



Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

ABOUT THIS DOCUMENT:

Purpose

This policy sets out the approach that the college takes when managing mental health and wellbeing of all stakeholders.

The aim is to ensure that mental health and wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do, all stakeholders are supported and that Creating Tomorrow College and Creating Tomorrow Trust are an employer of choice.

It is intended that this policy underpins the approach to all college policies and as such is the underlying ethos to everything we do.

Compiled by Gareth Ivett, January 2021

Agreed by Governors –

Review date – January 2023

Our vision and values

This policy aims to promote and embed Creating Tomorrow College's Core Values:

Determination	Aspiration	Respect	Empathy
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Our core values define how we expect all staff and learners to conduct themselves on a day to day basis in all their interactions with everyone, thus promoting a culture of regard for their own and everyone else's wellbeing

At Creating Tomorrow College, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of all; including staff, learners and families. We know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support. We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's responsibility.

At our college we:

- Provide a nurturing, safe and supportive environment based on trusting relationships to:
 - Help everyone to understand and manage their emotions and feelings
 - Help everyone to feel comfortable in sharing any concerns or worries
 - Help everyone to form and maintain relationships
 - Develop self-esteem and self-worth
 - Encourage everyone to be confident and celebrate their individuality
 - Help learners to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks
 - Provide a structured approach to education about relationships, sex and health
 - Support parents as partners in their child's learning and development

The Importance of Mental Health and Wellbeing

Recent research by the mental health foundation has shown that mental health problems affect about 1 in 10 children and young people. Statistics show that 70% of young people who experience a mental health problem have not had support at an early age or the opportunity to build and develop their resilience. As a college, we recognise the need to ensure mental health problems are identified early and appropriate support is provided.

At Creating Tomorrow College, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing of every member of our college community and recognise how important mental health and wellbeing is to our lives, as is physical health. We recognise that a young person's mental health and overall wellbeing can affect their learning and achievement.

A key aspect of our role in college is to ensure that everyone is able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. This includes teaching, support, advice and guidance about how they can maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health

problems and to be a college where:

- Everyone is valued as unique individuals
- Everyone feels a sense of belonging and feels safe
- Everyone knows they are able to talk openly, if they choose, about things that effect their mental health and wellbeing without feeling any stigma
- Positive mental health is promoted and valued
- Respect and tolerance is expected
- Everyone is supported to access help

Policy Aims

The Policy Aims to:

- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing of all
- Promote an open culture which increases understanding and awareness of common mental health issues
- Provide support to staff in the workplace
- Provide support to staff working with learners with mental health issues
- Provide support to learners experiencing ill mental health, including support for their peers and parents

Definition of Wellbeing

'Mental health is a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. It affects how we think, feel and act.' (World Health Organisation)

Mental health and well-being is not just the absence of mental health problems. We want everyone to:

- Be confident Individuals
 - Be solution focussed to resolve problems, either personal or with others, for themselves
 - Manage strong feelings such as frustration, anger and anxiety
- Be successful Learners
 - Be able to promote calm, optimistic states that support the achievement of goals
 - Recover from setbacks and persist in the face of the difficulties
 - Work and play co-operatively
 - Compete fairly and win and lose with dignity and respect for other competitors
- Be responsible citizens
 - Make and sustain friendships
 - Deal with and resolve conflict effectively and fairly
 - Recognise and stand up for their rights and the rights of others
 - Understand and value the individual differences, celebrating diversity and respecting the rights of others to have beliefs and values different from their own

Taking a Whole College Approach

We take a **whole college approach** to effective practice, and provision is in place that promotes

positive emotional wellbeing and mental health of staff, learners and parents. This is achieved by:

- Creating an ethos, policies and behaviours that support positive mental health and resilience and which everyone understands.
- Helping everyone to develop social relationships that support each other and seek help when they need it.
- Helping learners to be resilient learners.
- Teaching learners social and emotional skills and an awareness of mental health.
- Early identification of children who have mental health needs and planning to support their needs, including working with specialist services.
- Effectively working with parents and others.
- Supporting and training staff to develop their skills and own resilience.
- Developing an open culture that encourages discussion and understanding of mental health awareness.

