

Mental Health Strategy

For Students

Worthing College Mental Health Strategy

Context

In January 2017 the Association of Colleges published research which concluded that 85% of colleges were reporting an increase in students with disclosed mental health issues in the past three years. 69% of respondents said that the total number of 16-18 students with mental health difficulties had 'significantly increased' in the past three years with a further 20% saying they had 'slightly increased'. Our own recent experience at Worthing College has confirmed that mental health concerns are a growing challenge for young people locally.

Strategy statement

Worthing College aims to embed a concern for health and wellbeing throughout the organisation. We are committed to:

- promoting healthy lifestyle choices
- providing a range of services which improve the physical, mental and sexual health and wellbeing of our students and staff
- empowering individuals with the knowledge and understanding to make informed choices about their physical and mental health, well-being and safety, and reducing risk-taking behaviour
- engaging the whole college community in developing and implementing its mental health strategy
- developing effective partnerships with specialist local, regional and national organisations.
- collecting and report on appropriate data relating to staff and student wellbeing, and identify actions required to further promote health and wellbeing.

Frameworks

- The Healthy Child Programme (2009) sets out the recommended framework of universal and progressive services for children and young people from 5 to 19 years old to promote optimal health and wellbeing.
- In 2015 Public Health England published a guidance document: 'Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing'. This document identifies the eight principles to promote emotional health and wellbeing in schools and colleges, which will provide the structure for this strategy document.
- The Ofsted Common Inspection Framework (2015) indicates that inspectors will make a judgement on the personal development, behaviour and welfare of children and learners by evaluating *'the extent to which the provision is successfully promoting and supporting learners' knowledge of how to keep themselves healthy, both emotionally and physically, including through exercising and healthy eating.'*



Leadership and Management

- Delivery and monitoring of strategy
 - Reporting to corporation
- Liaison with local commissioners of services
 - Every Student Matters group
 - College Improvement Plan
- External services embedded within college

Worthing College Mental Health Strategy

1. An ethos and environment that promotes respect diversity and values diversity

The physical, social and emotional environment in which staff and students spend a high proportion of every week day has been shown to affect their physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing as well as impacting on attainment.

Worthing College will:

- foster an ethos that promotes mutual respect, learning and successful relationships among students and staff.
- create a culture of inclusiveness and communication that ensures all young people's concerns can be addressed (including the concerns of those who may be at particular risk of poor mental health)
- provide a safe environment which nurtures and encourages young people's sense of self-worth and self-efficacy, reduces the threat of bullying and violence and promotes positive behaviours
- Promote the NHS 5 steps to mental wellbeing
- Support the national Time to Change programme led by MIND with an annual campaign in the Autumn Term which challenges the stigma around mental health issues, promotes communication about mental health and encourages people to get the support they need.

The NHS 5 steps to mental wellbeing:

The 5 steps below have been identified by research as really promoting wellbeing:

- **Connect** – connect with the people around you: your family, friends and fellow students. Spend time developing these relationships.
- **Be active** – take a walk, go cycling, go to the gym or play a game of football. Find an activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your life.
- **Keep learning** – learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence. So work hard at your studies, learn a new sport or figure out how to fix your bike!
- **Give to others** – even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word. Larger acts, such as volunteering at your local community centre, can improve your mental wellbeing and help you build new social networks.
- **Be mindful** – be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you. Some people call this awareness "mindfulness". It can positively change the way you feel about life and how you approach challenges.

2. Curriculum and guidance delivery

College-based programmes of social and emotional learning have the potential to help young people acquire the skills they need to make good academic progress as well as benefit their health and wellbeing.

Worthing College will:

- At Induction, reduce the risk of isolation and encourage a sense of belonging using student ambassadors and by promoting opportunities for students to join groups and societies which enrich their experience at college.
- Address mental health issues as part of the year 12 tutorial programme in the Autumn Term.
- Embed social and emotional skills education into the whole curriculum, including resilience building, planning for success, dealing with exam stress and challenging the stigmatisation of mental health issues.
- Deliver an annual Time to Change campaign in the Autumn Term, including a poster campaign, year 12 assemblies and workshops for students.
- Deliver targeted workshops and talks throughout the year on mental health issues such as drug and alcohol abuse, coping with anxiety and resilience building
- Provide guidance to students at the start of the exam season on ways to deal with exam stress.
- Promote opportunities for students to benefit from the college's sports and fitness enrichment programme, with all of the benefits to mental wellbeing which physical activity brings.

3. Enabling student voice to influence decisions

Involving students in decisions that impact on them can benefit their emotional health and wellbeing by helping them to feel part of the college community and to have some control over their lives and education.

Worthing College will:

- Involve the Student Action Group, the Student Parliament and the Student Union, including the Student Welfare representative, in the development and review of this mental health strategy so that it belongs to the whole college community.
- Conduct a regular questionnaire with students to assess their levels of awareness of the support available, their satisfaction with this support and their suggestions for development.
- Introduce ways to ensure all young people have the opportunity to contribute to decisions that may impact on their social and emotional wellbeing
- Involve young people in the creation, delivery and evaluation of training and continuing professional development activities in relation to social and emotional wellbeing

4. Staff development, health and wellbeing

Promoting staff health and wellbeing is an essential element of an emotionally healthy college.

It is also important for staff to access training to increase their knowledge of emotional wellbeing in order to equip them to support their students, although college staff should not be expected to replace specialist services.

