



Mental Health

# Policy & Procedure

## 2022/24

<b>Author:</b>	<b>Name</b>	Stephen Musa	
	<b>Job Title</b>	Assistant Principal Student Experience & Welfare	
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### Policy Statement

*Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (World Health Organisation)*

At our College, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole College approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three students will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health. We seek to embed an open and inclusive ethos where those experiencing mental health difficulties are respected.

## Scope

This document describes the College's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing. This policy is intended as guidance for all staff including non-teaching staff and governors.

## The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and students
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide support to staff working with students with mental health issues
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers

## Lead Members of Staff

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Karen Marsh- Senior Mental Health Lead (2758)
- Stephen Musa- Designated Safeguarding Lead (2669)
- Katy Robinson- Safeguarding Link Governor (robinsonk@southport.ac.uk)
- Liz Jones- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (2759)
- Jodie Marcucci/Anne-Marie O'Donovan/Rebecca Rothwell- Safeguarding Officers (2886/2713/2774)
- Alison McDowell- Head of Human Resources and Payroll (2861)
- Vickie Hayes- Head of Learning Support and Inclusion (2872)
- Rachael Brownhill - Head of Studies (2811)
- Nicola Vernon- Counsellor (2720)
- Joanne Dawson/Emily Driver- Student Welfare Officers (2746/2774)
- Kim Goodier- Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator (2620)
- Adam Gordon- Health and Safety Officer (2777)

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the Mental Health Lead or a member of the Safeguarding Team in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the normal safeguarding procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Safeguarding Team. If the student presents a medical emergency then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS or other mental health services is appropriate, this will be led and managed by a Safeguarding Officer.

## **Risk Assessments/Fitness to Study**

It is helpful to draw up an individual risk assessments for students causing concern or who receive a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health. This should be drawn up involving the student, the parents (where the child is under 18) and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a student's condition including any risk issues
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the College can play

Where risks are significant, a Fitness to Study Panel may be convened to review the risk assessment and make a judgement around whether risks can be safely managed in the College setting.

## **Teaching about Mental Health**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically, and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our curriculum.

The specific content of sessions will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others. Mental health stigma will be challenged through curriculum teaching. There will be a focus on self-care. The sessions will encourage maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle.

We teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

All students including Higher Education, Apprentices, and Adult Learners will be educated around mental health issues and how to access help and support.

## **Signposting**

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within College and in the local community.

We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas, on digital signage and toilets and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum. Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

## Campaigns

In order to positively promote mental health, there will be a series of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion campaigns and events will be held throughout the year. Campaigns will link to local and national campaigns, specialist organisations will also deliver and contribute to these campaigns.

## Enrichment Activities

It is widely recognised that positive mental health and wellbeing can be promoted by engaging in meaningful activities, learning a new skill, being physically active, and by taking a break or finding ways to relax. In College every student will have the opportunity to engage in enrichment activities such as yoga, football, mindfulness etc.

## Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should **always** be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns with the Safeguarding Officer, or our mental health and emotional wellbeing lead.

Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping practical sports sessions or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to or absence from College
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Common 'adverse childhood experiences' ACES (such as family breakdown, bereavement and exposure to domestic violence) may also negatively impact student's mental health and wellbeing. Statistically the following groups may also be more likely to experience difficulties:

- Looked After Children/Care Leavers
- Young people who have been adopted
- LGBTQ+
- Those whose family have a history of mental health issues
- Young carers/carers
- Offenders

## Managing disclosures and Protocols

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or somebody else to any member of staff, so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of somebody else to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen rather than advise and our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'.

All disclosures, incidents or conversations should be recorded electronically in and held on the student's confidential Pro-Monitor area. This record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the Safeguarding Team, who will offer support and advice about next steps. The Safeguarding Policy and Procedures should be followed.

An immediate referral will be required from the member of staff where there are concerns the student may pose an immediate risk to themselves or others, and may be unable to keep themselves safe, 999 should be called or the student should be supported to access medical support from A & E. It may also be appropriate to support the student to access crisis mental health services or support from their GP. Where there are urgent safeguarding concerns staff may present to the Safeguarding Office (Southport- RF 007 or KGV- S20) or call 2821 which will alert all Safeguarding Officers. Staff and Students will have access to a Safeguarding Officer during term time Business hours. There will normally be a presence on site. After 5 pm the Duty Principal should be notified (4pm on a Friday). Students may self-present or present to raise a concern about somebody else.

