



South Devon UTC

Emotional Health and Wellbeing (EHWB) Policy 2026–2028

Policy owner	Headteacher/ Senior Mental Health Lead
Approved by	Governing Body
Review cycle	Annual
Next review	September 2027
Applies to	Students, staff, governors and the wider college community

1. Policy statement

South Devon UTC is committed to promoting positive emotional health and wellbeing across the whole college community. We recognise that mental health and wellbeing influence learning, attendance, behaviour, relationships, physical health and longer-term outcomes. We aim to create an inclusive, safe and supportive culture in which students and staff can thrive, seek help early and access appropriate support.

2. Context and rationale

A whole-college approach to emotional health and wellbeing supports college improvement by:

- promoting positive mental health, resilience, belonging and healthy relationships;
- supporting engagement, concentration, attainment, attendance and behaviour;
- helping staff recognise emerging concerns and respond early and appropriately;
- reducing stigma and making routes to support clear and accessible;
- strengthening student voice and participation;
- supporting inclusion, equality and reasonable adjustments for students with SEND and other additional needs;
- supporting staff wellbeing so that adults are able to provide consistent, safe and effective support to students.

The college will take account of current statutory and Department for Education guidance, including Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education (RSHE) guidance, and national guidance on a whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing.

3. Aims

For students

- to feel safe, valued, respected and able to belong;
- to develop emotional literacy, resilience and practical strategies for managing stress and setbacks;
- to know how, when and where to seek help for themselves or others;
- to experience timely, proportionate and inclusive support where concerns arise;
- to be able to participate meaningfully in decisions that affect college life and wellbeing.

For teaching, learning, behaviour and attendance

- to improve engagement, concentration and readiness to learn;
- to understand that changes in behaviour or attendance may sometimes indicate an unmet need or mental health concern;
- to use supportive, consistent responses alongside clear expectations and appropriate safeguarding action;
- to reduce bullying, discrimination, harassment and social isolation.

For staff and the wider community

- to build staff confidence in promoting wellbeing and recognising signs of concern without expecting staff to diagnose mental health conditions;
- to promote a culture in which staff wellbeing is valued and support is signposted;

- to work constructively with parents, carers and relevant external services, while respecting safeguarding and confidentiality requirements.

4. Whole-college approach

South Devon UTC will develop its approach through the following interconnected areas:

- Leadership and management that champions emotional health and wellbeing and ensures it is reflected in college improvement planning.
- An ethos and environment that promote respect, inclusion, safety, belonging and positive relationships.
- Curriculum, teaching and learning that develop knowledge and skills relating to mental wellbeing, healthy relationships, online life, physical health and help-seeking.
- Student voice that enables students to influence wellbeing provision, policy development and the college environment.
- Staff development so that staff understand their role, know the limits of that role and can follow agreed pathways for concern and referral.
- Early identification and targeted support for students who may need additional help.
- Effective partnership with parents, carers and external agencies where appropriate.
- Monitoring and evaluation using relevant evidence, including student feedback, attendance, behaviour, safeguarding themes and wellbeing information.

5. Promoting a safe, respectful and anti-bullying culture

- clear expectations for respectful behaviour and relationships, including respect for difference and protected characteristics;
- accessible anti-bullying and safeguarding procedures that are regularly communicated to students and staff;
- education about healthy relationships, consent, harassment, discrimination and online behaviour through the curriculum and wider college activity;
- safe routes for students to report concerns and confidence that concerns will be taken seriously;
- appropriate support for students affected by bullying, abuse, harassment or discrimination, alongside proportionate action in line with relevant policies.

6. Student voice and participation

- democratic opportunities for student representation, including the college council and student governor arrangements;
- consultation with students about wellbeing, safety, curriculum and policy development;
- student leadership and peer-support opportunities where these are appropriately trained, supervised and safeguarded;
- feedback mechanisms that allow students to identify barriers to seeking help and suggest improvements.

7. Curriculum and universal wellbeing provision

The college will promote emotional health and wellbeing through:

- PSHE/RSHE and wellbeing education delivered through the planned curriculum and tutor programme;

- age- and stage-appropriate teaching about mental wellbeing, healthy relationships, online safety, physical health, drugs and alcohol, and where to access help;
- careful sequencing and skilled delivery of sensitive topics, with staff prepared to respond appropriately to disclosures;
- careers education, enrichment, physical activity, trips and leadership opportunities that build confidence, connection and aspiration;
- an emphasis on praise, strengths, achievement and positive contribution.
- engagement with the Schools Health Education Unit (SHEU) survey to gather student health and wellbeing information and help inform college priorities and provision.

