



## Mental Health Policy (for Students)

### Mission Statement

St John Rigby College is a Catholic College dedicated to the education and development of the whole person and supporting all students to realise their full potential. In becoming an outstanding learning organisation SJR will have a strong sense of purpose and a commitment to shared values within a Christian community. We will provide a unique and challenging environment where every individual is valued, talents are recognised and nurtured, achievements are celebrated and dedication is rewarded. To achieve this as a community we will:

- Welcome all students who are happy to be educated within a Christian environment
- Value the uniqueness and dignity of each individual
- Provide the highest standards of teaching and learning
- All show a commitment to our work and the Christian values of the College
- Provide equality of opportunity, with mutual respect and positive encouragement
- Build and further develop local, national and international partnerships

Core values in daily life at St John Rigby College are expressed as:

- Genuine concern for others
- Support for and challenge of one another
- High standards and expectations
- Consistency and perseverance
- Recognition of talents, progress and achievements

### Purpose

The purpose of this document is to ensure that St John Rigby College provides a coherent holistic approach to supporting the mental health of our students.

The aims of the College, in respect of student mental health, are to:

- Promote positive mental health among the whole student population.
- Work in partnership with parents/carers and external agencies to help students overcome mental health difficulties.
- Raise awareness of mental health issues and provision and reduce stigma so that students in difficulty are encouraged to seek help and staff are confident in their response.
- Alert students and staff to early warning signs of mental ill health
- Provide consistent and effective support to students experiencing mental health difficulties, with a co-ordinated approach across College's, academic departments and central student support services and timely referral to external agencies.

The policy shows that the College takes mental health seriously and students should be assured that they will be supported. The College recognises that student wellbeing is essential for the delivery of successful teaching and learning. It recognises that promoting a culture where individuals take responsibility for their health but are supported by college initiatives is an important part of both good employment practice and ensuring positive academic outcomes for students.

## Scope

This policy and its associated procedures apply to all students. Staff will endeavour to provide appropriate support to students who are struggling with their mental health through making reasonable adjustments, promote resilience and help them to make referrals to relevant support available in college and outside agencies by working with parents/carers as appropriate.

Students will be informed about this policy through assemblies, tutorials and the College Intranet. Staff will be informed via the Staff Handbook.

## Policy Statement

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)

At St John Rigby College, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our student and staff body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole college approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three students will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly, and indirectly by mental ill health.

## Warning Signs of Mental Health Difficulties

Possible warning signs include:

- 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
- Lowering of academic achievement
- Talking or joking 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
- Lateness to or absence from college
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism
- Difficult personal circumstances, bereavement or being a young carer

\*Please note the above is not an exhaustive list and an individual can suffer one or more of the above at any given time.

## Student Support

The College has the following dedicated pastoral team who will support students with Mental Health difficulties;

- **Paula Nolan** Vice Principal for Students/DSL/ Mental Health Lead
- **Rosie McKelvey** Assistant Principal for Student Progression/Careers Lead/ Deputy DSL
- Safeguarding Team – Senior Tutors
- Progress Tutors – Each student is allocated a Progress Tutor who monitors wellbeing as well academic achievement

- **Gillian Yorke** – The College counsellor runs an appointment based system between 10.00am and 2.00pm every day during term time. Students can be referred by staff or students can self-refer. This service is promoted through assemblies, tutorial and posters.
- **Martin Malone** the College Chaplain has an open-door policy for students
- The College has a team of First Aiders
- Student Council Representative has responsibility for Mental Health and Wellbeing
- The College has a designated Mental Health Governor
- By the end of this academic year a group of staff will have obtained their Mental Health First Aid qualification

Any student or member of staff who is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of a student should speak to the Mental Health Lead or one of the Mental Health First Aiders in the first instance. If there is a fear that the student is in danger of immediate harm then the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection procedures should be followed with an immediate referral to the Designated Safeguarding Lead, Deputy DLS or the Principal. 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 a member of the College's Safeguarding team.

### **Individual Care Plans**

If a student is causing concern or has received a diagnosis pertaining to their mental health then an individual care plan will be drawn up involving the student, the parents/carers and relevant health professionals. This can include:

- Details of a student's condition
- Special requirements and precautions
- Medication and any side effects
- What to do, and who to contact in an emergency
- The support the College can give

### **Teaching and Learning 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 Tutorial and Values for Living programmes. The College will work with external agencies and guest speakers to educate students on how to take responsibility for their own mental health and promote resilience. This will also be done through college calendarised events and groups such as;

- Mental Health and Wellbeing week for students and staff
- Mental Health speaker for Yr12 parents/carers
- Student and Staff Wellbeing Group meet half termly
- Tea and Talk drop-in for students
- Visiting speakers from a range of mental health and wellbeing organisations

### **Managing Disclosures**

A student may choose to disclose concerns about themselves or a friend to any member of staff. 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 will always be calm, supportive and non-judgemental. Staff will listen, rather than advise and will consider the student's emotional and physical safety. All disclosures will be recorded in line with the College's Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures.

