

# "Enabling Students to Accomplish their Academic Goal"

# Policy Statement and Guidelines for Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Support

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1

# Contents

1 Background and Prevalence	4
2 Rationale	4
3 Policy Statement and Purpose of the Policy	5
4 Limitations	7
5 Mental Health and Well-being	7
6 Legal Considerations	8
7 Responding to Student with Mental Health Needs	. 8
7.1 Pre-admission, Entry and Induction	8
7.2 Disclosure of Information	9
7.3 Data Protection	9
7.4 Confidentiality	9
7.5 Managing the Sharing of Sensitive Information	9
8 College Student Support Services1	0
8.1 Mental Health and Well-being Services1	0
8.2 Bellmont College Students' Union1	0
8.3 Student Learning Support Team1	0
8.4 Mental Health & Wellbeing Adviser1	1
8.5 Monitoring Students Identified as Vulnerable or 'At Risk'	1
9 College Staff Involved in Pastoral Support Activity	1
9.1 Academic Support Tutors, Lecturers and Head of Academics	1
10 Roles and Responsibilities of Staff1	2
10.1 Urgent Situations1	2
10.2 Recognising Professional Boundaries and Limitations	2
10.3 Staff Well-being1	3
11 Roles and Responsibilities of Students1	3
12 Absence from College Due to Continued III Health1	3
12.1 Student Admission to Hospital1	4
12.2 Interruption of Studies1	4
12.3 Temporary Exclusion/Suspension in Serious Situations	4
13 Fitness to Practice1	5
14 Disciplinary Procedures1	5
15 Training and Support for Staff1	5
Appendix 1 Responding to Student with Mental Health Needs	6

2

Appendix 2	Mental health and Well-being – Internal Support Services	17
Appendix 3 M	lental Health and Well-being – External Support Services	18
Appendix 4 M	lental Health Well-being Guide for Staff	21
Appendix 5 L	seful Resources for Mental Health and Well-being	24
Appendix 6 C	yms/ Sports Centres in Wood Green for Students and Staff	28

# **1** Background and Prevalence

Student mental health is a critical issue in higher education and is of prime importance to all aspects of university life, insomuch that mental difficulties among undergraduate university students is increasing. In 2019 the University Mental Health Charter<sup>1</sup> set forth a set of principles universities can adopt to improve the mental health and wellbeing of their communities. Later Stepchange: Mentally Healthy Universities UK (2020)<sup>2</sup> offered guidance for universities to promote mental health and wellbeing to all aspects of university life, for all students and all staff.

Student mental health in England: Statistics, policy, and guidance (2024)<sup>3</sup> reported that the "proportion of home students (students who normally live in the UK) who disclosed a mental health condition to their university increased rapidly from under 1% in 2010/11 to 5.7% in 2021/222." Surveys of students where responses are confidential have found much higher rates of poor mental health than disclosed to universities. In a 2022 survey by the mental health charity Student Minds, 57% of respondents self-reported a mental health issue and 27% stated they had a diagnosed mental health condition. The consequences of mental health issues for students range from poor academic performance and dropping out of university to self-harm and suicide.<sup>4</sup>

The Office for National Statistics 2021 survey indicated that 37% of first-year students reported symptoms of depression and anxiety in England. This was 25% higher than the average for 16–29-year-olds. This is statistically significantly higher compared with 28% of 16 to 29-year-olds and 16% of the general adult population.<sup>5</sup> These figures indicate that students' mental health problems should be the main focus of universities support services.

## 2 Rationale

Most foreign students entering higher education at Bellmont College have lived in England between 3 to 16 years. These students would have acclimatised themselves to this country in terms of cultural differences and communicating in a language other than their home country. Compared to other non-UK students, European students are less likely to suffer from cultural shock than those from Southeast Asia. The latter "face significant challenges adjusting to western pedagogy in universities, due to the extreme cultural differences in education. Western pedagogy focuses on critical thinking and encourages discussion and debate. In contrast, East Asian students would view such behaviour as a disrespectful challenge of the instructor's knowledge"<sup>6</sup>. Additionally, differences in language, food and customs, and social isolation, sets the foundation of culture shock<sup>7</sup>. The biggest shift for Bellmont College

<sup>4</sup> As above

4

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hughes, G. and Spanner, L. (2019). The University Mental Health Charter. Leeds: Student Minds

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> De Pury and Dicks, A. (2020). Stepchange: Mentally Healthy Universities, London: Universities UK.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Lewis, J. and Stiebahl, S. (2024). Student mental health in England: Statistics, policy, and guidance. https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-8593/CBP-8593.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup>Office for National Statistics (2021). Coronavirus and first year higher education.

studentshttps://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthandwellbeing

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Taylor, G., and Ali, N. (2017). Learning and living overseas: Exploring factors that influence meaningful learning and assimilation: How international students adjust to studying in the UK from a socio-cultural perspective, Education Sciences, 7, 1, 35; https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci7010035 <sup>7</sup> Ward, C., Bochner, St., and Furnham, A. (2001). *The psychology of culture shock*. London: Routledge.

students is time management, adjusting financially to new circumstances, language competence and different teaching methods and ways of learning.

Transition into higher education offers many interesting opportunities and challenges for students. At the same time mature students can bring a wealth of experience into the classroom. Entering College requires considerable adjustment to working, social and academic life. It requires motivation, perseverance, and self-efficacy to overcome challenges as these factors increase the chances of academic success. Students' expectations are not always consistent with what they experience when they attend college which makes their transition into higher education all the more difficult<sup>8</sup>. Poor adjustment to College life can have a critical impact on student's mental health, self-concept, self-esteem, and wellbeing.

Persistent mental health problems can affect a student's attendance, energy level, mental ability, concentration, and communication with others. Social withdrawal can exacerbate isolation and loneliness and can result in suicide<sup>9</sup>. Without professional intervention, untreated mental health problems such as depression can create anxiety and concern in fellow peers, faculty, and staff. A comprehensive mental health strategy for the College for prevention and early-intervention methods is in place.

