

AoC Mental Health Charter

Commitment of support

On behalf of City of Wolverhampton College,

Malcolm Cowgill has made a

commitment of support to adopt the AoC

Mental Health Charter framework,

championing a whole-college approach to

student and staff mental health and

wellbeing.



Theme one: leadership and ethos

Through authentic leadership, model and champion an inclusive culture that meets the needs of the college community. Embed a consistent and coordinated whole-college approach to mental health through effective governance and leadership that ensures wellbeing permeates all aspects of college life.

The Department for Education (DfE)'s whole-college approach to mental health and wellbeing principles are:

Leadership and management: senior leaders promote efforts to support staff and students' emotional health and wellbeing, overseeing the acceptance and embedding of a whole-college approach, and governors champion college-wide effective practice.

Ethos and environment: promote respect and value diversity, demonstrated within the physical, social, and emotional environment of the college.

Good practice principles

1. There is visible leadership and a clear commitment to mental health and wellbeing across the whole organisation.
2. Senior leaders champion an inclusive culture that places compassion and kindness at its heart. Leaders model self-care and demonstrate the value and importance of positive wellbeing.
3. Whole-college approaches to mental health inform the organisational vision, mission and values, and are embedded in policies, practice and culture.
4. The college prioritises cohesion and inclusivity of services across all provision, seeking appropriate collaboration across the college community and relevant external stakeholders, to support a whole-college approach to mental health services and support.
5. Leaders take steps to create physically and psychologically safe spaces within the college (on campus and online) and individuals feel able and are supported to disclose when they are experiencing poor mental health.
6. Leaders work to prevent and address marginalisation, discrimination and harassment of individual students, staff and groups, nurturing a culture of belonging, inclusion and safety.



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Charter standards

C	There is a member of the college senior team with oversight of mental health and wellbeing
C	There is an active senior mental health lead within the organisation
C	The college has published its mental health and wellbeing strategy
C	An annual mental health report is delivered to corporation
E	There is an established mental health and wellbeing group to monitor and measure effectiveness and impact of strategy

Theme two: support for students

Foster a physically and psychologically safe and welcoming environment that promotes wellbeing, proactively supporting students' mental health throughout their learning journey.

The DfE's whole-college approach to mental health and wellbeing principles are:

Targeted support: provide support and appropriate referral through college systems and practice, embedding processes to identify students at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health.

Curriculum, teaching and learning: promote resilience and support social and emotional learning through dedicated curriculum, acknowledging key stages in the academic year and addressing topical and local issues, enabling students to reflect on their mental health and wellbeing needs.

The principles below apply to a whole-college strategy for mental health and wellbeing, reflecting interactions with students at the point of prevention, intervention and postvention. Practice may vary to meet the needs of the college and community.

Good practice principles

1. Measures to support transition are in place throughout the learning journey.
2. The college invests time and resource into the meaningful promotion of mental health and wellbeing throughout the academic year.
3. Support services are accessible, sustainable and inclusive, responding to current and future need, including that of the local context.
4. The college provides additional or specific interventions for students who need them, removing barriers and tackling stigma to ensure services are inclusive and accessible.
5. The college implement effective mechanisms to identify students in need of intervention to provide early support and reduce and prevent crisis intervention.
6. Thoughtful curricula are designed to impact positively on the mental health and wellbeing of all students across all courses. Embedding mental health and wellbeing into curriculum promotes awareness of support available and develops students' knowledge and strategies for self-care.



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7. Parents and carers are provided with opportunities and resources to develop their knowledge of mental health and wellbeing, to better support their young people.
8. The college proactively takes steps to build relationships with local NHS, social care and third sector agencies, to safeguard the college community through improved access to mental health and wellbeing support services.

