



Student Mental Health Strategy 2018-2020

MISSION:

Our mission is to work together as a whole organisation to promote students' wellbeing, to ensure that students who experience mental ill-health whilst at Askham Bryan College are well supported and to minimise the adverse effects of mental ill-health on their lives. The Strategy covers the full spectrum of prevention, early identification, support, focused intervention and referral to health professionals.

AIMS:

- Establish a co-ordinated, “whole College ” approach, engaging all sections of the college community to advance the student mental health agenda and ensure that student mental health is considered when planning and developing wider College policy
- Create a College environment that is conducive to mental wellbeing, which minimises the risk factors for mental ill-health and suicide and reduces the stigma associated with mental illness
- Promote positive mental health and wellbeing
- Improve the mental and emotional wellbeing support service for all students who attend Askham Bryan College
- Provide staff with specific development around mental health and young people and how they can best support students facing mental health and/or emotional difficulties
- Ensure all students, who wish to, are offered short term interventions, strategies and support, including counselling where appropriate and that our service provision meets the needs of our students
- Provide students with beneficial self-help material/resources and signpost contact services to enable students to feel better equipped to manage their symptoms independently
- Introduce group work, where possible and appropriate
- Implement an initial needs assessment so that students are provided with the appropriate and correct support going forward

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STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY

- Work in partnership with professional agencies and organisations to ensure accurate records are in place, data shared where appropriate and continuity of support is encouraged during and post education
- Safeguard staff and students
- Work in line with local Mental Health pathways
- We will use the Association of Colleges Wellbeing and Mental Health - Self Assessment Tool for Colleges in order to continually review our provision. (<https://www.aoc.co.uk/news/aoc-mental-health-resource-package>).

The framework is designed to assess College provision against 9 key areas:

- Leadership and management
 - Ethos and environment
 - Curriculum
 - Student Voice
 - Staff development and support
 - Targeted support
 - Parents and carers
 - External partnerships
 - Auditing and monitoring
- We will endeavour to make use of self-assessment, data, research evidence and feedback from staff and students to evaluate and improve our provision.
 - We will also use the Universities UK's StepChange framework in order to prepare to meet the standards expected within the University Mental Health Charter led by the mental health charity Student Minds. The Charter will go live in the academic year 2019/20 and will encourage universities to demonstrate a level of excellence in supporting students' mental health. The Framework will enable us to further assess the College's approach to mental health and wellbeing.
<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/stepchange/Pages/framework.aspx>

The Framework is designed to assess provision and identify areas for development against 8 key areas:

- Leadership
- Data
- Staff

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STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY

- Prevention
 - Early intervention
 - Support
 - Transitions
 - Partnership
- We will form a cross-college Mental Health Working Group to undertake the assessment of our current provision, using the two available frameworks referred to above. The frameworks will be cross-referenced to identify where the criteria are replicated.

DEVELOPMENTS FOR 2018-2019

A review undertaken during 2017-2018, since the implementation of the Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator roles has identified the following developments, to be implemented during 2018-2019.

1. Effective utilisation of counsellor time

- Any student presenting with Mental Health concerns should be referred to the Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators.
- All referrals for counselling to be channelled through the Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators
- Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to conduct the initial needs assessment with the student to determine whether counselling is the most appropriate support for them.
- If the student is appropriate for counselling, the Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators will place them on the waiting list. If it is deemed appropriate and necessary and the student wishes to, then low level intervention and support will be provided by the Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators in the interim.
- If student is not appropriate for counselling; Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to determine whether student wellbeing support is appropriate or a referral to an external agency is necessary.

2. Strategies to reduce waiting time for counsellors

- The Counsellors and Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to moderate if students do not attend scheduled appointments; if students miss 2 sessions or more with no explanation then student is automatically removed from their time slot and asked if they would like to be kept on the waiting list or no longer wish to receive support (this information is provided to students when they attend their first counselling appointment).

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- Counsellors stress at the beginning of counselling sessions that students should notify if they are to be absent or whether they no longer wish to receive support.
- When a counselling appointment becomes available, Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to contact the next student on the waiting list; making it clear that if they do not contact back they will miss out on this slot and be removed from the waiting list.
- Counsellors to operate an initial 6x sessions. If counsellors deem it inappropriate to complete after the 6 sessions then this is to be reviewed between counsellors/Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators/Student Services Manager.