We promote a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our core values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting learner voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making.
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements.
- Providing opportunities to develop a sense of self-worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meets needs.
- Creating a whole college community that upholds kindness, values difference and promotes inclusion.

Curriculum Provision

Positive wellbeing is promoted through the curriculum and all college activities. Through a carefully planned approach using the Preparing for Adulthood aspects of; Health, and Friends Relationships & Community, our learners are helped to acquire the knowledge and develop the skills and understanding they need to lead confident, healthy, independent lives, and to become resilient, informed and responsible citizens. Specific themes that promote positive emotional health and wellbeing include:

- Protective Behaviours
- Restorative Approaches
- PSHE themes
- Relationship and Sex Education themes
- Zones of Regulation
- Skills Builder

Whole college activities, such as class time sessions, will be carefully thought through to further develop the learners' knowledge of strategies. For example, Protective Behaviours and restorative approaches are taught through class time sessions to help learners learn to control and manage feelings if there are disputes.

We will plan whole college events throughout the year that promote the awareness of good mental health and during these events the focus will be on mindfulness and resilience with the purpose to teach the learners' strategies for dealing with anxiety and coping with change.

Learners will have the opportunity to raise difficult issues which feed into planning for future learning and life.

Staff have been trained to identify when learners require additional support for social, emotional and/or mental health and staff are able to refer through the welfare and pastoral team to access further support and sessions that are personalised to individual needs.

Where there is a need for more specialised targeted approaches to support vulnerable learners will be referred to outside organisations such and CAMHS.

Identifying Needs and Warning Signs

As a college, we want to ensure that we have clear systems and processes in place for early intervention and identification of mental health problems, and that referral to appropriate professionals is made. Staff know learners well and are vigilant, sympathetic and understanding of the signs and indicators for ill mental health (upset, appear anxious or worried, or are acting 'out of character'). Negative experiences and distressing life events can affect mental health in a way that brings about changes in a child's behaviour or emotional state. This may include:

- Emotional state (fearful, withdrawn, low self-esteem)
- Behaviour (submissiveness, aggressive or oppositional; habitual body rocking)
- Interpersonal behaviours (indiscriminate contact or affection seeking; overfriendliness or excessive clinginess; demonstrating excessively 'good' behaviour to prevent disapproval; failing to seek or accept appropriate comfort or affection from an appropriate person when significantly distressed; coercive controlling behaviour; or lack of ability to understand and recognise emotions).

These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff will report their concerns to the Designated Safeguarding Leads.

At Creating Tomorrow College we are aware that certain individuals and groups are more at risk of developing mental health problems than others. Young people who have a learning difficult are much more likely to experience ill mental health and as such all staff are trained in identifying and supporting as deemed appropriate. These risks can relate to the child, to their family, or to their community or life events. These risk factors, taken from **Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools**, November 2018, are listed on the following pages:

Risk and protective factors that are believed to be associated with mental health outcomes

	RISK FACTORS	PROTECTIVE FACTORS
In the child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genetic influences • Learning disabilities Specific development delay or neuro-diversity • Communication difficulties • Physical illness • Academic failure • Low self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secure attachment experience Outgoing temperament as an infant Good communication skills, sociability • Being a planner and having a belief in control • Humour • A positive attitude • Experiences of success and achievement • Faith or spirituality • Capacity to reflect