Worthing College will provide:

- Mental Health First Aid training for all tutors, SAS team, Safeguarding team and First Aiders to support them in their pastoral roles.
- Resilience training and peer support for staff engaged in most emotionally demanding pastoral and safeguarding work.
- Regular access for teachers to opportunities to receive training in developing students emotional wellbeing as part of the college's CPD programme.
- External counselling service for staff, providing the first 6 sessions free.
- Benenden Health Care scheme for staff
- Annual Healthy Living Day for staff at the end of each academic year.
- Phased return to work after prolonged staff absence.
- Annual mini-health checks for staff
- Twice yearly review of staff wellbeing as part of SPM cycle.
- Reduced price access to gym membership
- Opportunity for physical activity at College Development Days

5. Identifying need and monitoring impact of interventions

The early identification of students with mental health support needs and the assessment of the impact of interventions are essential to ensure that support for students is effective.

Worthing College will:

- Maintain an open-door approach so that students feel able to approach a range of staff to request support, including the tutor team, the SAS and Counselling.
- Give students the opportunity to disclose at application and enrolment
- Use transition meetings with feeder schools to identify students with potential support needs
- Promote support in tutorials in the Autumn Term and give opportunities for students requesting 1 to 1 time with their tutor.
- Monitor risk factors such as attendance data, teacher traffic lights and referrals from teachers in order to intervene early to address concerns which are emerging.
- Track prevalence of mental health issues amongst student population and conduct gap analysis on student outcomes.

6. Working with parents / carers

The family plays a key role in influencing young people's emotional health and wellbeing and involving parents / carers in the support provided to students can greatly enhance the benefits on students' wellbeing and academic progress.

Worthing College will:

- Work in partnership with parents, carers and other family members to promote students' social and emotional wellbeing
- Provide an annual opportunity for parents to be involved in the development of support for the social and emotional wellbeing of students.
- Provide an annual workshop for parents/carers focussing on building resilience and how to thrive.
- Fully involve parents/carers in the support provided to students where there are concerns about their emotional well-being (except on rare occasions when the college judges that the wellbeing of the student may be harmed by this involvement). Pastoral staff will communicate regularly with parents / carers through meetings, emails, letters home and telephone calls.

7. Targeted support and appropriate referral

There is frequently a need for more intensive, targeted support for students experiencing particular mental health difficulties. National research indicates how much students value the trusted adult, face-to-face interaction provided by pastoral staff in schools and colleges.

Worthing College will:

- Provide a range of support to students through internal college services, including:
 - Personal tutors who are normally the first point of contact for concerns regarding academic progress, attendance issues and other welfare / pastoral concerns.
 - The Student Advice and Support team who provide advice and support on a range of issues including emotional wellbeing, mental, physical and sexual health, housing and personal finance.
 - The Counselling team, who provide 1 to 1 counselling, initially for 6 weeks, for students who self-refer. Referrals are initially assessed by the manager of the Student Advice and Support team who prioritises and schedules provision and screens for safeguarding concerns.
 - The Safeguarding team who intervene when there are concerns about safeguarding risks to students, including risks around self-harm and suicide.
 - The Children Looked After (CLA) Coordinators who support students in care, students who have recently left care and those who are young carers
 - A college dog based in Student Advice and Support.
- Make referrals to appropriate external agencies including:
 - CAMHS
 - Early Intervention team
 - Young Persons Substance Misuse Team
 - WSCC Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub
 - Youth Emotional Support Team (YES)
 - MIND
 - Samaritans
 - Cruise bereavement Services

The Thrive framework produced by the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families provides a useful division of need into five categories; thriving, getting advice, getting help, getting more help and getting risk support. The support and referrals provided by Worthing College can be divided into these categories:

- Thriving – students benefit from the pastoral and curriculum support provided to all students through the tutorial programme, curriculum delivery and cross college input such as assemblies and progression events.
- Getting Advice – teachers, tutors and SAS
- Getting Help: Senior Tutors and Counselling
- Getting More Help: external referral
- Getting Risk Support: Safeguarding intervention and referral.

8. Leadership and Management


Effective delivery of a mental health strategy requires commitment from every level of the college including a committed senior leadership team, a governor with knowledge and understanding of the college's approach and a champion who will take the lead at an operational level in delivery of the strategy.

At Worthing College:

- The Assistant Principal for Guidance has lead responsibility for:
 - the delivery and monitoring of this strategy, including the collection of data regarding the prevalence of mental health issues and the impact of interventions
 - regular reporting to Corporation
 - liaison with the local commissioners of services including the local Health and Wellbeing board.
 - Ensuring that students and parents / carers are involved in the development and review of the mental health strategy
 - Safeguarding Lead
 - Line management of the Tutor team and Student Advice and Support team
- The college's link Governor with responsibility for Safeguarding also takes the lead role in overseeing the delivery of the college's mental health strategy.
- The college's manager of Student Advice and Support takes the lead in the operational delivery of the mental health strategy and for the promotion of mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- The Every Student Matters group is responsible for the delivery of the Every Student Matters strategy including the delivery of targeted workshops and events promoting emotion wellbeing
- The college will pursue opportunities for external mental health services to be delivered from the Worthing College campus.
- The college's commitment to addressing social and emotional wellbeing will be referenced within college improvement plans.



 01903 275 755

 1 Sanditon Way
Worthing
BN14 9FD

 info@worthing.ac.uk