Where there is no mental health crisis and more general support is required a referral can be made internally to offer the student support around their mental health and wellbeing, and a routine appointment should be offered. This support can be provided in the following ways:

- 1:1 meeting with a Safeguarding Officer, Progress Tutor, Welfare Officer or Health and Wellbeing Co-ordinator who can offer ongoing support, make specialist referrals, signpost to other agencies and make recommendations to the Curriculum Team e.g. soft landings, adjustments to timetables, time out etc.
- Referral to the College Counsellor or provide details on how to access drop in counselling (weekly term time sessions available). Counsellor will carry out an initial assessment and offer up to six sessions of person centred counselling/CBT as appropriate.
- Referral to NHS Mental Health Support Team who can offer a bespoke course of CBT interventions in College (criteria applies).

- Students are also able to access the staffed Learning Support Suite if they need to take some time out of class, timeout cards are available on request.

Where a potential student has disclosed a mental health condition prior to them starting at college, potential students are able to have access to an enhanced transition. Transitional support may be offered from the Safeguarding Team, the Learning Support Team or the Curriculum Team themselves. Activities may include taster sessions, tours of the college, familiarisation visits (particular classrooms and key staff), discussions around the students' individual needs and providing an appropriate level of support once they start.

## **Confidentiality and Consent**

We should be honest with regard to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on, then we should discuss with the student:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a student without first telling them. Ideally we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent. Where there are prevalent risk issues information may need to be shared with parents/carers in order to safeguard the student. It may also be appropriate to share information with external agencies such as Mental Health Services, Children's Social Care, Adult Services or the Emergency Services as appropriate.

It is always advisable to share disclosures with the Safeguarding Team. This helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our absence; and it provides an extra source of ideas and support. We should explain this to the student and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with.

## **Working with Parents**

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents, we need to be sensitive in our approach. It can be shocking and upsetting for parents to learn of their child's issues.

We should always highlight further sources of support for the student, and in addition support aimed specifically at parents, e.g. parent helplines and forums.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions or concerns. With each contact there should be agreed next steps and always keep a record of the content of the discussion or meeting on Pro-Monitor. Our Mental Health Policy and Procedure should be accessible to parents through the College website or upon request.

## Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other. In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations with the student who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend may need help (e.g. signs of relapse)

Additionally, we will want to highlight with peers:

- Where and how to access support for themselves
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling

## Support for Staff

There is a programme of staff wellbeing activities and opportunities for staff which drives a supportive culture. Health and Wellbeing days are offered throughout the year, as well as recognition and rewards. Counselling support is available for staff on request from personnel. Staff views around their own wellbeing is captured in the annual staff survey.

## Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular annual safeguarding training to enable them to keep students safe including online training. Specialist training will also be available throughout the year for key staff who require more in depth knowledge.

The Charlie Waller Memorial Trust and the NHS Mental Health Support Team provides funded training to Colleges on a variety of topics related to mental health. There will be a rolling programme of staff development.

The Senior Mental Health Lead has successfully completed DFE funded Senior Mental Health Lead training in conjunction with Leeds Beckett University.

## Quality Assurance/Student Voice

It is important that the mental health and wellbeing support offered to students is of a good quality and that our student's voices are heard. This includes all aspects of support and covers both teaching and learning, and more bespoke personal emotional support.

Student's views will be sought through themed Mental Health Focus Groups throughout the year where they will have the opportunity to give face to face feedback and make recommendations, this



work will be supported by the Student Council. Mental health and Wellbeing will also feature in student surveys.

The number of student mental health referrals made are monitored and reported on under both type of mental health concern e.g low mood, anxiety, eating disorder, self harm, etc and referral outcome. Trends amongst the student population are monitored year on year, and drive themed campaigns and the training needs of staff.

The College will use the Wellbeing Measurement Framework for Colleges. This tool will allow us to take a snap shot of a student's strengths, challenges and can be used to target support. Students should complete the questionnaire online annually. The questionnaire will measure key aspects of wellbeing and resilience.

In addition our student counsellor will use the Core 10 Tool to measure psychological distress and risk.

## **Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually. It is next due for review in September 2024.

Additionally, this policy will be reviewed and updated as appropriate on an ad hoc basis.

This policy will always be immediately updated to reflect personnel changes.

The Mental Health Action plan will, in addition be reviewed on a termly basis.