8. Identifying concerns and providing support

All staff have a role in noticing changes that may indicate a student needs support. Staff should not diagnose mental health conditions. Concerns should be recorded and shared through the college's agreed pastoral and safeguarding procedures.

- Support should be proportionate to need and may include pastoral support, reasonable adjustments, mentoring, learning support, targeted interventions or referral/signposting to external services.
- Where a mental health concern is also, or may become, a safeguarding concern — including serious risk associated with self-harm, suicidal ideation, eating disorders, abuse or exploitation — staff must follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and refer promptly to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or deputy.
- Where there is an immediate risk of serious harm, emergency safeguarding procedures take priority.
- Students and families should be involved in planning support where appropriate, subject to safeguarding duties and the student's circumstances.

9. Inclusion, SEND and equality

The college recognises that wellbeing needs and barriers to accessing support can vary. Provision will be inclusive and responsive to individual need. Staff will consider SEND, communication needs, neurodiversity, disability, culture, family circumstances and other relevant factors, and will make reasonable adjustments where required. The college will challenge stigma, prejudice and discrimination and promote respectful discussion of difference.

10. Parents and carers

The college will involve parents and carers, where appropriate, through:

- regular communication about progress, attendance, behaviour, pastoral matters and wellbeing;
- tutorial/review opportunities and subject-focused events;
- clear information about sources of support and referral routes;
- partnership working when a student needs additional support, unless doing so would conflict with safeguarding duties.

11. Staff wellbeing

Positive staff wellbeing supports a safe and effective college culture. Leaders will seek to promote manageable working practices, respectful professional relationships, appropriate supervision or debriefing

following difficult incidents, and clear signposting to available staff support. Staff are encouraged to seek support early where work is affecting their wellbeing.

12. Confidentiality and information sharing

Students should be treated with dignity and their information handled sensitively. Staff must not promise absolute confidentiality. Information will be shared on a need-to-know basis where this is necessary to safeguard a student, provide appropriate support or meet legal duties. Safeguarding and data-protection procedures must be followed.

13. Roles and responsibilities

Role	Responsibility
Governing Body	Provides strategic oversight, ensures the policy is implemented and reviewed, and receives appropriate information about the impact of the college's wellbeing approach. A designated wellbeing governor will support scrutiny and monitoring.
Head of College	Provides visible leadership, ensures staff understand their responsibilities, and ensures emotional health and wellbeing is integrated with safeguarding, behaviour, attendance, SEND, curriculum and staff development.
Senior Mental Health Lead / designated wellbeing lead	Coordinates the whole-college approach, supports development of provision and referral pathways, promotes staff development and contributes to monitoring and evaluation.
Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)	Leads the safeguarding response where mental health concerns intersect with risk of harm or other safeguarding concerns, in line with KCSIE and the college safeguarding policy.
All staff	Promote a positive culture, notice and report concerns, follow agreed procedures, maintain professional boundaries and undertake relevant training.
Students	Are encouraged to contribute to a respectful culture, seek help when needed, report concerns and participate in opportunities to shape wellbeing provision.
Parents and carers	Are encouraged to share relevant concerns and work in partnership with the college to support students, subject to safeguarding requirements.

14. Monitoring and evaluation

The college will review the effectiveness of its approach using a proportionate range of evidence, which may include:

- student voice and wellbeing surveys;
- findings and trends from the SHEU survey, where available;
- attendance, persistent absence and behaviour information;

- bullying, discrimination and safeguarding themes;
- use of pastoral and targeted support;
- feedback from staff, parents and carers;
- curriculum review and staff training records.

Information will be considered carefully and, where appropriate, in aggregate so that patterns can inform improvement without unnecessarily identifying individuals.

15. Related policies and guidance

- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Behaviour Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Attendance Policy
- SEND Policy / SEN Information Report
- Equality Policy
- RSHE / PSHE Policy
- Online Safety / Acceptable Use policies
- Staff wellbeing and health and safety arrangements

16. Review of policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by South Devon UTC, and earlier where there are significant changes to statutory guidance, safeguarding requirements, local need or college provision.

Appendix A – Current national guidance considered in this update

- Department for Education: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 (effective 1 September 2026).
- Department for Education: Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education – revised guidance for introduction 1 September 2026.
- Department for Education: Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing in schools and colleges (updated April 2026).
- Public Health England / Department for Education: Promoting children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing – a whole school or college approach.