## **3 Policy Statement and Purpose of the Policy**

Belmont College is committed to providing a genuinely supportive and inclusive environment for all its students. This policy describes our commitment to continually supporting students and empowering them through their learning experience to develop and achieve their full potential in a place of equal opportunity. The College will reflect on the best practice available in order to help those who are experiencing difficulties in their academic work and ensure that information on wellbeing services is promoted and easily accessible to students and staff at the university,

The College aims are:

- Providing advice and support services including a Mental Health and Wellbeing Service, Disability and Academic Support Service to students experiencing mental health issues;
- Providing pastoral care, Student Support and advice;
- Publicising the availability of support to prospective and current students;<sup>10</sup>
- Encouraging both prospective and current students to disclose a disability, providing disclosure at all points across the academic year;
- Encouraging students with mental health difficulties to seek help and advice;
- Ensuring that staff are trained in Mental Health First Aid to support students' mental health and wellbeing and can develop strategies to support their own mental health and wellbeing (mental health training on site);
- Signposting/referring students to local mental health and counselling services e.g. GPS, NHS services, voluntary services. (Establish a process for identifying

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> Taylor, G. Taylor, G., and Ali, N. (2017). Learning and living overseas: Exploring factors that influence meaningful learning and assimilation: How international students adjust to studying in the UK from a socio-cultural perspective, *Education Sciences*, 7, 1, 35; https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci7010035

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> WHO (2024). *Mental health problems in adolescents.* https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/adolescent-mental-health

 $<sup>^{\</sup>rm 10}$  Refer to Appendix 3 and Appendix 4, p.17

and making referrals for students suffering from poor mental health and wellbeing, and target support appropriately);

- Establish smooth pathways between internal College services and effective and coordinated relationships with external services by strengthening clear information agreements;
- Providing students with information regarding national wellbeing support agencies;<sup>11</sup>
- Meeting the support and study needs of students experiencing mental health problems, through the provision of reasonable adjustments where appropriate;
- Respecting the confidentiality of personal and/or sensitive details provided by students experiencing mental health problems;
- Providing mental health awareness-raising opportunities to students, faculty and staff;
- Providing consultation, guidance and appropriate training to College personnel involved in the teaching, pastoral care and support of students;
- Providing a programme of social activities to engage students outside their studies that enable them to develop a sense of belonging;
- Providing a comprehensive programme of health and wellbeing events and activities (e.g. National Mental Health and Anti-Bullying Week);
- Ensuring that information on wellbeing services is promoted and easily accessible to students and staff at the College;
- Promote a culture and environment within the college that supports equality, diversity and inclusion and a sense of wellbeing throughout.

### **Disability Support**

- Ensuring that arrangements are in place to support the needs of those applicants/students who disclose a disability, specific learning difference, health, or mental health condition;
- Providing appropriate information to disabled applicants/students, including information on Government DSAs;
- Having in place a qualified person who:
  - has a clear awareness of the College's obligations under the Equality Act 2010 in order to inform practice and delivery;
  - has knowledge of the College's disability support provision/ arrangements
  - is aware of the kind of reasonable adjustments available at the College;
  - has the required knowledge to be able to advise students on Government DSAs;
  - has the required knowledge to advise on/arrange/enable non-medical support, where required;
  - has the required knowledge/understanding in order to respond to/address any disability issues that may arise within the College (i.e., has a reasonable understanding of disability-related issues;
- Arrangements will be in place to enable mental health support for students identified as requiring such support following a Learning Support Assessment of need.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Refer to Appendix 3 and Appendix 4, p.17

## 4 Limitations

Bellmont College recognise that mental health problems are common among students in higher education and is committed to providing appropriate support services in a safe environment.

The College's support services are directed at supporting students to continue in their academic studies and address their academic needs. All students are allocated an Academic Support Tutor (AST), who will be with them throughout their study journey at Bellmont College as well as drop-in sessions on Saturdays for help with coursework or queries. The College does not provide an on-site medical or mental facility or counselling service as there are limits to the extent of support it can provide. In some cases, students will need to seek outside support. This is the responsibility of the NHS and local health service provision.

The College has a population of mature students, consequently they are responsible for their own actions. They have right to decide whether or not to take advantage of the advice and support offered to them.

## 5 Mental Health and Well-being

Mental health is a state of mind "characterised by emotional well-being, good behavioural adjustment, relative freedom from anxiety and disabling symptoms, and a capacity to establish constructive relationships and cope with the ordinary demands and stresses of life<sup>12</sup>. "It is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially quite different social and clinical outcomes"<sup>13</sup>.

Mental illness (mental health disorders), concerns a wide range of mental health conditions which affect mood, thinking and behaviour. It includes depression, anxiety disorders, schizophrenia, eating disorders and addictive behaviours. Poor mental health status (depression and/or anxiety) is associated with poor academic selfefficacy, learning ability and motivation in comparison to those without these problems. Consequently, these factors can negatively impact on final academic outcomes,<sup>14</sup> but also in other areas of adulthood.

Wellbeing is a broad concept as it includes "mental and physical health, physical and emotional safety, a feeling of belonging, sense of purpose, achievement, and success. It covers a range of psychological and physical abilities such as emotional, physical,

social, workplace, and societal wellbeing."<sup>15</sup> A general sense of wellbeing relies on these types of functioning to a certain extent.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> American Psychological Association (2018). *Mental health* https://dictionary.apa.org

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> World Health Organisation (2022). Mental health https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/mental-health-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> Grotan, K., Sund, E. R., and Bjerkeset, O. (2019). Mental health, academic self-efficacy and study progress among college students - the SHoT study, Norway. Frontiers in Psychology, 10. 10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00045

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> Council of Europe Improving wellbeing at school (https://www.coe.int/en/web/campaign-free-to-speak-safe-to-learn/ [Accessed 3 Jan 2025] <sup>16</sup> Davis, T. (2024). What s well-being? Definition, types, and well-being Skills. *Psychology Today* 

https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog [Accessed 3 Jan 2025]

The College encourages both students and staff to take regular exercise. Regular exercise can have a positive impact on mental and physical health and emotional wellbeing. It improves concentration and alertness and is beneficial to cardiovascular function. See Appendix 9.

# 6 Legal Considerations

The College has a legal duty of care to all students, including a positive approach to the management of physical and mental health issues which is critical to student academic achievement and to the wider student experience. Under the Equality Act (2010) students who have disclosed their long-term or recurring mental health conditions are considered 'disabled.' Education providers have a duty to make reasonable adjustments<sup>17</sup> for disabled students, so they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage compared to non-disabled students. Bellmont College recognises that it has an `Anticipatory Duty' to plan ahead to address the needs of prospective and current students experiencing mental health difficulties.

