

Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

2025

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1. Aims of the Policy

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

At The Sixth Form College, Farnborough, we aim to promote positive mental health for all students and staff. 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.

This Policy aims to:

- promote positive mental health for 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 young people with mental health issues
- Provide support to students suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers.

2. Scope

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

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Medical Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical or safeguarding issue and the SEND policy where a student has an identified special educational need.

3. Lead Members of Staff

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

Assistant Principal for Pastoral:	Matt Smith
Health and Wellbeing Coordinator:	Kirsten Halvorsen
Lead College Counsellor:	Claire Basil
Senior Mental Health Lead:	Anne Temple-Hall
College Nurse:	Catherine Hichens
Mental Health First Aiders:	

Ross Sarginson, Jay Relf, Zoe Gregory, Sally Reed, Sarah Pithers, Matt Smith, Rachel Buck, Anne Temple-Hall, Heather Carman, Carol Dooley, Diana Hartley, Helen Prinsloo.

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should follow the Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures. It is vital that all staff are aware, '...that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation' (Keeping Children Safe in Education p15 September 2022).

4. Enrolment & the Importance of Information Sharing

All applicants to The Sixth Form College Farnborough are asked to disclose both physical and mental health issues.

It is important that information is shared by potential students, their parents and the schools.

5. Individual Care Plans

It is helpful to draw up an individual care plan for pupils causing concern pertaining to their mental health and to share this where necessary with relevant members of college staff. This should be drawn up involving the pupil, the parents and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a pupil's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Advice for staff on managing any associated behaviours
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school can play

6. Fitness to Study Procedure

We use the Fitness to Study Procedure when a student's wellbeing is impacting on their ability to learn and progress. We recognise that there may be a need to make reasonable adjustments and the Fitness to Study Procedure allows for discussion and collaboration to take place. However, the best interests of the individual student and their welfare are at the centre of decisions.

Where there is no consensus that withdrawal is the most appropriate outcome, then 3 stages will be followed:

Stage 1 - a letter is sent home by the Personal Tutor outlining concerns and setting targets. The situation is reviewed two weeks later.

Stage 2 - a letter is sent home by a Lead Tutor firmly outlining concerns and resetting targets. The situation is reviewed two weeks later.

Stage 3 - a case conference reviews the situation and provides guidance to the Assistant Principal - Pastoral, who will adjudicate on the feasibility of the students continued place at College. The student will then be notified of the decision.

It is crucial to recognise that, on occasions, the College is advised, by medical specialists, that it is unsafe for students to attend. This advice will always supersede College policy and the student will not be able to attend until we are notified of their fitness to do so by the relevant authority.

7. Training and Raising Awareness about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are addressed in Tutor Programme activities throughout the year. There is also the Health & Wellbeing section on the College website which provides signposting for students, staff and parents.

As a minimum, all staff will receive annual training and ongoing updates about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of the mandatory Child Protection and Safeguarding training to enable them to keep students safe.

We will host relevant information on the Health and Wellbeing site for students and staff who wish to learn more about mental health.

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 due to developing situations with one or more students.

8. Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within college and in the local community. They are made aware of how to access this support via meetings with Personal Tutors or SPAs, the Health and Wellbeing Team, and Teachers. Through the Tutorial programme, the College website and information posted around the site, all students are aware of the availability of the counselling service at College.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of students seeking help by ensuring they understand;

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

9. Managing Disclosures

When a student discloses a mental health concern, staff will follow the procedures clearly outlined in the Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

10. Confidentiality

It is not possible to offer confidentiality legally in terms of radicalisation, terrorism, risk, harm to self and others. 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, ideally, 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

11. Working with Parents

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents (in accordance with Child Protection and Safeguarding Procedures), we need to be sensitive in our approach.

We should always highlight further sources of information and signpost websites and local services.

We should always provide clear means of contacting us with further questions and consider booking in a follow up meeting or phone call right away. Finish each meeting with agreed next steps and always keep a brief record of the meeting on the student's confidential notes.

In order to support parents generally we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues on the college website
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents on the college website
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through the college newsletter

12. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every year. The next date of the Policy review will be May 2025.