The Sixth Form College Birkenhead

STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH & EMOTIONAL WELLBEING PROTOCOL

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1 PROTOCOL STATEMENT

At Birkenhead Sixth Form College, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students. 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.

Where concerns about attendance, engagement, or conduct appear to be significantly influenced by mental health, disability or other recognised barriers, staff should refer to the Student Conduct policy.

The College recognises that some mental health conditions may amount to a disability under the Equality Act 20210. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments may be considered to remove barrier to learning and participation. These will be determined on an individual basis alongside the Student Conduct policy and SEND procedures.

The College promotes positive mental health and provides pastoral support, reasonable adjustments and appropriate referrals. The College is not a healthcare provider and cannot provide clinical assessment or treatment. Students requiring specialist intervention will be supported to access external services

2 SCOPE

This protocol is a guide to all College students & staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining our approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.

3 PROTOCOL AIMS

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all College students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common 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.

4 KEY STAFF MEMBERS

This protocol aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of students, however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Student Development Tutor Team
- Designated Safeguarding Officers
- Director of Learning Support
- Senior Mental Health Lead
- Deputy Mental Health Lead & Learning Support Coordinator
- Learning Support Assistants

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student, in the first instance, they should speak to their Tutor.

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the College's Safeguarding procedures should be followed. Staff should never attempt to assess suicide risk themselves. Where there is concern that a student presents an immediate risk to themselves or others, safeguarding procedures must be followed immediately.

If the student presents a high risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving a first aider and the emergency services if necessary.

5 ADDITIONAL LEARNING SUPPORT

When a student has been identified as having cause for concern; has received a diagnosis of a mental health issue or is receiving support either through CAMHS or another organisation, it is recommended that an ALS note should be drawn up on Sapien by Learning Support.

Elements of this plan include:

- Details of the student's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or classroom strategies and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- Details of staff overseeing ALS note
- Code Blue pop-up for Sapien if appropriate to alert staff

6 TEACHING ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our tutorial Scheme of Work. They are embedded in accordance with College's values of Positivity, Ambition, Resilience and Thoughtfulness.

We follow a tutorial programme which covers mental health and emotional health themes safely and sensitively. Incorporating this into our curriculum College wide, is a good opportunity to promote students' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of students' own emotions as well as those of other people.

The tutorial Scheme of Work is also a vehicle for providing students who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting students to support any of their friends who are facing challenges.

7 SIGNPOSTING

We will ensure that students are aware of the support and services available at College and within the local community and how to access these services. Within the College (noticeboards, bulletins, social space, toilets etc.) and through our communication channels (Teams channels, websites, social media accounts), we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure students understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it

8 SOURCES OF SUPPORT AT COLLEGE & IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

At College:

Tutors- speak with your Tutor about where to find help and advice for mental health. They will be able to signpost you to College services or local agencies who offer support.

Senior Mental Health Lead- one to one mental health support from our trained Mental Health Lead by arrangement.

Youth Service- one to one mental health support service via Health Services in Schools. Thursday afternoon sessions available in the Lab.
To make an appointment, see your Tutor.

Wellbeing Service- one to one mental health support service via a trained member of college staff. Appointments available throughout the week.
To make an appointment, see your Tutor.

Local services:

Branch Wirral - branch-wirral.co.uk - an online wellbeing hub for childeren and young people in Wirral

All age Advice and Crisis Line for Wirral - 0800 145 6485 or via NHS 111, selecting the mental health option - Advice, information and crisis support for individuals and those who care for them. Available 24/7.

Your GP - For advice on mental health and referrals to support services.

The Open Door Centre, Birkenhead - guided CBT and talking therapies in a venue that holds local music events and encourages the involvement of young people.

On the Wirral, there are a range of organisations and groups offering support, including the CYPMHS (formerly CAMHS) partnership, a group of providers specialising in children and young people's mental health wellbeing. These partners deliver accessible support to children, young people and their families, whilst working with professionals to reduce the range of mental health issues through prevention, intervention, training and participation.
http://www.cwp.nhs.uk/our-services/wirral/cypmhs-0-18-wirral

Useful Websites:

www.kooth.com online counselling and advice - online counselling and advice.
https://giveusashout.org/ - Shout is the UK's first and only free, confidential, 24/7 text messaging support service for anyone who is struggling to cope.
https://youngminds.org.uk
http://www.mymind.org.uk

9 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 alert the student's tutor.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating / 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
- Secretive behaviour
- Lateness to, or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

10 MANAGING DISCLOSURES

If a student chooses to disclose a diagnosis/concern about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Wherever possible, concerns will be discussed with the student before information ios shared. However, where there are safeguarding concerns of a risk of harm, information may be shared without consent in accordance with the College's Safeguarding Policy. All disclosures should be recorded sensitively on the student's Sapien page, with further details being shared with the student's tutor after discussion with the student.

Tutors can then signpost to services/ staff including an e-mail to teachers to allow them to understand how the student is feeling and any reasonable adjustments that could help. If the concern is more serious, it may be that the safeguarding threshold is triggered and those procedures should also be followed. A code blue status on Sapien can be added by the Safeguarding Lead, should a student disclose that they are feeling vulnerable and may try to harm themselves or have thought about harming themselves.

11 CONFIDENTIALITY

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student to either someone within or outside of the College, then this will be first discussed with the student. We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them
- When we're going to tell them

It is important to also safeguard staff. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

12 WHOLE COLLEGE APPROACH

12.1 Working with Parents/Carers

Often it is helpful to involve parents to discuss student support in and outside of College. We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about mental health and wellbeing issues can be upsetting and distressing. Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. Lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

12.1 Supporting Parents

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels.

13 TRAINING

All staff will receive training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular training, to enable them to keep students safe.

The MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with the Assistant Principal, who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

14 PROTOCOL REVIEW

This protocol will be reviewed every two years as a minimum.

In between updates, the protocol will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of the Senior Mental Health Lead.

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