

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY

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1.0 Policy statement

At Blanchelande College we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff. 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.

2.0 Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and governors – outlining Blanchelande College's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing. It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies including the Behaviour Policy, SEND Policy, Anti Bullying, RSE Policy and Safeguarding Policy.

3.0 Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with 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.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing;

instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

- Work in accordance with the [Equality Act 2010](#) and [Mental Health Act 2007](#)

4.0 Key staff members

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

- Pastoral Staff
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
- SENCO
- Mental Health First Aid
- PSHE Coordinator

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of student, in the first instance they should speak to a member of the Pastoral Care Team

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

5.0 Well Being Manager

When a pupil 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 logged on our School System, the Well Being Manager (ISAMS), were the Pastoral Leaders triage the severity of the concerns. The Pastoral Team works in collaboration with the pupil, parents, and relevant professionals.



Records are kept and shared, as needed, which include:

- Details of the pupil's situation/condition/diagnosis
- Special requirements or strategies, and necessary precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- Who to contact in an emergency
- The role the school and specific staff

6 Teaching about mental health

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

We will follow the guidance issued by the PSHE Association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively.

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/guidance-preparing-teach-about-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing>.

We also use the Ten Ten Scheme www.tentenresources.co.uk incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages 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.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as 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 staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

Within the school (noticeboards, common rooms) and through our communication channels (newsletters, websites), we will share and display relevant information about local and



national support services and events. We also publish our own Blanchelande wellbeing pamphlets on areas such as sleep, self esteem and anxiety and mental health.

8 Sources of support at school and in the local community

The Pastoral Team provide first line of support to students concerned about their mental health of that of another student. Including:

- Drop-in service at the Pastoral Room
- EBSA (Emotional Based School Attendance) programmes
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistant) providing short term interventions and talking groups
- Anxiety Gremlins (Primary life-skills group)

Support and guidance is also available from:

- A team of Mental Health First Aiders
- Catholic Support – any child can request a meeting with our school priest
- Phase Leaders and Form Tutors

Local Support

Locally there are a range of organisations and groups offering support, including the CAMHS, MIND and The Youth Commission. These organisations provide specialist support 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.

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 share their concerns on Wellbeing Manager and alert one of the mental health first aiders.

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
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- Lateness to, or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

10 Targeted support

We recognise some children, and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

When needed we work closely with school nurses and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers. Agreeing a written plan as the first stage of a 'stepped care' approach;
- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including Guernsey CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of Guernsey education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality;

11 Managing disclosures

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. All staff (teaching and non-teaching) and governors have completed Safeguarding Level 2 training, which includes how to deal with disclosures.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially on the Wellbeing Manager, including:

- Date
- Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information will be shared with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) We have a volunteer VI Form student who is also available to listen to other children.

12 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 school, 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
- When we're going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

Ideally, consent should be gained from the student first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as students up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm.

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

Parents must always be informed, but students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, a timescale of 24 hours is recommended to share this information before the school makes contact with the parents/carers.

If a pupil gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

13 Whole school approach

Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.
- Who should be present – students, staff, parents etc.?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agree are added to the pupil's record.

Supporting parents

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

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems. This includes being invited to listen to guest speakers or joining Neurodiversity programmes (NAS Teen Life);
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.);
- Sign posting to services that can help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners;

14 Supporting Peers

When a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends who may want to support but do not know how. To keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support. Support will be provided in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations by the student who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told
- How friends can best support
- Things friends should avoid doing / saying which may inadvertently cause upset
- Warning signs that their friend needs 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

15 Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep students safe. The school has a team of staff who have Mental Health First Aid training.

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 developing situations with one or more students.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all 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 DSL who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.