# 7 Responding to Student with Mental Health Needs

## 7.1 Pre-admission, Entry and Induction

The College is committed to providing excellent learning opportunities and accessible facilities to all students. In line with the Equality Opportunities Act. It encourages potential students to disclose any disability (mental or physical) at the point of the application stage, or soon thereafter for provision of care by the College's Student Support Teams (SST).

The College intends to hold (workshops) for students where presentations will focus on disability support and how it is approached by the SST. Information and advice will be provided about application for Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) by the SST.

If a potential student discloses a mental health or physical disability this will be followed-up by the Mental Health & Wellbeing Advisor who will directly contact the student to offer advice on the support available. A meeting between a student and MHWA will be organised to offer advice and support and assessment of their needs.

At the College's induction events the AST Team and the MHWA give presentations/talks and information on mental health and learning support available for students with mental and physical disabilities. Information about these activities and support is available on the College's website.

The College will ensure that all information regarding mental health and disability support is clear and accurate. If a member of staff is uncertain as to the nature of the support given to students, they can contact the Head of Quality and Operations for clarification.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> Disability Rights UK Adjustments for disabled students and apprentices. https://www.disabilityrightsuk.org/resources

### 7.2 Disclosure of Information

Duty of care, protecting the confidentiality and integrity of personal data is a key responsibility of the College. In cases where there is a statutory obligation upon the College to comply with a request for disclosure of a student's data, there is no obligation to make a disclosure, even in cases where the GDPR authorises it. However, if a student is at risk to self or others, failure to release medical information about the student could result in self-harm, or death of the student; or serious harm to a third party if such information were not disclosed. If national security were at risk disclosure of information about a student would apply.

## 7.3 Data Protection

Bellmont College is committed to data protection rights of students and all those with whom it works, including, but not limited to staff, visitors, and volunteers. Its GDPR and Retention Policy<sup>18</sup> sets out the accountability and responsibilities of the College, and its students to comply fully with the provision.

of the General Data Protection Regulation ("the UK GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 ("the DPA") and recognises managing personal data appropriately and in compliance with data protection legislation.

A student's personal data includes any information about, or correspondence relating to, the named student. All those working for the College whose duties involve handling of students' sensitive/personal data must adhere to current statutory data protection legislation and protocols. Data protection applies to all formats in which information is kept and used (e.g., paper records, digital documents, handwritten notes, emails, IT equipment, portable devices – USB memory sticks and external hard drives.

### 7.4 Confidentiality

There is an ethical and legal obligation to protect personal/sensitive information shared by students, parents, and staff within the College environment. Sometimes a situation arises when offering support to a student with mental health difficulties requires the advice of a third party. But, without the consent of a student no action can be taken. Nevertheless, immediate action is often warranted where a student and others are at risk of harm<sup>19</sup>.

Personal or sensitive information (e.g. financial difficulties, personal relationship problems, mental health and/or physical disabilities) disclosed by a student to a staff member must be treated as confidential. Other personal information (date of birth, home and email address, mobile number) is shared with relevant staff at the Bellmont College as required.

## 7.5 Managing the Sharing of Sensitive Information

Maintaining the confidentiality of student records is essential to uphold this right and prevent unauthorised access. At Bellmont College all sensitive/personal information is processed in a manner that ensures appropriate security of personal data, including

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup>Bellmont College's Data Protection and Protection Regulations are defined in the following document: https://bellmontcollege.co.uk/images/procedures/3-Bellmont-College-GDPR-and-Retention-Policy-Feb-2024-v2.pdf
<sup>19</sup> Refer to 10.1 Urgent Situations.

Bellmont College Policy Statement and Guidelines for Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Support Jan 2025 v1

protection against unauthorised or unlawful processing and against accidental loss, destruction, or damage, using appropriate technical or organisational measures.

If staff have concerns or questions about sharing a student's personal/sensitive material with others, they must seek advice of the Head of Quality and Operations.

# 8 College Student Support Services

The College takes seriously its duty of care to its students and staff. Responsibilities at Bellmont College are divided into two main areas being:

- Academic Support which is headed by the Head of Academics and
- Pastoral Support which is headed by the Head of Quality and Operations.

## 8.1 Mental Health and Well-being Services

Although Bellmont College does not have a clinical psychologist or mental health counsellor on site, its Mental Health First Aiders, Mental Health Well-Being Adviser, Student Support Team, and Head of Academic and Pastoral Support will have all undertaken Mental Training Awareness, and Well-being courses. They can offer basic advice and guidance to students experiencing mental health difficulties, and if appropriate refer them to external services.

### 8.2 Bellmont College Students' Union

The Student (class) Representatives are involved in advertising and promoting events/awareness campaigns (Mental Health Week, AIDS Week, Dyslexia Week, World Well-being Week<sup>20</sup>, Stress Awareness Month, Stress Management, Eating Disorders) to encourage the student population to work together so as to get the most out of the College experience in a community of equal opportunity.

Often the SR encounter students experiencing mental health issues which can negatively impact their academic performance. At Bellmont College the SR liaises with the Student Support Team, Mental Health Well-Being Adviser and Academic Support Tutors to ensure that adequate advice and information is given to students who require support.

### 8.3 Student Learning Support Team

Bellmont College operates a Learner Support model that offers direct, friendly, professional, and confidential advice and support on site via the Academic Suport Tutor Team and the Student Support Team.

The Learner Support model<sup>21</sup>. comprises of the following:

- Programme Focused Academic Support
- Pastoral Support

Students who have mental health and/or physical disabilities, a medical condition, or other additional needs may request additional support or adjustments, for example, for time-constrained tests conducted during taught sessions. Information about this support is provided by the Head of Academics through the Academic Support Tutors.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> June 2025

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>21</sup> Bellmont College Student Handbook February 2024 v2

A Learning Support Plan can be implemented by the Academic Support Tutors to ensure that the relevant departments are aware of a student's specific support needs.

