

LEARNER RELATED POLICY: STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING STRATEGY 2023-25

This policy is biennially reviewed to ensure compliance with current regulations

Approved/reviewed by	
Approved by: Principal Reviewed by: Assistant Principal: Student Experience	
Date of next review	November 2025

This policy and procedure is subject to The Equality Act 2010 which recognises the following Protected Characteristics: Age, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion and Belief, Sex, Sexual orientation and Disability

1. Document Control

1.1. Document Details

Title	Student Mental Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2023-2025
Author	Abid Hussain / Sharon Posey
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1.2. Revision History

Version	Date	Author	Comments
1.0	November 2023	Abid Hussain	Definitive Release
1.1	July 2024	Sharon Posey	Minor amendments – MHFA implementation
1.2	December 2024	Sharon Posey	Amendments to the 3 rd paragraph under the 'Implementation' heading. Additional headings 'Staff Support & Training' and 'Student Voice'. Additional sentence at the start of the 'Staff Support & Training' section.

1.3. Distribution

Name	Email	Organisation
All Staff	Uploaded to SharePoint	Boston College

Introduction

At Boston College we recognise and prioritise the Safeguarding of our students. A fundamental aspect of this is the mental health and wellbeing of our students.

We are committed to supporting students' wellbeing and acknowledge that a positive approach to management of physical and mental health, alongside behaviour issues, is vital to students learning and achieving. Our vision is to work together, as a whole college, to promote student wellbeing, to minimise risk factors for mental ill-health, to spot and address early mental health problems faced by students ensuring they are well supported.

We recognise that the current cohort of students are those who were affected the most by lockdowns and blended learning during the COVID pandemic of 2020/21. This affected students, not just academically, but also with regards to their wellbeing. For many, wellbeing and mental health was significantly impacted.

Boston College has a duty of care to all within its community and has a responsibility to take action to support students. This strategy outlines the process to be followed when a students' mental health, wellbeing and/or behaviour is creating a barrier to their learning or progression.

At Boston College we want to provide a safe and open environment where students feel they can approach any staff member about their wellbeing. The college has a strong Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team who deal with, and support students.

We believe Boston College should be an environment where there is no stigma attached to ill mental health. This strategy applies to all students at Boston College including adult provision and work-based learning. The strategy is to be used once students are enrolled at Boston College and is not intended for use during the admissions process.

The purpose of the strategy is to ensure students stay on their programme, achieve to their best ability whilst feeling assured that they are cared for in a professional capacity.

Implementation

The duty of care for wellbeing and mental health falls to all staff within the organisation. Key staff will receive enhanced training, but it is essential staff know where to turn to if a student requires support with their mental health and/or wellbeing.

The college acknowledges that a student may disclose information to any staff member, not necessarily those who have been trained in Mental health First Aid or Safeguarding. It is therefore essential that all staff feel confident talking to students about wellbeing and mental health.

The College will appoint a Mental Health Designated Lead (current Executive Director: People), who will take a strategic lead at executive level to oversee strategy and implementation in collaboration with the Assistant Principal: Student Experience. In turn, a group of staff have been trained as Youth Mental Health First Aiders. This group of staff will develop the skill set to support students and know when to refer to internal support networks and external organisations.

Staff Support & Training

Student Services and curriculum areas will work collaboratively to ensure information about students needs and support is shared appropriately, if applicable. Staff should feel empowered and skilled enough to reach out to other departments if this benefits the student's wellbeing. Curriculum staff will update VITAL with relevant information regarding discussions around mental health and wellbeing. The student's ILJ within Vital will form the basis for clear communication regarding students' wellbeing and mental health. This will ensure information can remain confidential or shared with curriculum teams on a need-to-know basis. Full college training will be provided on internal systems and referral points with concerns. Where information is to be shared internally staff will be required to seek consent. The student should have a clear understanding of what information is being shared and why it is being shared.

Open and honest discussions within tutorials and discussions with Personal Tutors and Success Coaches will empower students to reach out and enable them to support their peers. This will be incorporated within the scheme of work (SOW) for tutorial sessions at regular intervals.

Student Voice

Regular data check points and leveraging Student Voice to obtain feedback about mental health and wellbeing from students is critical to demonstrate impact. This will enable the college to establish early interventions required to support the student.

Students need to know where they can go within the college for support. The whole of Boston College is a 'Safe Place' but having key areas identified for students is essential.

Initial Implementation Plan (detailed stakeholder engagement plan to follow)

Key Actions with milestones:

1. Mental Health Lead trained - November 2023
2. Action Mental Health First Aid Training for key staff - October 2023
3. Ensure effective communication goes to all staff and students - October 2023
4. Begin consultation via Student Voice - October 2023
5. Youth Mental First Aid Training for key staff – August 2024

Impact Measurement

1. Conduct focus groups with students on wellbeing.
2. Analyse wellbeing feedback via student surveys.
3. Analyse feedback data from wellbeing sessions (e.g., counselling etc.)
4. Retention data for students disclosing and receiving interventions.
5. Pulse survey data conducted termly (QR Code)