

DE LA SALLE COLLEGE



MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING POLICY (STUDENTS)

“DO NOT BE ANXIOUS ABOUT ANYTHING, BUT IN EVERYTHING BY PRAYER AND SUPPLICATION WITH THANKSGIVING LET YOUR REQUESTS BE MADE KNOWN TO GOD. AND THE PEACE OF GOD, WHICH SUPASSES ALL UNDERSTANDING, WILL GUARD YOUR MINDS IN CHRIST JESUS.”

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

Compiled by: The Head of College	Last Reviewed: September 2024
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Mental health is a state of well-being 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. (World Health Organization)

This policy should be read in conjunction with the Bereavement Policy, Child Protection Policy, Self-Harm Policy, Social Moral Spiritual and Cultural Policy, PSHE policy, Counter Bullying policy and Articles 2.3.12.13.14.19 and 39 of the UNCRC.

At De La Salle, we are committed to support mental health and wellbeing of our students and staff. Our culture is supportive, caring and respectful, and our school ethos holds values that enhance and empower individuals within our community. We encourage students to be open and aim to ensure each individual has a voice that is heard. At De La Salle, we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that each of us may need help to cope with them sometimes. We understand that anyone and everyone may need additional emotional support. Therefore, positive mental health is held high in regard across the College, and we all have a role to play.

Policy Scope

The aim of this policy is to demonstrate our commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of our staff and students.

Objectives we uphold

- Help children to understand their emotions and experiences better
- Ensure our students feel comfortable sharing any concerns and worries
- Help children to form and maintain relationships
- Encourage children to be confident and help promote their self esteem
- Help children to develop resilience and ways of coping with setbacks
- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all students and staff
- Celebrate both academic and non-academic achievements so they feel valued and respected
- Promote the Lasallian values and encourage a sense of belonging and community
- Provide opportunities to develop a sense of worth and the ability reflect
- Promote our students' voices and provide them with the opportunity to participate in decision making
- Adopt a whole school approach to mental health and providing support to students who need it
- Raise awareness amongst staff and students about mental health issues and the signs and symptoms
- Enable staff to respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students
- Supporting staff who are struggling with their mental health

Key Staff Members

All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students and each other. However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process. These are:

Head of College: Jason Turner

College Safeguarding and Wellbeing Lead: David Sharrock

Primary school: Gary Coutanche

Secondary school: Adam Cook

Wellbeing Co-Ordinators:

Primary school: Katie Sweeney

Secondary school: Hannah Pickstock

SENCO: Nina Jones

School Counsellor: Catherine Halliwell

ELSA: Deacon Nick LeCornu, Peter Le Gal

Chaplaincy: Deacon Nick LeCornu

Senior Head of House: Carin Washington (Stanley)

Head of House: Dave McCormack (Rhodes), Blake Campbell (Peary), Paul Rogers (Scott)

6th Form: Dan Washington

School Office: Debbie McGuigan, Elle Le Moucheux

Any member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to Primary Headteacher or Heads of House (Secondary) in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm, child protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Safeguard Lead and a welfare concern form is to be completed. If the student presents a medical emergency, then the normal procedures for medical emergencies should be followed, including alerting the first aid staff and contacting the emergency services if necessary.

Where a referral to CAMHS is appropriate, this will be led and managed by the designated safeguard leads and/or SENCO.

Teaching about Mental Health

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our students to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our PSHE Curriculum. The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching, but there will always be an emphasis on enabling students to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

We will follow the Curriculum guidelines to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms. We will regularly review our PSHE curriculum and lesson content to ensure that they're meeting the

aims outlined in this policy. We'll also implement this into our curriculum at all stages to provide students with strategies to help keep themselves mentally well.

Support at school and in the local community

We have a wide range of support available in school for the Wellbeing of all students, and specifically any students struggling as listed below:

PRIMARY SCHOOL

Within the Primary School, boys are taught most of the time by a single class teacher. This enables a close and supportive relationship to be built between the class teacher and the child, and the class teacher and the child's carers.

There are many opportunities, both formal (e.g., Parent Consultations) and informal (e.g., Decorations Day), for carers and staff to build a relationship.

For the students, having a single class teacher for most of every day and as a point of contact means that they develop a close relationship quickly. The teacher leads PSHE sessions, the character and moods of the students are well known to the teacher so any changes are quickly noted, and the students are familiar with and comfortable talking to the class teacher if they have any worries.

At the end of every year, class teachers meet to pass on academic, social and wellbeing notes to the receiving teacher, so that knowledge of particular students is never lost.