#### 8.4 Mental Health & Wellbeing Adviser

The Mental Health & Wellbeing Adviser (MHWA) provides individual support and strategies to students whose personal circumstances are affecting their mental and physical well-being and/or their studies.

It is not an emergency service. The MHWA may also signpost or refer students to external services.

At Bellmont College a wide range of events (seminars, presentations) are organised for students and staff, namely, relaxation techniques and stress management, mental health awareness week, understanding eating disorders, and drug abuse), and information regarding external mental health support services.

The College encourages students and staff to participate in regular exercise at Wood Green gyms, sports and yoga centres, as exercise<sup>22</sup> which is beneficial to those experiencing mental health problems.

#### 8.5 Monitoring Students Identified as Vulnerable or 'At Risk'

Monitoring students identified as vulnerable or 'at risk' is fundamental for ensuring their academic success and overall well-being. At Bellmont College, this process involves regular check-ins, personalised support plans, and collaboration between tutors, academic support tutors, and the Head of Academics to address academic challenges, whilst it falls under the Head of Quality and Operations remit to address social, and emotional challenges.

Early intervention strategies, such as mentoring, tutoring, and mental health resources, help prevent disengagement, failure of non-completion and improves outcomes. By fostering a supportive and inclusive environment, Bellmont College supports and invests in "at-risk" students to overcome barriers and thrive in their educational journey.

## 9 College Staff Involved in Pastoral Support Activity

#### 9.1 Academic Support Tutors, Lecturers and Head of Academics

Attending college presents students with a wide range of challenges (deadlines, examinations, mixing with new people) which can impact on their mental health and well-being. Academic Support Tutors and lecturers have a duty of care by being approachable, supportive and non-judgemental to students approaching them with personal problems or study difficulties. Academic Support Tutors have regular contact with students, as they keep track of students' academic progress and are in a good position to judge whether or not a student is experiencing difficulties.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>22</sup> Physical activity can increase students' self-esteem, and it can reduce stress and anxiety. It also "plays a role in preventing the development of mental health problems and in improving the quality of life of people experiencing mental health problems." Mental Health Foundation. *How to look after your mental health.* https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk

Providing support to students can contribute to their sense of belonging and can increase the likelihood of student satisfaction. Students should be made aware of other support services available at the College or if appropriate, external mental health services.

# 10 Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

## 10.1 Urgent Situations

Urgent mental health emergencies rarely happen. A student with a serious mental health disorder will be 'referred' to the National Health Service (NHS) and/or other emergency services. It is essential that all staff are aware of how to respond to the situation in a non-discriminatory, non-stigmatising and positive manner.

Below, although not an exhaustive list, urgent/emergency may arise in such situations as:

- A serious risk of student self-harm or harm to others: Threats of suicide, selfharm, or violence towards others
- Serious mental health issues: The student is experiencing severe depression, sudden dramatic changes in behaviour, psychosis, or an eating disorder.
- Neglect or abuse: If you are, or someone you know is suspected to be, a victim of physical, emotional, or sexual abuse.
- Sudden deterioration in health or well-being: A significant decline physical or mental health, particularly if it is affecting ability to function daily, can be a cause for concern.
- Sudden personal withdrawal: Isolation.

The above circumstances are outside the remit of College employees' usual duties and require the involvement of Mental Health First Aiders<sup>23</sup>, Head of Academic & Pastoral Support, Mental Health & Wellbeing Adviser, Student Support Team or in some cases College security and/or emergency services.

If there are concerns about the student's mental health, it may be possible to calm the student down by encouraging the student to explain what is distressing them. If the situation is urgent, contact a Mental Health First Aider, and/or a student's Academic Support Tutor/Mental Health & Wellbeing Adviser. If the student refuses help or remains at College it is essential that the staff member does not compromise their own safety and those of students, staff and others. However, if the student is off Campus, and the situation sounds critical regarding their mental health or physical safety, the staff member will need to ascertain the student's location, and if he/she is alone, or has company. In this situation it is important to stay in contact with the student while contact is made with the emergency service(s).

## **10.2 Recognising Professional Boundaries and Limitations**

The role of staff in supporting student mental health poses many challenges to provide effective support. It is essential that staff recognise personal and professional limitations of their role when offering support to a student with mental

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>23</sup> Some of the Mental Health First Aiders are part of the Student Support Team.

health difficulty and to have an awareness to seek specialist care either internally at the College or externally.

#### 10.3 Staff Well-being

Although staff play a key role in identifying and supporting students who have mental health difficulty, they may also require support to effectively perform their role. The College has a variety of internal and external services and resources available to staff to help support their mental health and well-being. The MHWA and/or the Head of Academic and Pastoral Support offer guidance to help staff access specialist services in times of crisis.

## **11 Roles and Responsibilities of Students**

While Bellmont College takes seriously its duty of care to deliver educational and pastoral services and to protect the health, safety, and welfare of all students, it is not responsible for their health. Students are expected to look after their own health, general well-being and safety and the safety of others who may be affected by their actions while at College. If they have mental or physical disabilities, it is not compulsory to report them, although the College has several mechanisms<sup>24</sup> in place to support such students.

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Adviser, Head of Academic and Pastoral Support can offer support, advice and guidance to students experiencing significant mental health difficulties. However, they are not a counselling service. Students who require mental health counselling will be referred to a GP or the local NHS, if the student's circumstances warrant external support.

The Student Learning Support Team, Study Skills Centre can support students experiencing difficulties with their academic course work. Dyslexic students can only receive support if they have written evidence of their disability.

If a student is concerned about another student's well-being they need to complete a Student of Concern Report. The student can seek guidance in confidence from a Academic Support Tutor, Lecturer, Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisor and Head of Academic and Pastoral Support.

## 12 Absence from College Due to Continued III Health

Bellmont College recognises that it has the responsibility to supporting students and the importance of a student's health and wellbeing in relation to academic achievement and their general experience of college life. There may be occasions where the student's mental and physical health may deteriorate to extent that he/she unlikely to be mentally equipped to continue studying at the College. Nevertheless, students will be encouraged to notify the College of any changes in his/her condition so that support can be offered to the student.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>24</sup> Where to go to for support, Appendix 2.

Student finance can offer students advice at induction events and enrolment about the Disabled Student Allowances (DSA) scheme which aims to ensure everyone has the support and adjustments they need to succeed during their studies.

