

## MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

### 1. Policy Statement

At Callywith College, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of our students.

We have a supportive and caring ethos, and our approach is respectful and kind, where everyone and their wellbeing is valued. We understand that everyone experiences life challenges that can make them vulnerable and at times, individuals may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

At Callywith we:

- help students to understand their emotions and feelings better.
- help students to feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries.
- help students socially to form and maintain relationships.
- promote self-esteem and encourage a sense of belonging to ensure students know they are an important part of the college community.
- encourage students to be confident and create an environment where they can be themselves.
- help students to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.
- support individual students with mental health difficulties.

At Callywith we promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting student voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making and shape learning and pastoral support.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of worth through taking part in extracurricular activities.
- Providing opportunities and spaces to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs, either within Callywith itself or by liaising with external agencies.

We pursue our aims through:

- A universal, whole college trauma informed approach.
- Targeted support for individual student.
- Specialised, targeted approaches aimed at students with more complex or long-term difficulties.

### 2. Scope and Purpose

#### Why do we need a specific mental health policy?

- 2.1 For regulatory and legal reasons to comply with the Equality Act 2010.
- 2.2 To ensure equal access to education and to appropriate support for all with the goal of retention and positive achievement of students.
- 2.3 To comply with recommendations regarding the "duty of care" responsibilities of the college.
- 2.4 To establish procedures that safeguard the college community, give guidance regarding appropriate action and ensure accurate written records are kept.

2.5 It is recognised that students can be vulnerable as they are in a period of transition and may experience stress or other mental health difficulties during their time at Callywith. We have a duty of care to respond appropriately to situations where concerns are raised about a student. We will intervene if a student's state of health presents a risk, either to themselves or to others, or where this results in unreasonable demands being placed on staff, or that the teaching and learning environment is compromised so that we cannot ensure the health and safety of both the student those around them. This is in line with our **Fitness to Study policy**.

This states that we may require a student to interrupt their studies and sets out the associate procedures. Examples include, when a student's conduct is presenting risks in how they behave and treat others, how they function in managing their own health and safety and where this impacts on other students, staff or members of the public. We do this in recognition that there may be underlying physical or mental health issues, substance misuse problems or difficult personal circumstances giving rise to or contributing to unacceptable conduct.

2.6 This policy may be used in conjunction with our Safeguarding policy.

### **3. Common mental health concerns**

Common mental health issues may include:

Anxiety disorders including:

- PTSD- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
- OCD- obsessive compulsive disorder
- Panic attacks
- Depression
- Stress
- Eating Disorders
- Disorders of personality and identity
- Psychosis- including Schizophrenia
- Bi-Polar
- Self-Harm
- Suicidal thoughts/ attempts

The needs and experiences of young people with mental difficulties are individual to them. As a college we endeavour to make it possible for students who experience mental health difficulties to complete their education, whilst they are initially supported by the college and then signposted or referred to external agencies.

### **4. Support provision**

We aim to provide support for students with mental health difficulties through our tutorial/pastoral and Student Services provision.

We will request support from outside agencies where necessary, using lead professionals for guidance, which may be the GP or a specialised service such as CAMHS, counselling services etc.

#### **4.1 Targeted support**

The college will offer support through targeted approaches for individual students or groups of students which may include:

- Access to the college counsellor for Person Centred Therapy as well as Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT).
- Time 2 Talk team of voluntary counsellors who can offer specialised 1:1 counselling.
- Targeted use of TIS resources.
- Access to TIS (Trauma Informed School) trained staff in Student Services and SMT who can offer 1:1 support.
- Young carer groups
- LGBT+ groups
- Welcoming public and confidential space in Student Services.

The college also makes use of resources to assess and track wellbeing as appropriate including an annual “Wish my Teacher Knew” exercise.

**4.2 Reasonable adjustments** in line with the Equality Act 2010. We must make ‘reasonable adjustments’ to support students with a disability, including a mental health diagnosis. Adjustments will be made, often with the guidance of relevant external agencies and key professionals. Any assessment of the individual’s needs will ensure that any provision/adjustment made will be beneficial for the student and possible to deliver.

#### **4.3 Pre-entry; Access and Admissions**

We encourage applications from individuals who can benefit from our courses and who meet the entry requirements. We aim to ensure they can meet the demands of the course and have the potential to succeed and achieve.

Information about a mental health difficulty may be made on the application form and/or may be discussed at interview. At all times it will be made clear that any information imparted will only be used in the student’s interests and with her or his full knowledge and permission. Such disclosures will be followed up by the Learning Support or Student Services team. Information will be shared so that support can be offered on commencing at the college.

#### **4.4 Identification of mental health difficulties after admission**

Mental health awareness training is delivered to staff on training days. A member of the SMT is a senior mental health lead and the student services team have undertaken TIS (Trauma Informed Schools) training in supporting young people. We have a mental health adviser within the Student Services team. Not all students with mental health difficulties will disclose this on their application form and/or their mental health condition may develop during their studies.

Any member of staff can refer a student for additional support with their mental health by completing a safeguarding or student services referral form. This goes directly to the Student Services team and college mental health adviser for review. An assessment of the student’s needs will be undertaken and if appropriate a referral made to outside agencies for further guidance and support. Or a student may be able to receive support through our college Time2Talk provision.

The needs of a student with mental health difficulties may be complex and diverse and liaison between college staff and other agencies will enable the best integrated support. However, if the student declines support or does not wish their mental health difficulty to be disclosed, in line with Data Protection Act, the information should not be shared, unless it is considered that the student is likely to harm themselves or another person because of maintaining confidentiality.

#### **4.5 Assessment**

The Learning Support team will undertake an assessment of support needs and plan any reasonable adjustments to be made. These may include:

- Examination concessions
- Guidelines on time management and classroom behaviour
- Additional educational resources
- Where it is identified that Student Services/pastoral support would be of benefit, students will be signposted to the relevant team.

Once the learning support needs of the student have been assessed, the student support team might put in place other necessary measures which could include one or a combination of the support interventions listed above.

Where a student discloses a history of or current mental health difficulties which present a safeguarding issue, we will discuss the need for an individual support plan with that student and their parent/carer or next of kin.

## **5. External Liaison**

Liaison with local statutory, private and/or voluntary organisations is essential in both providing individually tailored support for students and to our role in the community.

As part of our targeted provision, we work with other agencies to support student's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- Educational psychology services
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- CMHT for older students
- Eating Disorder Teams
- Early Help Hub
- Outlook Southwest
- GPs
- Social Workers
- The MARU

To support parents, we:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our website.
- Ensure that all staff are available to parents and parents are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their child/ young person.
- Make our mental health policy easily accessible to parents via our website.
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children.

## **6. Education**

In addition, we are committed to raising awareness of mental health issues, challenging negative stereotypes and combating stigma and discrimination throughout the college. We therefore provide staff development as appropriate, and additionally, have staff who are trained mental health first aiders and specifically designed tutorial sessions providing a safe space for students to discuss mental health.