

STUDENT WELLBEING SERVICE POLICY - 2020

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RATIONALE

Brighton Secondary College recognises the importance of student wellbeing in enabling excellent academic outcomes. It is the function of the Student Wellbeing Team to provide the support students need to enable them to learn effectively. This includes individual and group counselling services, the facilitation of wellbeing programs and liaison with external support services. The wellbeing team functions under the Brighton Secondary College's Child Safe Standards policies. Wellbeing teams in the Victorian state school system are not intended or resourced to be primary health care providers for students undergoing serious psychological or mental health challenges.

WELLBEING TEAM MEMBERS

Peter Mangold (Manager Student Wellbeing/Psychologist) BA (Hons), BTheol, DipTeach.

Kylie Mayers (Mental Health Practitioner/Psychologist) MPsych (Ed. & Dev.)

Tania Vairamuttu (Mental Health Practitioner/Social Worker) BSW.

Karen Gibson (Student Welfare Coordinator) BEd.

Jess Giffin (Chaplain) BPsych, GDipPsych.

The wellbeing team works in close partnership with the Leading Teacher (Student Support Programs) to ensure that students with diagnosed learning difficulties are well-supported.

ROLE OF WELLBEING TEAM MEMBERS IN SCHOOLS

- providing direct counselling support and other early intervention services for individual students identified as at-risk and/or experiencing or demonstrating mild to moderate mental health needs
- providing direct counselling support and other early intervention services for small groups (where appropriate)
- coordinating supports (both within and external to the school) for students with critical needs, including proactively working with regions and other health professionals to engage further support as required
- enhancing mental health promotion and prevention activities in the school by contributing to whole school health and wellbeing plans, building the capability of teaching staff and school leadership to manage student health and wellbeing, and helping to embed mental health promotion and prevention programs and strategies in the school.

ACCESSING SUPPORT

Referrals to the Student Wellbeing team may be made directly by parents, teachers and students. Parents are encouraged to contact the Wellbeing Office by phone or email. Teachers make referrals via the relevant Year Level Manager. Students can either email a wellbeing team member or visit the office directly.

CONSENT AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Wellbeing team members are nominated by the Principal to assess whether students can be regarded as 'mature minors'. For a student to be considered a mature minor they must be able to give their informed consent to receiving the mental health service, including being able to understand what the service involves, what it is for, why it is needed and why it applies to them. They must also be aware of the potential consequences of not engaging with the service, and any other options available (if relevant).

If a student is determined to be a mature minor for the purpose of receiving mental health support, the student can self-refer and sign their own consent form.

The information students provide in wellbeing sessions is confidential. Wellbeing team members will always try to seek consent and include students and parents in decisions about the young person's health and safety where they can. They will seek consent to refer information to people who can provide the student with further help including teachers and external agencies. However, if the staff member is concerned about a student's immediate safety or the safety of others, they can disclose this information without consent to ensure that the student and others remain safe.

A mature minor's request that wellbeing team members not communicate with parents or caregivers will be respected by the school in the absence of exceptional circumstances or significant risk.

¹ <https://brightonsc.vic.edu.au/community/policies/>

² [Mental Health Practitioners School Implementation Guide](#)

MANDATORY REPORTING

Wellbeing team members must comply with mandatory reporting obligations under the Children Youth and Families Act 2005 (Vic) with the staff member following the requirements of a 'mandatory reporter'. This means that the staff member must make a report to the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Child Protection if they form a reasonable belief that a student needs protection as a result of physical injury or sexual abuse, and the student's parents/guardians/carers are unable or unwilling to protect the student from that abuse.

RECORD KEEPING

Wellbeing team members keep records regarding appointments, therapeutic goals, treatment plans and outcomes. All wellbeing appointment times are recorded on Compass and regarded as approved absences from class. Access to interview records is restricted and can only be obtained via Freedom of Information request or court subpoenas. In some circumstances, an authorised representative may not be entitled to information about the student. These circumstances include when granting access would not be in the student's best interests or would breach our duty of care to the student, would be contrary to a mature minor student's wishes or would unreasonably impact on the privacy of another person.

³ [Mental Health Practitioners School Implementation Guide](#)

⁴ [Mental Health Practitioners School Implementation Guide](#)

⁵ <https://www.education.vic.gov.au/Pages/schoolsprivacypolicy.aspx>



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