#### **12.1 Student Admission to Hospital**

If a student has been admitted to hospital for a mental condition or has been detained under the Mental Health Act 1983<sup>25</sup>, a member of staff (e.g., Student Support Team\Mental Health & Wellbeing Adviser) who has responsibility for this case should arrange for a case conference. With the student's consent the Head of Academic & Student Support\ Mental Health and Well-Being Adviser and Head of Academic & Pastoral Support will organise a case conference with College Staff (e.g. Senior Management), to ascertain what happened, establish who will contact the student in hospital, determine what support is needed when the student is discharged from hospital, and who will monitor the student's progress.

While the student is in hospital careful consideration should be given to academic decisions (e.g., Board of Examiners; release of marks) as this could negatively impact on the student's mental health and well-being. If/when the student returns to college following his/her hospitalisation, the MHWA/ Head of Academic & Pastoral Support are responsible to meet the student to determine what academic support (if any) they need aid in their smooth return to study. If necessary, a further meeting with the Academic Support Team can establish whether or not the student requires additional academic support and if so, a Learning Support Plan (LSP) can be processed.

#### **12.2 Interruption of Studies**

Bellmont College recognise that sometimes mental health difficulties may cause severe disruption to a student's studies. In such a situation, interrupting studies might be the best option. An interruption of study is the formal procedure which allows a student to request a break from his/her studies for the remainder of the current academic year. However, in exceptional circumstances an interruption of two consecutive years might be considered. In this case, medical verification is required concerning a student's fitness to return to his/her academic studies.

Before withdrawing from study, a student is encouraged to seek guidance from an Academic Support Tutor and Head of Academic, Pastoral Support, Learning Support Team and Student Finance. Advice can be provided on to how to complete the formal withdrawal procedure to prevent future complications or fee liabilities.

#### 12.3 Temporary Exclusion/Suspension in Serious Situations

If there are serious concerns about a student's mental health, well-being, and ability to participate in college life, or where their participation presents a serious risk to their own safety or other students, staff, family members and health professions, several options are available. For example, voluntary or temporary leave of absence, or temporary suspension/exclusion, or a Fitness to Study process could begin. Nonetheless, the College is mindful of a student's mental and physical well-being, and he/she needs to be aware of the circumstances/ behaviour that has led to a fitness study issue or suspension/ exclusion.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>25</sup> Mental Health Act 1983 is up to date with all the changes known to be in force on or before 11 January 2025. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Found at: https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1983/20/contents

## **13 Fitness to Practice**

Most professional bodies make fitness to practise a requirement for registration to practise. The requirements for fitness to practise vary from body to body<sup>26</sup>. However, Bellmont College do not have any professionally oriented programmes (e.g. Nursing, Social Work).

## **14 Disciplinary Procedures**

All students attending Bellmont College are subject to the College's Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary procedures. Students with mental health difficulties also come under this regulation. However, where mental issues are concerned, there is a requirement to consider circumstances leading up to the incident(s) (e.g. support arrangements and the efficacy of such arrangements leading up to a disciplinary action). The student's mental health status will be assessed by the Mental Health and Wellbeing Advisor at Bellmont College.

If a student's behaviour has breached the Student Code, and there is no reasonable association between the student's behaviour and any apparent mental health difficulty. The College will action a Disciplinary Procedure. Any such action would take account of the Equality Act 2010.

The College has a duty of care to all students and staff, and as such is committed to effectively promoting and providing positive mental support. If the behaviour of a student with mental health difficulty is disturbing others or causing concern, then a balance must be found between duty of care to a student with a mental health difficulty and the duty of care to staff and students. Where adequate and appropriate support has been given to the student with mental health difficulty and their behaviour continues, the College will consider disciplinary procedures and/or Fitness to Study process or consider suspension.

## 15 Training and Support for Staff

The College is committed to fostering a supportive and inclusive environment by promoting positive mental health. It provides ongoing training programmes<sup>27</sup> for all staff, particularly those involved in pastoral care. Mental health awareness training<sup>28</sup> is available to staff as part of their CPD. These courses enable staff to recognise mental health issues and put safeguarding in place.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>26</sup> Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (n.d.). *Fitness to practice*. https://www.oiahe.org.uk/resourcesand-publications/good-practice-framework/fitness-to-practise

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>27</sup> Maudsley Learning courses on mental health offer in-person sessions or online courses. It means that staff can recognise mental health issues and put safeguarding in place.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>28</sup> Mental First Aiders courses at Mental First Aid England.

### Appendix 1 Responding to Student with Mental Health Needs

 Has there been a suicide attempt or any risk of harm to themselves or others?

(e.g. drug overdose, excessive alcohol consumption, violent, threatening and aggressive/strange behaviour, significant blood loss)

Is the student a serious threat to other students and/or staff?



Can the student keep themself safe until help arrives?

#### Emergency – Dial 999

• Even if individual(s) have not consented to do so.

Ε

- Contact Campus Security
- During office hours contact the Student Mental Well-being Service
- Stay with the student until help arrives
- If the student refuses support seek assistance from a colleague
- If the student is off Campus, check the address and inform The relevant manager and emergency services, as necessary



Student Mental Health and Well-being Support

**Non-emergency** (no immediate risk to others)

#### If the student accepts help:

- Listen to the student's concerns
- Reassure the student that support is available
- Provide the student with a list of support services that may assist
- Encourage the student to seek help with a treating health professional (*i.e., their General Practitioner*) or attend Accident and Emergency for assessment
- Follow-up meeting with the student to check and monitor the situation to see if further support is needed.