Charter standards

C	There is dedicated internal resource to support students' mental health and wellbeing
C	There is clear evidence that mental health and wellbeing is embedded within the college's curriculum
C	Safeguarding to be effective at most recent Ofsted inspection
E	A model of effective support has been designed, demonstrating a triage support system that responds to students' needs and emerging themes and issues
E	Extra-curricular and enrichment activities are delivered with the objective of supporting all students to take proactive steps to be both physically and mentally healthy, such as promoting the benefits of the 'NHS Five Ways to Wellbeing' or other models



Theme three: workplace wellbeing

Nurture a culture that supports and invests in people and their wellbeing and create an exceptional working environment where colleagues feel valued, supported and can thrive.

The DfE's whole-college approach to mental health and wellbeing principles are:

Staff development, health and wellbeing: commitment to assess staff mental health, addressing identified needs and supporting staff to reflect on and take actions to enhance wellbeing, promoting a healthy work-life balance.

Good practice principles

1. The college develops a culture and environment that supports positive staff wellbeing and a welcoming workplace.
2. The college equips managers with the knowledge, skills and confidence to support good wellbeing within their teams and respond appropriately when staff experience poor mental health.
3. Staff feel able to discuss their own mental health and wellbeing and have access to effective, accessible support and proactive interventions to help them improve their own mental health and wellbeing.
4. The college promotes a workplace environment and management practices that support formal and informal reflection, consultation and development for staff who may encounter student mental illness.
5. The college strives to understand the lived experience of staff, implementing mechanisms to gather intelligence to inform college mental health strategies and improve support services.
6. Staff are confident in supporting students' mental health concerns, working within appropriate and supportive boundaries.
7. Staff receive mental health training that is context and role specific and are supported to develop, individually and collectively, the confidence and ability to promote positive mental health, responding appropriately and signposting to relevant agencies.
8. Specialist staff who support individuals with their mental health and wellbeing engage in regular, ongoing clinical development and support.



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C	College people plans or staff development plans includes mental health and wellbeing training relevant to their role
C	The college has invested in training relevant staff to achieve the Mental Health First Aid certification
C	The college has invested in an external support programme for staff
C	Wellbeing is an integral part of all HR processes – recruitment and selection, induction, professional development reviews, 1:1s and professional development
E	The college holds an external accreditation that recognises its approach to staff, for example, investors in people
E	The college shows a proactive commitment to staff wellbeing by signing a workplace pledge, for example, menopause workplace pledge



Theme four: evidence and impact

Deliver and develop services, policies and strategy which are responsive to research and evidence of lived-experience and community need. Provide transparent accountability through consistent and effective mechanisms, regular evaluation and reporting, and have a partnership approach to college activity.

The DfE's whole-college approach to mental health and wellbeing principles are:

Identifying needs and monitoring impact: identification of student needs, recording and monitoring impact of support put in place, and data and evidence driven engagement with local authorities and external mental health services to influence local decision-making.

Student voice: enabling student voice, individually and collectively, to influence decisions and to develop connectedness, independence and skills to make healthy choices.

Working with parents and carers: mental health and wellbeing services are clearly communicated to parents and carers; where additional needs are identified, support parents and carers of wider support available in local area.

Good practice principles

1. The college prioritises both quantitative and qualitative metrics on measuring the impact of its work regarding student mental health and wellbeing, and undertakes a rigorous and systematic evaluation of services and interventions.
2. The college captures student voice specifically on their mental health and wellbeing and uses this to inform strategy and future development of support services.
3. The college works in partnership with the students' union and wider college community to create a culture that supports positive wellbeing.
4. The college has effective mechanisms in place to listen and respond to views of staff.
5. Formal reporting to the governing body is consistent.
6. The college supports research into mental health and wellbeing, inspiring the development of innovative practice that informs decision making and continuous improvement.



7. All opportunities to engage and communicate with parents and carers are taken, fostering a collaborative approach to positive mental health and wellbeing support.
8. The college uses its role as a community educator to demystify mental health concerns, championing positive mental health and wellbeing among staff, students, parents and carers.

Charter standards

C	The college has completed an annual self-assessment, using the Charlie Waller CMET Tool
C	The college has published an impact statement and annual report on mental health and wellbeing
E	The college has an established student and staff mental health and wellbeing group
E	The students' union has established the role of a mental health and wellbeing officer or similar