## **Links to Other Policies**

Safeguarding Policy and Procedures  
Fitness to Study Policy and Procedures  
First Aid Policy and Procedures  
Sexual Harassment and Violence Policy and Procedures  
Counselling Policy and Procedures  
MSR Conduct and Academic Policy and Procedures  
Online Safety Policy and Procedures  
Criminal Convictions Policy and Procedures

## Appendix

### Local External Support Services - Emergency

Merseycare (for access to the Sefton's Crisis Team and Community Mental Health Team) - 01704 383600

Sefton Early Intervention in Psychosis Service - 01704 383602

Sefton CAMHS- 0151 282 4527

Sefton and Liverpool Crisis CAMHS- 0151 293 3577

Sefton MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) - 0151 934 4013/4481

Sefton Emergency Duty Team (out of hours Children's Social Care) - 0151 934 3555

Sefton Adult Social Care- 0345 140 0845

West Lancashire CAMHS- 01695 684262

West Lancashire Crisis Team- 0800 0130 708

Lancashire Children's Social Care- 0300 123 6720

Lancashire Children's/Adult Social Care out of hours- 0300 123 6722

Lancashire Adult Services- 0300 123 6720

### Local External Support Services

#### Non-Emergency

Name	Service Offer	Telephone Number	Website/Email Contact
SWAN Women's Centre – Litherland & Sefton	Adult Service Young Peoples Service (18 & under)	0151 933 3292	Swanwomenscentre.org
The Venus Centre Bootle & Sefton	Adult Service Young Peoples Service	0151 474 4744	Venuscharity.org
YPAS – Bootle & Sefton	Young Peoples Service Crisis phone line & Drop-in	0151 707 1025	support@ypas.org.uk
Philippi Trust – Southport & St Helens	Adult Service £20 per hr Young Peoples Service	01704 807660	Philippitrust.com
Crisis Café	Weekend Drop-in Service	0300 323 0197	Seftoncvcs.org.uk
Trust House – Preston & Lancashire	Adult Service (rape & sexual abuse, pre-trial)	01772 825288	Support@trusthouse.org
RASA – Merseyside & Liverpool	Adult & Young Peoples Service (rape & sexual abuse, pre-trial)	0151 558 1801	helpline@rasamerseyside.org
Parenting 2000 – Sefton	Young Peoples Service	01704 380047	info@parenting2000.org.uk

	Adult Service Family Support		
Voice 4 change - Sefton	Adult & Family Service Anger Management	0151 345 8499	Voice4change.org.uk
Cedar house - Lancashire	Adult Service	01772 880909	Cedarhouse.co.uk
Inspire – Skelmersdale & Lancashire	Adult & Young People Service & Family Support – Alcohol & Drug Addiction	01254 495 014	Inspireblackburndarwen.org. uk
Lancashire Women – Lancashire	Adult Service	0300 330 1354	Lancashirewomen.org
Listening Ear – Merseyside	Adult & Young Peoples Service	0151 488 6648	enquiries@listening- ear.co.uk
James Place – Liverpool/Sefton	Adult Service for men in suicidal crisis	0151 303 5757	info@jamesplace.org.uk
Recovery Circle - Southport Addiction service Seans Place – Maghull/Sefton	Group Support Counselling  Adult Service (Male)	075486079 02  No phone contact Online referral only	Facebook Page & phone contact only  Seansplace.org.uk Downloadable referral form
WHISC Women’s Centre Liverpool/Sefton	Adult Service	0151 707 1826	Whisc.org.uk
Love Jasmine – Sefton	Adult/Family & Young Peoples Service (Bereavement)	0151 459 4779	enquiries@loveJasmine.org.u k
The Bereavement Service – Ormskirk/Lancashire/Sef ton	Adult Service (Bereavement)	01695 684177	TheBCS101@btconnect.com
Liverpool Bereavement Service – Liverpool/Sefton	Adult Service (Bereavement)	0151 236 3932	enquiries@liverpoolbereave ment.co.uk
Breathe Therapies – Lancashire	Adult & Young Peoples Service Eating Disorder	01772 915 735	enquiries@breathetherapies. co.uk
Kooth – National Service	Young Peoples Service		Kooth.com

## National External Support Services

Young Minds ([www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk))

Mind ([www.mind.org.uk](http://www.mind.org.uk)) and for e-learning opportunities — Minded ([www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)).

National Self-Harm Network: [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)

Harmless: [www.harmless.org.uk](http://www.harmless.org.uk)

Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

On the edge: ChildLine spotlight report on suicide:

[www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/on-the-edge-childline-suicide-report.pdf](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/globalassets/documents/research-reports/on-the-edge-childline-suicide-report.pdf)

Beat – the eating disorders charity: <https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk>

Anxiety UK: [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)

OCD UK: [www.ocduk.org/ocd/](http://www.ocduk.org/ocd/)