#### If the student refuses help:

- Inform and seek advice from the Student Mental Well-being Service
- Discreetly monitor the situation

#### Contacts

#### Student Mental and Well-being Service

Main Switchboard 020 3929 7665/ 07519971718

#### Good Practice

- Confidentiality: Student's consent required (depending on the nature of risk) to share your concerns with Student Mental and Well-being
- Seek help of colleague/campus security if required
- Only share material on 'a need-toknow basis

Name	Support Services Provided	Contact	
Mrs. Elaine Wayne- Walker Head of Quality & Operations & Pastoral Support	Lifestyle-related support including accommodation, finance, wellbeing, disability advice and counselling.	Telephone: 020 3929 7665 Email: registry@bellmontcollege.co.uk	
Dr. Syed Jafri Head of Academics	Programme support, Module & Assessment support. Individual Learning Plan Support (IPS)	Telephone: 020 3929 7665 Email: syed@bellmontcollege.co.uk	
Dr. Susan Marchant- Haycox Psychologist	Psychologist	Telephone: 020 3929 7665 susan@bellmontcollege.co.uk	
Ms. Solomia Kasiian Mental Health Wellbeing Advisor/ Student Support Advisor	Student support and advice	Telephone: 020 3929 7665 solomiia@bellmontcollege.co.uk	
Mr. Abdul Babita IT Manager	IT related support	Telephone: 020 3929 7665 itsupport@bellmontcollege.co.uk	

Appendix 2 Mental health and Well-being – Internal Support Services

## Appendix 3 Mental Health and Well-being – External Support Services

Emergency Services	In an emergency when someone is at immediate risk to themselves or from someone else or to someone else, call 999 or visit A&E
NHS direct	NHS – call 111 to get advice or ask for an urgent General Practitioner appointment. To get help online: www.nhs.uk/nhs services/mental health services - counselling for student mental health problems
Accident & Emergency	Whittington Hospital - 18 Magdala Ave, London N19 5NF Telephone: 020 7272 3070
	North Middlesex University Hospital, Sterling Way, London N18 1QX <b>Telephone:</b> 020 8887 2000 A&E open 24 hours
Anna Freud	Anna Freud Centre, 4-8 Rodney Street, London N1 9JH Mental health charity that offers help regarding suicidal thoughts, abuse or assault, self-harm, bullying and relationship issues Telephone: 020 779 2313 Crisis messenger Text: AFC 85258
CALM	Campaign Against Living Miserably – a suicide prevention charity against suicide Telephone: 0800 58 58 58 Website: https://www.thecalmzone.net Webchat: https://www.thecalmzone.net/help/webchat
Drug addiction	The Grove (NHS) – a free confidential drug treatment 276 High Rd, London N22 8JT Service Telephone: 020 8702 6220 Website: Beh-tr.thegrovedrugservice@nhs.net
Papyrus	HOPELINE Telephone: 247 0800 068 41 41. Text: 88247 Website: https://www.papyrus-uk.org/contact-us/ Open: 24 hours, 7 days a week (including weekends and Bank Holidays)
Refuge	The largest specialist abuse organisation in the UK. It supports survivors, to overcome the physical, emotional, financial, and logistical impacts of abuse. Telephone: 0808 2000 247 Website: https://refuge.org.uk/about-refuge Open 24 hours
Relate	Relate (Haringey) Manor House on Lothair Road (North), N4 1ER. Telephone: 01708 441722 (counselling)

	Website: https://www.nhs.uk/services/service-
•	directory/haringey-relate/N10864396
Samaritans	Free confidential emotional support and listening for people who
	are experiencing distress or despair
	North London Samaritans – Haringey, Barnet, Enfield
	https://www.samaritans.org
	Contact: 116 123
	Email: jo@sa,arotams.org for a reply within 24 hours.
	Telephone: 0330 094 5717
	Website: https://www.samaritans.org
	Open 24 hours
Saneline	Helpline for those coping with mental health problems,
Carlonno	regardless of if they are carers, friends, family members
	Telephone: 0300 304 7000
	Website: https://www.sane.org.uk
	Open 24 hours
Solf injuny	Help and support provided for women and girls affected by self-
Self-injury	
support	injury, trauma and abuse
	Telephone: 0808 800 8088
	Text: 07537 432 444
	Free, confidential support, 24/7,
Shout	Text: SHOUT to 85258
	Website: https://giveusashout.org/get-help/
	Open 24 hours
Solace	Haringey Floating Support Service
	Free, confidential advice, support and advocacy to women and
	girls over the age of 16 affected by domestic and sexual
	violence, of standard to medium risk
	Telephone: 020 8885 3557
	Email: haringey.fs@solacewomensaid.org
Mind	Mind provide advice and support to empower anyone
	experiencing a mental health problem.
	Telephone: 0300 123 3393
	Mind in Haringey: 73C Stapleton Hall Road, Haringey
	Telephone: 020 8340 2474
	North London - Palmers Green
	Telephone: 020 8886 3631
Medical Centre	Westbury Medical Centre (NHS), 205 Westbury Avenue, N22
	6RX
	Telephone: 020 8888 3021
Mental Health	Support and services for some of the biggest societal
UK	challenges that pose a threat to people's mental health,
UN	
	including money problems, navigating through the system to get
	the right support, understanding mental health, loneliness and
	isolation, and resilience in young people.
	Website: https://mentalhealth-uk.org/
Student Minds	Mental Health Charity
	Telephone: 0113 343 8440

	Website: studentminds.org.uk
Young Minds	Crisis Messenger text service
	Provides nationwide free crisis support
	Text: YM to 85258
UMHAN	Mental Health information for students about the support
University	available for mental health conditions.
Mental Health	Website: Umhan.com/pages/resources
Advisers	
Network	

### Appendix 4 Mental Health Well-being Guide for Staff

- **Apathy** Loss of initiative or desire to participate in any activity.
- Sleep or appetite changes Dramatic sleep and appetite changes or decline in personal care.
- **Mood changes** Rapid or dramatic shifts in emotions or depressed feelings, greater irritability/anger, tearful
- Withdrawal Recent social withdrawal and loss of interest in activities previously enjoyed.
- Nervousness Fear or suspiciousness of others or a strong nervous feeling.
- Drop in functioning An unusual drop in functioning, at college or social activities. Behind with course assignments, continued absenteeism. Unresponsive to emails, telephone calls from friends and college staff.
- **Problems thinking** Problems with concentration, memory or logical thought and speech that are hard to explain.
- Increased sensitivity Heightened sensitivity to sights, sounds, smells or touch; avoidance of over-stimulating situations.
- Feeling disconnected A vague feeling of being disconnected from oneself or one's surroundings; a sense of unreality.
- Illogical thinking Unusual or exaggerated beliefs about personal powers to understand meanings or influence events; illogical or "magical" thinking typical of childhood in an adult.
- **Unusual behaviour** Odd, uncharacteristic, peculiar behaviour.
- Changes in college work Increased absenteeism, worsening performance, difficulties in relationships with peers and co-workers.
- Lack of hygiene and neglect of appearance
- Eating disorder (sudden weight loss/gain) anorexia nervosa, bulimia, obesity.
- Addiction problems alcohol, drugs.
- Suicidal thoughts a person may express a desire to hurt or kill themselves. They may have harmed themselves or be thinking about ways to die. Some people may have thoughts of harming others.