Welfare concerns are logged using Welfare forms and passed to the Headteacher, and there is an effective team of Teaching Assistants and pastoral staff who can provide general wellbeing support, as well as ELSA provision and other complementary therapies, such as "Drawing and Talking" therapy.

More significant wellbeing concerns are raised to the Headteacher, Designated Safeguarding Lead and/or ENCO, as appropriate. Contact with the family and then further action, such as referral to the Children and Families Hub, may then be made.

Pastoral Staff

The House system was introduced into the pastoral system to create a vertical community for students to support each other, engage in friendly competition, and band together to make positive contributions within their house, school, and local community.

The pastoral system is structured into four Houses, each with a Head of House attached. These include, Mr Campbell as Head of Peary House, Mr McCormack as Head of Rhodes House, Mr Rodgers as Head of Scott House and Mrs Washington, who is also the House System Co-ordinator, as Head of Stanley House.

Upon joining De La Salle College, each student is allocated to one of the four Houses, becoming a member 'for life' under the guidance of the other students and teachers within their House. Family members will follow each other into the same House, a tradition which we hope will encourage camaraderie, loyalty, and commitment. All teaching staff are also allocated to a house and each house is led by their respective Head of House (staff member), House Captains (current Year 10 students) and house representatives (a student from each year group).

The House system also supports the pastoral care of the boys by ensuring that each of them identifies with a smaller, “vertical” community, made up of students in every Year group from Year 7 to Year 13, within the wider school community. Combined with this pastoral care are additional support mechanisms within the school to help promote positive well-being for students and in accordance with our Rights Respecting School responsibilities. The pastoral team have access to the Emotional Literacy Support Assistants, the School Based Counsellor and the school Chaplaincy Team, as well as excellent links to various external agencies.

The structure of the House system means that each student has a chance to shine, to discover their own talents and to make a genuine contribution to their school community. House assemblies, events and celebrations allow students to build positive relationships vertically and horizontally across the school community. Houses also provide opportunities for leadership, responsibility, coaching and mentoring for all students.

There are inter-House competitions in numerous academic, sports and cultural activities including music, poetry, maths, science, general knowledge, drama, art, chess and debating. The aims of these wide and varied activities are to give each student the chance to contribute to their House and feel a sense of belonging and worth.

Sixth Form

Sixth Form is overseen by Dan Washington, supported by Marc Le Moignan. Each year group has two house groups which are supported with a form tutor. The form tutor is the first point of contact for the pupils should they have an issue. If their concern/issue is more serious or needs to be escalated, it would then be moved forward to the Head of Sixth Form.

In regards to support on mental health, we cover various areas via our PSHE lessons in Year 12. Topics covered including mental health are:

- Drugs
- Alcohol
- Mental Health - Resilience
- Sexual Consent
- Social media
- Eating disorders (Bulimia Nervosa)
- Time Management & Handling Stress

There is a Sixth Form drop in with Catherine Halliwell. We also have a mentoring system for students who are struggling academically or pastorally where they meet with their mentor once a week.

SENCO

The role of the SENCO is to support boys with additional needs. One of the areas of need is Social Emotional and Mental Health. If a student is identified as having a SEMH need, in the first instance they will be offered support from the ELSA and/or School Based Counsellor, as detailed above. If further support is necessary, the SENCO can refer students to a range of external agencies, as appropriate. This includes agencies such as:

- Social Emotional Mental Health Team

- Primary Mental Health Team
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Autism and Social Communication Team
- Children and Families Hub
- Educational Psychologist

In all cases there will be close liaison between the student, the parents, the school and the external agency/s to ensure the students' needs are being met.

ELSA

ELSAs are Emotional Literacy Support Assistants, trained by educational psychologists to support the emotional development of children and young people in school. ELSAs have regular professional supervision from educational psychologists. ELSAs help children and young people learn to understand their emotions and respect the feelings of those around them. They provide the time and space for pupils to think about their personal circumstances and how they manage them.

Most ELSA programmes will last for 6 to 12 weeks, helping the pupil to learn some specific new skills or coping strategies. Clear programme aims are set and each session has an objective – something the ELSA wants to help the pupil understand or achieve.

The De La Salle College ELSA programme aims to support students to improve their sense of wellbeing and resilience. It is an opportunity to consider ideas and strategies that build confidence and self-esteem. Specific areas of focus include anger management and social skills. The students that attend ELSA find it a positive and proactive slot that allows them to think about the things that are important to them. It also provides an opportunity for students to become more at ease in how to identify and voice thoughts and emotions.