In the family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overt parental conflict including domestic violence • Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted) • Inconsistent or unclear discipline • Hostile and rejecting relationships • Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs • Physical, sexual, emotional abuse, or neglect • Parental psychiatric illness Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder • Death and loss – including loss of friendship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult) • Affection • Clear, consistent discipline • Support for education • Supportive long term relationship or the absence of severe discord
In the college	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bullying including online (cyber) • Discrimination • Breakdown in or lack of positive friendships • Deviant peer influences • Peer pressure • Peer on peer abuse • Poor learner to teacher/college staff relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear policies on behaviour and bullying • Staff behaviour policy (also known as code of conduct) • 'Open door' policy for children to raise problems • A whole-college approach to promoting good mental health • Good learner to teacher/college staff relationships • Positive classroom management • A sense of belonging • Positive peer influences • Positive friendships • Effective safeguarding and Child Protection policies. • An effective early help process • Understand their role in and be part of effective multi-agency working • Appropriate procedures to ensure staff are confident to can raise concerns about policies and processes, and know they will be dealt with fairly and effectively
In the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Socio-economic disadvantage • Homelessness • Disaster, accidents, war or other overwhelming events • Discrimination • Exploitation, including by criminal gangs and organised crime groups, trafficking, online abuse, sexual exploitation and the influences of extremism leading to radicalisation • Other significant life events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider supportive network • Good housing • High standard of living • High morale college with positive policies for behaviour, attitudes and anti-bullying • Opportunities for valued social roles • Range of sport/leisure activities

Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. Creating Tomorrow College's role in supporting and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

- **Prevention:** Creating a safe and calm environment where mental health difficulties are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole college population, and equipping learners to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching learners about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this through our ethos and other college activities.
- **Identification:** Recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible.
- **Early support:** Helping learners to access evidence based early support and interventions.
- **Access to specialist support:** Working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment.

Pastoral Support for Wellbeing

Pastoral support at Creating Tomorrow College is fundamental to our aims and philosophy and therefore the college has additional staff to support with the mental health and well being of our learners.

Creating Tomorrow College also has a team of Learner Mentors.

We believe that a well-supported, valued staff team with a clear and shared purpose are best placed to provide emotional wellbeing for learners in their care.

Creating Tomorrow College is committed to supporting our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing using the Northamptonshire Targeted Mental Health in Colleges (TaMHS) approach, which is a coordinated multi-agency programme for building capacity within colleges through training, support and introducing new programmes and approaches to better meet the mental health needs of all children.

The programme can be used at universal, targeted and more specialist levels, including through systemic work with parents, staff and locality agencies. By meeting mental health needs in this way, sustainable positive impact on children's mental health, attainments, bullying, attendance and exclusions can be achieved.

We plan to introduce a wellbeing working party and from this our aim is to form a Mental Health and Wellbeing Team. This team will include representatives from all stakeholder groups. The team will meet regularly to support the college's work around mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Linda Saunders is our Link Trustee for Mental health and Wellbeing. Her role is to ensure that staff wellbeing is at the heart of everything we do:

- Leaders act as positive role models
- Leaders promote an open listening culture that responds quickly to problems
- Leaders and Mental Health and Wellbeing Team ensure that the college environment promotes staff wellbeing
- Decision making processes, where possible, are understood and supported by staff
- Opportunities are provided for staff to socialise and relax with each other
- New staff are supported with an appropriate level of induction
- Ensure that the environment is well maintained and staff have access to quality facilities

- The regular and systematic monitoring of staff absences is focussed on supporting staff
- Access to confidential counselling and support services (including staff supervision)

Working in Partnership with Parents

At Creating Tomorrow College, we understand and value the need to work closely with families to ensure that the college's health initiatives meet the needs of our learners. We value the important contribution made by families and appreciate the need to proactively engage parents / carers and families in the health of their children. We seek to establish and maintain strong partnerships with families, outside agencies and the wider community to promote consistent support for children's health and wellbeing.

To support families, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our college website.
- Ensure that all families are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy easily accessible to families.
- Share ideas about how families can support positive mental health in their children, for example links through our website, outside speakers and specialist support
- Keep families informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in the college and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

Working with Other Agencies and Partners

As part of our targeted provision the college will work with other agencies to support young people's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The College Nurse
- Educational Psychology services
- Children's and Adult's social Services
- Behaviour support services (including Community Team for People with Learning Difficulties)
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service)
- TaMHS (Targeted Mental Health in Schools)

Training

We are committed to high quality, ongoing professional development on emotional wellbeing and mental health. All staff will receive regular training linked to recognising and responding to mental health issues. Specific issues will be covered through specialist training as appropriate.

Policy Development and Review

This policy will be reviewed in consultation with staff, learners, families, governors / trustees and

professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing. Key stakeholders involved at the time in the college's work in this area will review it.