<sup>1</sup> American Psychiatric Association https://www.psychiatry.org/patients-families/warning-signs-of-mental-illness

#### Mental Health Issues — What to do

- It is important to provide an open and non-judgemental space with no distractions
- Let the student lead the discussion at their own pace
- Listen and do not interrupt
- Do not pressure the student to tell you anything they are not ready to talk about
- Clarify and summarise what the student has said
- Inform the student of the support available
- Encourage the student to seek professional support and provide information on ways to do this
- Know your limits/role on the support you can provide
- Contact the Mental and Well-being Advisor and Head of Academic & Pastoral Support

to discuss any concern, you have about the student's mental health and wellbeing

If you believe they are in immediate danger or have injuries that need medical attention, you must take urgent action to ensure they are safe

Mental Health Foundation (n.d.). *How to support someone with a mental health problem*. <u>https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/</u>

## Mental Health Issues — What NOT to do

- Do not try to diagnose or second guess their feelings
- Dismiss their symptoms
- Deny their feelings
- Compare their feelings to others
- Express apathy, and call them selfish
- Offer continuing support

### If the student declines support

- Inform the student of the support that is available at the College
- If necessary contact Mental Health & Well-being Adviser or Head of Academic & Pastoral Support

Mental Health Foundation (n.d.). *How to support someone with a mental health problem.* https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/explore-mental-health/articles/how-support-someone-mental-health-problem Schimelpfening, N. (2024). *What not to say to somebody who is depressed.* https://www.verywellmind.com

#### Confidentiality

In a "mental health emergency, data protection does not act as a barrier to necessary and proportionate information sharing. Organisations should not hesitate to share students' personal data to prevent serious harm to the physical or mental wellbeing of a student in an emergency situation, or to protect a life" (ICO, 2024).

- When there is high or severe risk to a student's mental well-being or safety is a cause for concern
- Where a student is at risk of self-harm (risk to life)
- Where a student's behaviour is presents a physical threat (violence) to students, staff and others
- Where a student's unacceptable behaviour impacting on other students, staff and others

Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) (2024). *Information sharing in mental health emergencies at work.* https://ico.org.uk

### Appendix 5 Useful Resources for Mental Health and Well-being

- Beat Eating Disorders UK a Charity that provides information, advice, and support if you, a family member, friend or student has an eating disorder (https://www.beateatingdisorders.org.uk/about-beat/)
- BetterHelp (therapy without GP referral) a service proved to match those with mental health needs to therapists based on their location, preferences and, therapist availability (https://www.betterhelp.com);
- British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) Register of Counsellors and Psychotherapists which is accredited by the Department of Health and Social Care;
- Anti-Bullying Alliance: Bullying and mental health guidance: Guidance for teachers and other professionals. Free resource to help Colleges, teachers and other professionals understand the issues around bullying and mental health for children and young people (https://anti-bullyingalliance.org.uk);
- C.A.L.M offers mental health offers mental health services and tools for better understanding of mental health and physical wellbeing (https://www.calmhealth.com);
- Child Bereavement Network UK provides information and resources to support bereaved students, Colleges, and staff (https://childhoodbereavementnetwork.org.uk/);
- Cruse Bereavement Support https://www.cruse.org.uk
- Creating a culture: how College leaders can optimise behaviour Bennett's (2017) independent review on behaviour in Colleges (leadership, culture, and techniques to improve student behaviour);https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk
- **The Grove** free drug treatment (Beh-tr.thegrovedrugservice@nhs.net)
- Dyslexia Aware Counselling (DAC) in North London DAC has teamed up with charity GroOops to offer help and advice(https://www.grooops.org)
- Early Intervention Foundation guidebook on trauma-focused cognitive behavioural therapy (https://guidebook.eif.org.uk/files/pdfs/programmestrauma-focused-cognitive-behavioural-therapy.pdf);
- Education Endowment Foundation The Sutton Trust-EEF Teaching and Learning Toolkit is an accessible summary of educational research which provides guidance for teachers and Colleges on how to use their resources to improve the attainment of all students and especially disadvantaged students (https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/);
- Education Support The UK charity that provides practical tips and advice for teachers and education staff in schools, colleges, and universities to improve their wellbeing (https://www.educationsupport.org.uk);
- GroOops Dyslexia Aware Counselling offers help and advice. The only therapeutic charity in the U.K. that focuses exclusively on the emotional repercussions of Dyslexia (https://www.grooops.org)
- Health A-Z (NHS) Conditions and treatments by subject, includes information on Mental health (https://www.nhs.uk/conditions);
- Measuring and monitoring children and young people's mental wellbeing: a toolkit for Colleges and colleges – this toolkit aims to raise awareness amongst College and college staff of the range of validated tools that are

available to help measure subjective mental wellbeing amongst the pupil population (https://www.annafreud.org/resources/schools-and-colleges);

- Mental Health Services (Haringey) Haringey's specialist adult mental health and wellbeing services are provided as part of the North London Mental Health Partnership. Support includes community mental health services as well as hospital inpatient services (https://haringey.gov.uk/healthwellbeing/health-services-support/mental-health-wellbeing/adult-mentalhealth-services);
- Mind a mental health charity in England and Wales which information and advice to people with mental health problems (https://www.mind.org.uk/needurgent-help/using-this-tool);
- MindEd provides free educational resources on children and young people's mental health for all adults.
- Counselling MindEd Counselling MindEd is an online resource within MindEd that provides free evidence-based, e-learning to support the training of College and youth counsellors and supervisors working in a wide variety of settings;
- MindEd for Families advice and information from trusted experts to help improve understanding of mental health problems, and how parents and carers can best support their families;
- National Health Service NHS Choices directory of therapy and counselling can be accessed by individuals suffering from a major life event. They can contact a psychological health team who can provide such support as cognitive behavioural therapy and counselling;
- Papyrus Prevention of Young Suicide UK a charity dedicated to the prevention of suicide and the promotion of positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in young people;
- PSHE Association: Teacher guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing. Apart from providing useful and comprehensive guidance for teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing, it includes information on organisations that can provide support for specific mental health conditions;
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) NICE's role is to improve outcomes for people using the NHS and other public health and social care services, Its guidelines are evidence-based recommendations for good health and improvement in the quality of care and services.
- National Bereavement Alliance (NBA) The Alliance brings together national, regional and local bereavement care providers and membership organisations supporting bereaved people, to provide a collective voice representing the needs of bereaved people and those supporting them (www.ehospice.com);
- Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing: A whole school or college approach – Public Health England's useful guidance on the eight principles for promoting emotional health and wellbeing in schools and colleges headteachers, college principals and their senior leadership teams, school, and college governing bodies (https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk);

