

# STUDENT RELATED POLICY: MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

This policy is annually reviewed to ensure compliance with current regulations

| Approved/reviewed by                                                                              |           |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| <b>Approved by:</b> Executive Leadership Team                                                     |           |
| <b>Reviewed by:</b> Head of Safeguarding & Wellbeing (DSL), Assistant Principal: SEND & Inclusion |           |
| Date of next review                                                                               | July 2027 |

*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 and Wellbeing Policy |
| Author  | Sharon Posey                               |
| Version | 1.0                                        |
| Date    | July 2026                                  |
| Status  | Published                                  |

### 1.2. Revision History

| Version | Date      | Author  | Comments                              |
|---------|-----------|---------|---------------------------------------|
| 1.0     | July 2026 | S Posey | Definitive Release - Brand New Policy |

### 1.3. Distribution

| Name      | Email                  | Organisation   |
|-----------|------------------------|----------------|
| All Staff | Uploaded to SharePoint | Boston College |

## **1. Policy Statement**

Boston College is committed to fostering a culture that prioritises the mental health, wellbeing and inclusion of all students. We recognise that student emotional wellbeing is fundamental to creating a positive learning environment, enhancing the whole college experience, and ensuring the overall success and achievement of our students.

The college is not a clinical mental health service and does not diagnose or treat mental health conditions. Its role is to promote positive wellbeing, identify concerns, provide proportionate pastoral and safeguarding support, make reasonable adjustments where appropriate, and facilitate access or referral to specialist services.

This policy demonstrates our commitment to creating a supportive culture where students feel valued, respected and nurtured.

## **2. Scope**

This policy applies to all applicants and enrolled students of all ages and modes of study, including apprentices, higher education students, adult students, distance learners and students undertaking work experience or placements. It applies across all college campuses and, where relevant, college-related activity takes place off-site.

## **3. Aims**

This policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing.
- Create a supportive and inclusive learning environment.
- Provide early identification and support for students experiencing mental health or wellbeing difficulties.
- Ensure appropriate referral pathways between internal and external services.
- Reduce stigma and raise awareness of mental health issues.
- Support students experiencing mental health difficulties
- Encourage open communication about wellbeing concerns
- Provide access to support services and resources
- Foster a culture of mutual respect and consideration across all college campuses.

## **4. Roles and Responsibilities**

- The Senior Mental Health Lead (Executive Director for People Services): Oversees strategic implementation and review, with support from the Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing (DSL).
- Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing (DSL) and Deputy DSL: Oversees operational implementation and procedures.
- The Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team: Coordinates support and referrals, including ongoing support meetings as required.

- The Success Coach Team: Offer pastoral support for wellbeing and raising awareness of mental health and wellbeing and how to access support in tutorial sessions.
- Tutors, Lecturers and Professional Services staff: Identify concerns and signpost support to the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Team or Success Coach Team.
- Students: Encouraged to seek help and support peers

All staff must remain alert to changes in a student's presentation, behaviour, attendance, engagement, or academic performance that may indicate a well-being or mental health concern. Concerns must be recorded and referred promptly through the college's safeguarding and wellbeing procedures. Staff must not promise absolute confidentiality, attempt to diagnose a mental health condition, or provide support beyond their role, competence, or training.

## **5. Support Services**

- On-site counselling and wellbeing service: Therapeutic Counsellors are based at Rochford campus to support students across all sites with at least one counsellor available for booked appointments Monday – Friday during term time. Appointments can be made by students via email [counselling@boston.ac.uk](mailto:counselling@boston.ac.uk), or they can ask a trusted adult or peer to make the referral on their behalf. A triage appointment will be offered in the first instance, with follow-up appointments agreed between the Counsellor and student. Counsellors can deliver face to face, via Microsoft Teams or phone call appointments.
- Safeguarding and Wellbeing Officers (SWO's): SWO's are based at Rochford campus to support students across all sites and offer both ad-hoc and arranged appointments. They are available Monday to Friday including half terms and holidays (excluding Christmas break). Students can contact SWO's direct via [support@boston.ac.uk](mailto:support@boston.ac.uk), or they can ask a trusted adult or peer to make a referral on their behalf. SWO's can deliver face to face, via Microsoft Teams or phone call appointments.
- Youth Mental Health First Aiders: Trained Youth Mental Health First Aiders are available to provide initial support and signposting. They provide initial reassurance, listen non-judgmentally, and signpost or escalate concerns. They are available Monday to Friday including half terms and holidays (excluding Christmas break). Our Youth First Aiders wear a round blue coloured badge with an ear on it that says "First Aid for Mental Health".
- The SWO's can support students and families with referral pathways to NHS services, including partnership working with Mental Health Support Teams and other external agencies.

## **6. Identification and Referral**

- **Early Identification:** Students are encouraged to disclose any mental health or emotional well-being support needs at application. The Safeguarding Team will request information sharing meetings with feeder schools and liaise with them in the summer term, and with the student and their family to agree what support is required at college. The safeguarding Team will collaborate with external agencies such as CAMHS or the Mental Health Support Teams to ensure that students are supported both inside and outside of college.
- The College will provide private and confidential spaces for students to be seen by internal support staff and external agencies, wherever possible.
- **Clear referral pathways and confidentiality protocols:** All referrals will be treated in the strictest confidence following GDPR regulations. Consent for onward referrals will be sought from students, unless there is a safeguarding concern, where a referral can be made without consent e.g. to Children's Social Care.
- For students aged 18 or over, consent will normally be sought before involving parents, carers, family members or other trusted adults. However, information may be shared without consent where there is a serious or imminent risk of harm, where the student lacks capacity to make the relevant decision, where safeguarding duties apply or where another lawful basis permits or requires disclosure. Any decision to override an adult student's wishes must be authorised by the DSL or nominated deputy, clearly justified and recorded on the College's safeguarding system.
- **Use of risk assessments/safety planning and wellbeing check-ins:** SWO's will utilise various resources to carry out risk assessments for mental health and emotional wellbeing, and create safety plans with students where required to support their college experience.

## **7. Equality and Inclusion**

Boston College are committed to the Equality Act 2010. Support can be tailored to meet individual needs, including neurodiverse, LGBTQ+, and international students.

## **8. Crisis and Suicide Prevention**

- Boston College has a suicide prevention strategy and policy aligned with national guidance.
- Boston College will offer immediate response protocols for students in crisis, including calling 999 or arranging for them to go to A&E.
- Collaboration with emergency services and crisis teams where required.

## **9. Training and Awareness**

- Mandatory suicide awareness training is provided to all staff.
- Mental health awareness training for staff is available throughout the year via distance learning and online platforms, and face to face sessions on Staff Development Days.

- Workshops and campaigns for students delivered by both internal and external staff e.g. Mental Health Support Team workshops.
- Tutorial sessions raising awareness of mental health issues, including suicide prevention and how to access support.

#### **10. Data and Monitoring**

- Regular student surveys to assess wellbeing.
- Annual policy review informed by feedback and data.

#### **11. Policy Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing and Assistant Principal for SEND and Inclusion, with input from students, staff, and external partners.