The sessions are designed around worksheets, games and activities that promote discussion and learning in an informal and positive environment on a one-to-one basis. Sessions also include mindfulness practices and calming techniques.

The ELSA programme is accessed through a referral system, usually instigated by Heads of House, Primary Headteacher, or the SENCO.

The referring adult should complete a referral form and hand this to the ELSA, who will compile a bespoke programme to meet each individual student's needs. The referring adult should also discuss the offer of ELSA with the student and their parents/guardians before the ELSA makes a formal written invitation to parents/guardians outlining dates and arrangements.

Benefits to students of attending ELSA

- Pupils feel supported by having “special time” and being listened to
- Pupils develop greater self-awareness
- Pupils learn to talk about difficulties
- Pupils develop coping strategies
- Pupils interact more successfully with other
- Pupils feel better about themselves
- Pupils build more positive relationships

The DLS ELSA also runs a board games club in the Learning Support Centre at lunchtimes. This is open to all students and acts as a drop-in contact opportunity for those students needing ongoing support and encouragement. It also provides isolated or anxious students a safe, defined, supervised space to interact with their peers.

School Counsellor Service

The school counsellor is a professional counsellor qualified to Foundation Degree level in Counselling. The counsellor is also a member of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy, the National Counselling Society and a Student Member of the British Psychological Society. The counsellor undergoes minimum annual hours of Continued Professional Development and monthly clinical supervision ensuring best practice, ethical conduct and the discussion of any new research that may affect practice.

Ethical practice includes following the BACP guidelines for working with young people and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Any ethical dilemmas the counsellor will take to the BACP and clinical supervision.

Students can access this service by asking the counsellor directly for an appointment or asking another staff member to contact the counsellor on their behalf. The service provides a one-to-one, confidential, empathic, non-judgmental space where the student can discuss what he needs to. This can be any topic and the counsellor will guide the student through the process. Collaboratively, the student and counsellor will decide how to proceed and how long the therapy will take. In school, the student will come out of class and go to the counsellors' room. A message will show on the boys' attendance record that the student has a meeting, thereby providing discretion. The counsellor will endeavour to see the student at varied times so that he is not missing too much of a certain subject, potentially causing him further anxiety.

This service aims to help boys gain insight and understanding into their mental processes and to help them learn to develop healthy coping mechanisms and strategies. If they are able to understand the process, then the power of insight will help relieve further anxieties. This is a safe, confidential space where they can explore the most personal of thoughts and emotions.

If boys are over 16, they can access the service without parental consent. If they are under 16, they are advised to ask parental consent. If they wish to see the counsellor without parental consent, then they must provide the counsellor with an explanation letter and the counsellor will decide based upon each student if she needs parental consent or not to work with him. This follows Gillick Competence guidelines.

The counsellor can also work with small groups if there a number of students with the same issue and if they consent to meeting in this way. A shared understanding can prove to give students deeper insight into their own processes. The group agree to maintain confidentiality of others in the group and will be respectful of others' situations and emotional processes.

If required, the counsellor will work with other agencies to provide a tailored support to the young person. This strategy can provide extremely valuable to the young person; however, it would not be done without his consent. There are times when this is necessary, and the counsellor will advise the Safeguarding Lead and they will work collaboratively to support the young person and the agencies involved, i.e., Police, Social work, Early Help, Educational Psychologists, educational welfare officer, families hub and so forth.

Our counsellor is also qualified in Animal Assisted Therapy and brings a therapy dog into school. This has greatly raised the awareness of the students of having a school counsellor, also encouraging the students to talk to the counsellor every time they see her, whether they have a mental health concern or not, thereby increasing their self-worth and self-esteem.

Our counsellor can also give targeted therapeutic support by using a variety of therapeutic techniques, such as humanistic therapy, cognitive behaviour therapy, psychodynamic therapy, play therapy, music therapy, Animal Assistance Therapy, narrative therapy, dialectical behaviour therapy. She will also use techniques from the Decider skills programme and other helpful interventions tailored to the individuals' needs.

Chaplaincy

The Chaplaincy department is based in the College Chapel. Lunch time clubs are offered for year groups 7-10. They are a time when lunch can be had in an informal atmosphere, where discussion can be had around a topic of the day. Formation for first holy communion and confirmation is also offered to those who wish to be put forward for the sacraments of the Church. The Chapel is open to all Secondary boys throughout the day as a place of peace and quiet where students can take time out. The Chaplaincy team produce weekly videos for parents and students to encourage contemplation of life and faith, as well as a weekly contribution to the Parent Briefing. The College Chaplain is supported by a Student Faith Mentor, as well as resources from the wider Lasallian network.

