the impact of adverse mental health, ease social isolation, increase emotional resilience and support wellbeing across Preston’s school communities.*

*Striving for better outcomes for both parent and child, providing support for long-term sustainable change to improve lives.*

**Why McMullen?**

In the Autumn term of 2020, our school family was changed forever following the tragic loss of a dear colleague and friend to us all, Mrs Lorraine McMullen. Leaving her mark on us all and creating some incredible memories the school was devastated at a loss. Lorraine suffered with her mental health for many years and was very open about the struggles she faced as well as her passionate support of others who may have faced such challenges also.

She was an incredible lady, and some might say the heart of our school family. She was always heard before she was seen and often weaved her way down the corridors tripping over coats and bags whilst singing at the top of her voice.

She had such a gift; despite the battles she faced herself, she was able to make everyone laugh, really belly laugh. It is fair to say she was loved by us all, and now missed by us all.

In my privileged role as headteacher of Fulwood and Cadley on the day we lost our beloved Mrs Mc, I made a silent vow that we would and could never lose anyone in our school family again to mental health.

Mental health touches so many of us and with the support of an incredible team and Governing body which aim to make a difference not just in our school but in as many Preston schools as we can. Helping children and parents to overcome challenge and ensure crisis point is never reached.

**In fond and loving memory of the amazing and unforgettable**

**Lorraine McMullen**

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**The Service**

**Community-Based Project**

The McMullen Project is a community-based project bringing together primary schools, their parents and children as well as Further Education providers to provide simultaneous therapeutic intervention for both parent and child.

Working alongside UCLAN, Runshaw College and Preston College, families who have faced trauma, emotional challenge and or mental health difficulties will be able to access support and begin to rebuild and bounce back.  The project works with student counsellors on a volunteer basis to provide therapy where it is most needed. With two counsellors supporting either the child or parent within one family unit, both will be able to gain the support they need to improve long-term outcomes.

In addition, the project will provide further support through educational initiatives for parents to enhance employability and life skills, reducing social isolation through groups, classes, and community projects at a pace parents are comfortable with.

**Rationale**

Agencies across the county are striving to support both parents and families, but with the reality of long waiting lists and referral times, the support is often too late, and many families are at a crisis point.

We aim to respond promptly, providing early intervention, preventing an escalation to other services, as well as preventing an impact on behaviour which could lead to suspension, attendance issues and ultimately, poor educational progress.

The pandemic has seen a dramatic rise in an already stretched mental health service within the UK, with figures showing that people are waiting well over a year for talking therapies (Mind, 2021). Exact figures show that 1.54 million people were in contact with mental health services at the end of January 2022 with 1,033,561 being adults.

Current research in parental mental health impacts to children and long-term trajectories into adulthood also notes consistently higher distress rates than those children who are not exposed to adverse parental mental health (Kamis, 2020). It has also been suggested that primary caregivers of children with mental health problems show disengagement from the child’s needs and harsh behaviours, which are considered as impaired parenting. These behaviours can lead to insecurity, problems in social control, self-esteem, and feelings of belonging with the child. In the family system, parents’ mental health has a direct effect on marital conflict, substance misuse and divorce, adding to the child distress and anxiety (Williams and Cheadle, 2016; McFarland, 2017; Schepman et al. 2011).

By addressing the mental health of both parent and child as soon as possible, the cycle can be broken before it exacerbates to a crisis point or indeed impacts on the child to the point of affecting their adulthood trajectory, as evidenced by the research conducted by Kamis, 2020. This also potentially lessens the requirement for further services involvement and the burden to current waiting lists.

Further research by Haugvik, 2012 highlights that simultaneous, structured and time-limited therapy for both parent and child promote change in several areas at the same time and initiates positive connections for the child whilst promoting a sense of resilience and mastery for the parent.  This in turn, contributes to an improved family situation and increased communication between parent and child, which is significant for the child’s psychological development. This can positively impact their adulthood trajectory as implied by Kamis, 2021.

**Therapists**

Therapy for the project will be led by Paula Davies, a fully qualified Psychotherapist and Clinical Supervisor who currently provides therapy for children within several schools. Additional volunteer counsellors will be recruited from the three local degree course providers who are qualified fit for practice but require their final 100-hour clinical placements to graduate, as highlighted by the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP). There will be a requirement to adhere to the BACP Ethical Framework or equivalent including a requirement for monthly clinical supervision, practitioners’ insurance, and DBS certificate.

Paula graduated from Derby University with a First-Class Honours Degree in Counselling and Psychotherapy in 2019 and has opened her own private practice locally, which also supports and mentors newly qualified counsellors in the area. Paula is currently studying for her PhD in Mental Health Research at Lancaster University with a focus on endogenous opioids in the therapeutic context whilst also completing her Diploma in Clinical Supervision.

Paula came to Fulwood and Cadley Primary School whilst on placement to become qualified in working therapeutically with children and young people and never left. She is a member of the BACP and has accrued over 4,500 clinical hours working with both children and adults with a particular focus in complex trauma, addiction and is an ally to the LGBTQA+ community. She is also one of only three accredited Rewind Therapists in Lancashire.

