

STUDENT MENTAL WELLBEING STRATEGY

INTRODUCTION

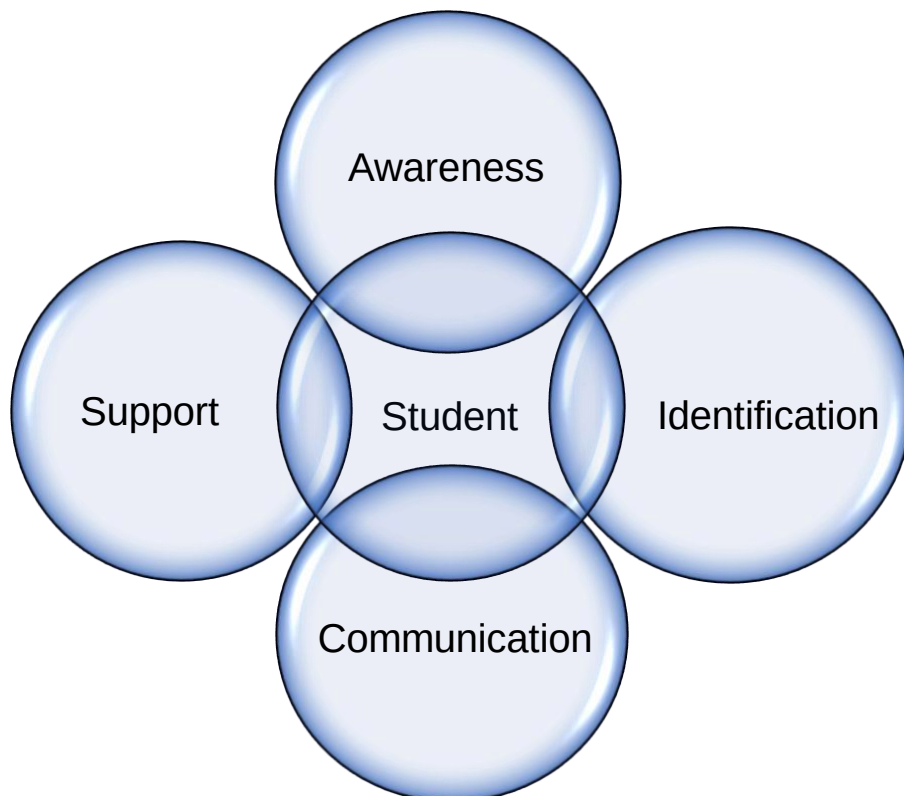
At City of Bristol College, our ultimate aim is to provide our students with a top-quality learning experience, enabling each individual to reach their full potential. We recognise that in order to do this, we need to provide additional support to students who are experiencing issues with their mental wellbeing.

With that in mind, teams across the College have worked together and with external organisations to develop this strategic approach to supporting our students' mental wellbeing.

The four pillars of this strategy are:

- Cross-college awareness of mental health
- Proactive identification of concerns
- Integrated communication
- Multi-layered support

At the centre of this approach is a focus on individual students and their needs, taking into account their relationships with staff, the type of support best suited to them and the timescales of support required.



The aim of this strategy is to provide consistent, high-quality mental health support to all our students, including:

- 16-19 Further Education learners
- HE and access students
- Adult learners, including ESOL
- Apprentices and other work-based provision
- Students accessing training through partner organisations and Partners in Bristol

CROSS-COLLEGE AWARENESS

Effectively supporting student wellbeing starts with a cross-college approach. All College staff, in both curriculum departments and professional services, are provided with continuous development opportunities to enhance their awareness and understanding of mental health. This training encompasses awareness of indicators of concern, how to effectively have conversations with students about mental health, and education around the support available and how it can be accessed, including:

- Training on Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)
- Mental Health First Aid training
- Safeguarding updates
- Awareness of wellbeing support offer including mindfulness, TogetherAll, counselling and face to face support.
- Referral of all mental wellbeing concerns via MyConcern.

PROACTIVE TRIAGE

In addition to this cross-college approach, we have teams in place to address student wellbeing proactively by recognising potential concerns, meeting with students, developing support plans for those who need them and creating effective referrals.

Study Coaches and Personal Tutors are the go-to staff for pastoral support, alongside Higher Education tutors and apprenticeship assessors. They provide a supportive tutorial programme, including wellbeing and resilience topics, and can refer individuals to other College teams where more specific support is required.

The Additional Learner Support team supports students with specific needs, including those with Educational Health Care Plans (EHCPs), and are trained to provide mental health support to those students.

The Safeguarding and Welfare team review all safeguarding concerns relating to student mental health and wellbeing. They can meet with students on a one-to-one basis and will also refer students for additional support, including our College counselling service.

INTEGRATED COMMUNICATION PROCESS

Communication is key to providing effective support, and the integrated process means taking a 'team around the student' approach to helping the individual. This involves the above teams working effectively together, identifying lead individuals on a case-by-case basis and involving external agencies such as mental health teams, social services and supported housing provision where necessary.

Below are some examples of the integrated processes currently in place:

- Early College panel
- High needs panels
- Child in need meetings
- Communication with Safer Options Team, Social Services, housing providers and mental health teams.
- Work with Creative Youth Network
- 'Team around the student' meetings
- Regular meetings between Safeguarding, ALS, Study Coaches and Foundation Learning teams.

MULTI-LAYERED SUPPORT PACKAGE – what are we doing already?

The package on offer includes both College support and referral to external provision.

College support currently encompasses:

- Online resources available on the student support page of the website
- Face-to-face support from Study Coaches, Personal Tutors, Learning Mentors and members of the Safeguarding Team
- Counselling offered on-site and virtually
- Access for all students to the TogetherAll wellbeing platform, using their student email as their username to set up access
- Weekly mindfulness groups across sites which can be referred to by the Safeguarding Team, ALS and Study Coaches/Personal Tutors

We also work closely with external organisations across the city, including:

- CAMHS: Children and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Adult Mental Health Services
- Off The Record

HOW TO ACCESS WELLBEING SUPPORT

Students can access support by speaking to any member of College staff. This could be a trusted teacher, a Personal Tutor or Study Coach, a mentor or Learning Assistant from our Additional Learner Support (ALS) team, or Student Services via the College receptions.

These staff can provide pastoral support where appropriate, and refer students to the Safeguarding and Welfare team via MyConcern, who will meet with the student and can refer them for additional support where needed.

AREAS FOR DEVELOPMENT

It is widely recognised that a greater emphasis on supporting students' wellbeing will enable students to stay in college despite any challenging circumstances, and prevent the need for escalation to more serious referrals.

It has been suggested that, when the time is appropriate, the College should reintroduce a dedicated student wellbeing team to provide support beyond the basic pastoral care offered by Study Coaches. This team would work alongside the Safeguarding and Welfare team to provide specific and regular check-ins to students who need them, with the intention of preventing that student from reaching the safeguarding threshold.

It has also been suggested that we utilise the growing voice of our students to develop a student-led approach to wellbeing through the Students' Union. This could encompass peer support, student wellbeing working groups and student representation at meetings with key staff members to steer further service developments.