3. Plans for staff development

- Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to offer staff development and awareness training sessions to improve knowledge and equip staff members to enable them to better support their students facing mental health difficulties.
- Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to develop training/awareness sessions/packages on; Self harm, General mental health support for young people, Building resilience and Anxiety.
- Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to offer twilight sessions and sessions within staff development weeks.
- Mental Health Working group to be established that will investigate sources of online training for multiple staff, including a Level 2 qualification.

4. Introduce group work for students

- Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to implement initial group work around exam times surrounding stress and anxiety coping trips.
- With help of counsellor introduce focussed group initially around; anxiety and stress.
- Assess uptake and whether this is deemed success to introduce more sessions in new academic term.
- Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to arrange where possible with counsellor to provide 1 hour group work initially to a small select – specifically around anxiety; focussing on exam stress and coping techniques.
- In York, Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to manage the Mental Health Champion programme within college alongside City of York Council to select students. The model, if successful, will be rolled out at other centres.

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5. Development of self help resources

- Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators have at their disposal a number of self help resources to work through with students initially; with a view that students can use these independently.
- Coping techniques/strategies – Self harm, low mood, anxiety, anger – located in Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators room.
- Information regarding mental health difficulties in Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators room.
- Signposting services and contact details – In Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator’s room – Easily located for students so they don’t have to ask for these but also Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators has additional information.
- Leaflets/information sheets provided to students as and when required
 - **Self Help Tools include: -**
 - Samaritans Information and Contact Numbers
 - Kooth – online App
 - Qwell – online App
 - Mind Information booklets
 - Local Voluntary organisation Literature
 - MindWell – popular website for self-help resources/strategies for a number of mental health difficulties

6. Development of an initial assessment/screening tool

- An Assessment/screening tool enabling assessment of what support would be beneficial for the student to be designed to be completed when the Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators initially meets with a student.
- The tool will be used to determine whether regular meetings with Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators are appropriate, or referral to the in house counselling service or external agencies and whether any safeguarding concerns are raised.
- Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to use initial assessment screening tool to help the student explain the symptoms they are feeling, if any mental health conditions have previously been diagnosed and to determine the next appropriate steps regarding what support would be beneficial.
- Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to, as part of the assessment, to ask the student to rate how their symptoms are affecting their daily life on a scale of 1-10 and evaluate this when support comes to a mutually agreed end.
- Initial screening assessment to ask questions relating to anxiety, depression, self-harm, substance misuse, self-harm and suicidal feelings; this tool is used purely to determine the best possible support whilst the student is studying at

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Askham Bryan College; if at any point a GP referral is necessary Student Wellbeing Co-ordinators to support with these next steps as necessary.

- Student Wellbeing Co-ordinator at York to work alongside the HE Mental Wellbeing Co-ordinator to provide a seamless service for students in need of support.

7. **Development of support programmes for staff and students**

- Working with external partners to introduce support schemes run for and by students:
 - **Mental Health Champions Programme** run in conjunction with City of York Council. The purpose of the MHC project is to have an impact on college culture and raise awareness of mental health and therefore our young people mental health champions will be able to bid into a central innovation fund to fund their campaign.
 - The MHC will aim to recruit 12 champions who will undertake 2 ½ days' worth of training to help them to gain skills to be a practical role model for empowering young people to encourage positive mental health and peer support.
 - After their training the champions will campaign to raise awareness of positive mental health throughout college and act as peer supporters to their peers who require someone to talk to.
 - **Studentminds.org.uk 'Look after your mate' Programme** supported by Higher York. 4 members of staff to undertake the initial training and be responsible for roll-out of the programme

8. **Working with external agencies and partner organisations, including:**

- Local authorities
- NHS
- Higher York
- Mental Health First Aid England
- Healthwatch York

9. **Development of a Suicide Prevention Strategy as an integral part of the Mental Health Strategy.**

This will be produced for approval by SMT by October 31st 2018.

10. **Review of current provision to identify any further actions/improvements required, utilising the AoC and Universities' UK frameworks.**

This review will be undertaken during 2018-2019 and an implementation plan developed.

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