**Accessing Support**

Schools are at the forefront of supporting our children and families. Engagement with services is key, but often, parents require a more time-sensitive therapeutic approach, building emotional resilience and providing containment for the challenges they may be facing. Such support positively impacts the child, as the parent feels more able to cope. Support for a family can be accessed and reviewed on a half-termly basis giving schools flexibility to increase support or access other alternative provision.

Those children identified as being at risk of suspension or have had any fixed-term suspensions may be entitled to additional support with funding through the District 6 Inclusion Hub; this will be assessed on an individual basis following completion of the McMullen project or DG6 referral form.

This is a voluntary service and must be completed with consent from both parent and child.

The intervention will be scheduled over a 7-week period, with children accessing sessions in school and parents accessing sessions at Ara House at Ashton and Lea Golf Club. Transport for parents will be provided both to and from the session, overcoming any potential barriers for engagement.

The McMullen Project will currently only offer face-to-face sessions.

**Staff**

Kirsty France – Headteacher and Project Lead

Paula Davies – Project Manager and Psychotherapist

Rachel Smith – Bursar / Finance Manager

**Therapy at The McMullen Project**

The McMullen Project will provide student practitioner-based person-centred therapy services. Student practitioners are recruited from a variety of different educational establishments.

All referrals to The McMullen Project are made via local primary schools. Dual assessments are made, initially via the respective Headteachers, and then via the Project Manager, Paula Davies, who will assist with the referral form completion to ensure the service agreed upon at assessment is appropriate and the student practitioner allocation is suitable.

During assessment, clients will have the opportunity to explore their current difficulties and goals for support and complete a health and safety assessment. All of this information will be stored in the client’s file and provided to the allocated therapist before the first session.

NICE recommend talking therapies for a range of mental health issues including, but not limited to, depression, anxiety disorders, bipolar disorders, borderline personality disorders and schizophrenia. Talking therapies help people recover from relationship breakdown, loss, bereavement and other situations that cause distress. Some clients that we support may be on a medication regime which a healthcare professional or GP will support.

**Administration Procedures**

**Sickness Absence**

You should notify one of the team members as soon as possible by telephone or text when you are unfit to meet your commitments due to sickness. Sickness absence will be monitored in accordance with your educational establishments’ guidelines.

**Cancellations and Non-attendance Procedures**

If clients give reasonable notice of cancellation before a scheduled appointment, they will be allocated another appointment with you for the same time the following week.

Our cancellation policy is detailed in the clients’ contract, and frequent cancellations will lead to the service being withdrawn. It is the responsibility of the student practitioner and Project Manager to enforce the cancellation policy, however, you should also be aware of this policy and raise any concerns you may have with the Project Manager.

When a client does not attend (DNA) they will be expected to contact the service if they want their support to continue. Clients have two weeks to make contact before their case is closed to the service.

When your placement nears an end, we expect that you will see through your work with clients and end naturally with your clients as they require. Passing your clients to another counsellor mid-therapy is not acceptable and should be avoided.

**Supervision**

The McMullen Project will provide up to £50 per calendar month to each Student Practitioner towards Clinical Supervision costs as you are required to attend under BACP/NCS or equivalent guidelines for good practice.

We ask that you complete the ‘Supervision Claim form’, attach a copy of the receipt from your supervisor for the supervision you will have just attended, pass this to the Project Manager, and we will then arrange payment. Please ensure we have your bank details on file.

**Travel Expenses**

Your mileage will also be paid for travel to your placement; please complete the ‘Mileage Claim form’ at the end of the month and pass this to the Project Manager for authorisation, which will then be processed. Again, ensure we have your bank details for this.

**Training**

You will be invited to additional training events, CPD and mentoring. Subjects we hope to cover will be safeguarding, trauma and ad hoc training that may be available to you through the schools. We will give you good notice of this, and we hope you will be able to attend.

**Policies and Procedures**

Specific policies and procedures are available on request, please speak with Paula Davies or email – info@aracounselling.co.uk

***Student Practitioners Emergency Contact Details***

*Name:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….*

*Address:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………*

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*Tel No:…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..…...*

*Mobile No:…………………………………………………………………………………………………………..….….*

*Email:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..…….…*

*Primary Contact:…………………………………………………………………………………………………….……*

*Address:…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..….*

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*……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………*

*Tel No:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….….….*

*Mobile No:…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..*

*Secondary Contact:…………………………………………………………………………………………………..…*

*Address:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….…*

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*Tel No:…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………..…..*

*Mobile No:………………………………………………………………………………………………………………….*

I hereby give permission to The McMullen Project Staff to contact my primary or secondary contact in the event of an emergency

Signed: ……………………………………………………………………………………..

Dated: ……………………………………………………………………………………….

**Contact Information for the McMullen Project:**

**Paula Davies Tel – 07771 914040**

 **Email –** **info@aracounselling.co.uk**

**Kirsty France Tel - 01772 717087**

 **Email –** **head@fulwoodcadley.lancs.sch.uk**

**Rachel Smith Tel – 01772 717087**

 **Email –** **bursar@fulwoodcadley.lancs.sch.uk**