- Refuge is the largest specialist abuse organisation in the UK. Its services support survivors, helping them to overcome the physical, emotional, financial and logistical impacts of abuse, free from fear (https://refuge.org.uk/aboutrefuge)
- Relate a national charity that offers relationship counselling, sex therapy, training, and education. They have a network of centres across the UK, and also offer counselling by telephone, email, and live chat (https://www.relatelnee.org.uk);
- Royal College of Nursing (RCN) RCN document Counselling for staff in health service settings: A guide for employers and managers, is a useful document outlining ways to support individuals facing a stressful situation (www.rcn.org.uk).
- Royal College of Psychiatrists (RCPSYCH) Provides specific information about mental illnesses and mental problems for young people, parents, teachers and carers (https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk);
- The Samaritans An organisation that provides confidential emotional support and listening to people who are in distress or despair (https://www.samaritans.org);
- Solace Haringey Floating Support Service provides free and confidential advice, support and advocacy to women and girls over the age of 16 affected by domestic and sexual violence, of standard to medium risk. They offer short to medium term support; email: haringey.fs@solacewomensaid.org;
- Trauma Informed Colleges UK provides training for Colleges, communities and organisations to become trauma informed and mentally healthy places for all;
- Schools and Colleges Resources The Anna Freud Organisation provides 5 steps to mental health and wellbeing is a free, evidence-based framework to help develop a holistic, who whole-school or whole college approach to mental health (https://www.annafreud.org/resources/schools-and-colleges/5-steps);
- Student Minds a UK student mental health charity (studentminds.org.uk):
- Supporting mental health in Colleges and colleges: pen portraits of provision – this report presents pen portraits of mental health provision based on case study research in 36 Colleges, colleges and other educational institutions across England;
- Supporting staff wellbeing in Colleges aims to give College staff and senior leadership teams simple guidance and good practical examples where Colleges have successfully implemented staff wellbeing strategies;
- Colleges in Mind a free network for College staff and allied professionals which shares practical, academic and clinical expertise concerning the wellbeing and mental health issues and that affect Colleges;
- UMHAN University Mental Health Advisers Network Information for students about the support available for mental health conditions. (Umhan.com/pages/resources);
- Women's Aid a national domestic violence charity that works to end violence against women and children, and support domestic and sexual violence services across the country (https://survivorsforum.womensaid.org.uk)
- Worklife Support part of a national charity group, the Teacher Support Network. It provides counselling by qualified and specialist telephone support

for coping with stressful life events from bereavement to infertility and support programmes to employees in over 700 schools and charities across the UK. A confidential 24-hour service with access to expert advice, guidance and emotional support, including face-to-face counselling (worklifesupport.com).

- Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ) SDQ has five sections that cover details of emotional difficulties, conduct problems, hyperactivity or inattention, friendships and peer groups and Pro Social behaviour. It is an overview way of making an assessment on whether or not a student is experiencing a mental health problem (https://www.sdqinfo.org/py)
- Youth Wellbeing Directory provides a list of local and national organisations for anyone up to the age of 25 (including teachers helping students to find support), along with additional essential information and support (https://www.nclwaitingroom.nhs.uk/youth-wellbeing-directory);
- Supporting public health: children, young people and families documents to support local authorities and providers in commissioning and delivering children's public health services aged 0 to 19 years (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/commissioning-of-public-healthservices-for-children)
- Triple P provides parents simple and practical strategies to help them build strong, healthy relationships, confidently manage their children's behaviour and prevent problems developing;

## Appendix 6 Gyms/ Sports Centres in Wood Green for Students and Staff

Name	Concessions	Address	
Haringey		<b>Yoga studio</b> , 6a High Road, Wood Green, London	
Yoga Centre		Telephone 0808 196 0345	
		Website: https://www.moreyoga.co.uk	
The London Wing Chun	Discounts on new	2nd Floor Cypress House, 2 Coburg Road, Wood Green, London N22 6UJ	
Academy	membership	Telephone: 020 3638 4045	
London		Mobile: 07976 855 259	
		Website: https://londonwingchun.co.uk/online- martial-arts-classes	
		<b>Classes:</b> Wing Chun, San Da Kickboxing, Brazilian Jiu Jitsu, Yoga, FitLab or StrikeLab	
New River Centre Leisure	25% reduction off new membership	<b>New River Sport and Fitness</b> , White Hart Lane Wood Green, London N22 5QW	
Centre		Telephone: 020 8489 3443	
		Email: newriver@haringey.gov.uk	
		Website: https://www.haringey.gov.uk/leisure- parks-culture	
PureGym	30% reduction for students	Ground Floor, 110 High Street, Wood Green, London N22 6HE	
		Telephone: 0344 477 0005	
		Website: https://www.puregym.com/gyms/london-wood- green/	
		Open 24 hours	
Twisted Yoga		125 Bowes Road, London N13 4SB	
		Telephone: 07854 688846	
		Website: www.twisted-yoga.com	

Bellmont College Policy Statement and Guidelines for Student Mental Health and Wellbeing					
Support	Support				
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Bellmont College Student Handbook	February 2024 v2
Bellmont College Recruitment, Selection and Admission Policy	February 2024 v2
Bellmont College Reasonable Adjustment & Special Consideration Policy	February 2024 v2
Bellmont College Equality and Diversity Policy	February 2024 v2