### **Confidentiality**

Staff will be honest with students regarding the issue of confidentiality. If it is necessary for College to pass concerns on about a student then the relevant member of staff will discuss this with the student and ideally inform them:

- Who College are going to talk to
- What College are going to tell them
- Why College needs to tell them

College would normally not share information about a student without first telling them unless there was a Safeguarding concern. Ideally College would receive the student's consent, though there are certain situations when information must always be shared with another member of staff and / or a parent/carer and College would have to follow its Safeguarding and Child Protection policy.

#### **Related Policies**

Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy

Excellence Through inclusion Strategy

## **Appendix A: Further information and sources of support about common mental health issues**

Below, College has sign-posted information and guidance about the issues most commonly seen in students. The links will take you through to the most relevant page of the listed website.

Support on all of these issues can be accessed via [Young Minds](http://www.youngminds.org.uk) ([www.youngminds.org.uk](http://www.youngminds.org.uk)).

### **Self-harm**

Self-harm describes any behaviour where a young person causes harm to themselves in order to cope with thoughts, feelings or experiences they are not able to manage in any other way.

#### **Online support**

[SelfHarm.co.uk](http://www.selfharm.com): [www.selfharm.com](http://www.selfharm.com)

[National Self-Harm Network](http://www.nshn.co.uk): [www.nshn.co.uk](http://www.nshn.co.uk)

### **Depression**

Ups and downs are a normal part of life for all of us, but for someone who is suffering from depression these ups and downs may be more extreme. Feelings of failure, hopelessness, numbness or sadness may invade their day-to-day life over an extended period of weeks or months, and have a significant impact on their behaviour and ability and motivation to engage in day-to-day activities.

#### **Online support**

[Depression Alliance](http://www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression): [www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression](http://www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression)

### **Anxiety, panic attacks and phobias**

Anxiety can take many forms in young people, and it is something that each of us experiences at low levels as part of normal life. When thoughts of anxiety, fear or panic are repeatedly present over several weeks or months and/or they are beginning to impact on a young person's ability to access or enjoy day-to-day life, intervention is needed.

#### **Online support**

[Anxiety UK](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk): [www.anxietyuk.org.uk](http://www.anxietyuk.org.uk)

### **Obsessions and compulsions**

Obsessions describe intrusive thoughts or feelings that enter our minds which are disturbing or upsetting; compulsions are the behaviours we carry out in order to manage those thoughts or feelings. For example, a young person may be constantly worried that their house will burn down if they don't turn off all switches before leaving the house. They may respond to these thoughts by repeatedly checking switches, perhaps returning home several times to do so. Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) can take many forms – it is not just about cleaning and checking.

#### **Online support**

[OCD UK](http://www.ocduk.org/ocd): [www.ocduk.org/ocd](http://www.ocduk.org/ocd)

### **Suicidal feelings**

Young people may experience complicated thoughts and feelings about wanting to end their own lives. Some young people never act on these feelings though they may openly discuss and explore them, while other young people die suddenly from suicide.

#### **Online support**

[Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPHYRUS](http://www.papyrus-uk.org): [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

[On the edge: ChildLine spotlight report on suicide](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/research-and-resources/on-the-edge-childline-spotlight/): [www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/research-and-resources/on-the-edge-childline-spotlight/](http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/research-and-resources/on-the-edge-childline-spotlight/)

### **Eating problems**

Food, weight and shape may be used as a way of coping with, or communicating about, difficult thoughts, feelings and behaviours that a young person experiences day to day. Some young people develop eating disorders such as anorexia

(where food intake is restricted), binge eating disorder and bulimia nervosa (a cycle of bingeing and purging). Other young people, may develop problematic behaviours around food including refusing to eat in certain situations or with certain people. This can be a way of communicating messages the young person does not have the words to convey.

### **Online support**

Beat – the eating disorders charity: [www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders](http://www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders)

### **CAMHS – Children and Mental Health Services – Wigan**

Please see below the NHS specialist service contact details for young people with mental health difficulties in Wigan.

<http://www.nwbh.nhs.uk/camhs-wigan>

Wigan CAMHS  
Helping Hands Centre  
155-157 Manchester Road  
Ince-in-Makerfield  
Wigan  
WN2 2JA

Tel: 01942 775 400

CAMHS – Referral form

[http://www.nwbh.nhs.uk/Documents/GP%20referral%20forms/37293\\_NWBH\\_CAMHS%20referral%20form.pdf](http://www.nwbh.nhs.uk/Documents/GP%20referral%20forms/37293_NWBH_CAMHS%20referral%20form.pdf)