The College Chaplain works in the Primary School to support the faith development of the boys in RE lessons and in more general areas of learning. The College Chaplain runs a daily Early Morning Club and is on playground duty every day. He also attends weekly Primary School assemblies. This ensures the Chaplain is a familiar person to all members of the school community.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community. We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas such as the library, toilet doors and noticeboards and will regularly highlight sources of support to students within relevant parts of the curriculum.

Whenever we highlight sources of support, we will increase the chance of student help-seeking by ensuring students understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why to access it
- What is likely to happen next

Where relevant, information and signposting are also provided to parents through either the Parent Briefing (for general information) or specific contact (if information is relevant to only a small number of families with particular known needs).

Warning Signs

School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should communicate their concerns appropriately.

Possible warning signs include:

- Evident changes in behaviour
- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
- Changes in eating/sleeping habits
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Reduced concentration
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking, joking or researching about self-harm or suicide
- Abusing drugs or alcohol
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Changes in clothing, e.g., long sleeves in warm weather
- Secretive behaviour
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
- An increase in lateness to or absence from school
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- Spending more time at the bathroom
- Discontinued hobbies or interests
- Failure to take care of personal appearance
- Seemingly overly cheerful after a bout of depression

Managing disclosures

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff, so all staff need to know how to respond appropriately to a disclosure.

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about their own mental health or that of a friend to a member of staff, the member of staff's response should always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental.

Staff should listen, rather than advise, and our first thoughts should be of the student's emotional and physical safety rather than of exploring 'Why?'.

All disclosures should be recorded in writing and held on the student's confidential file. This written record should include:

- Date
- The name of the member of staff to whom the disclosure was made
- Recorded facts from the conversation
- Agreed next steps

This information should be shared with the Primary Headteacher or the Secondary DSL as appropriate, who will store the record appropriately and offer support and advice about next steps.

Confidentiality

We should be honest with regards to the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for us to pass our concerns about a student on, then we should discuss with the student:

- Who we are going to talk to
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them

We should never share information about a student without first telling them.

Ideally, we would receive their consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and/or a parent, e.g. where a young person up to the age of 16 is at risk. It is always advisable to share disclosures with a colleague, usually the Head of House staff, as this helps to safeguard our own emotional wellbeing as we are no longer solely responsible for the student, it ensures continuity of care in our absence and it provides an extra source of ideas and support.

We should explain this to the student and discuss with them who it would be most appropriate and helpful to share this information with. Parents should be informed and students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If a child gives us reason to believe that there may be underlying child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the Child Protection Officer, Dave Sharrock or Adam Cook, must be informed immediately.

Working with Parents

Parents are often very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's emotional and mental health.

In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues through the Parent Briefing
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to get about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child
- Make our Mental Health Policy easily accessible to parents on our website
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children through our regular information evenings
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home.

Where it is deemed appropriate to inform parents about an issue or concern, we need to be sensitive in our approach. Before disclosing to parents, we should consider the following questions (on a case-by-case basis):

- Can the meeting happen face-to-face? This is preferable.
- Where should the meeting happen?

- Who should be present? Consider parents, the student, other members of staff.
- What are the aims of the meeting?

Working with other agencies and Partners

As part of our whole school approach, we will also work with other agencies to support our students' emotional health and wellbeing. This might include liaising with:

- Our school counsellor
- Family support workers
- Social workers
- Behavioural support workers
- CAMHS
- Supporting peers
- KOOTH Mental Health and Wellbeing Services
- Healing Waves Charity
- Autism Jersey
- YES Project
- YOU Matter
- Mind Jersey
- LGBTQ+ Jersey

We understand that when a student is suffering from mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their peers. In response to this, we will consider on a case-by-case basis supporting any peers that may need additional support. We will provide support in a one-to-one or a group setting. These sessions will be guided by the student, they will discuss how peers can help, how peers can support themselves and healthy ways of coping with any emotions they might be feeling.

Training

Many staff will receive regular training in child mental health so that they can recognise and respond to mental health issues. This will form part of their regular Safeguarding training and is a requirement to keep children safe. Training records will be held in staff files.

We will consider additional training opportunities for staff, and we will support any additional CPD throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with pupils.

Policy review

This policy will be reviewed every year so that it remains up to date, useful and relevant. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local and UK policy changes.