



The World Health Organisation defines mental health as:

"a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises their own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to their community".

The Moreton Bay Colleges are committed to supporting the physical and mental health and wellbeing of their students, and to providing a supportive, caring and Uniting Church Christian learning environment. For students to realise their potential the Moreton Bay Colleges acknowledge their responsibility to incorporate wellbeing practices into its core business. This is evident in our evidence-based wellbeing pastoral frameworks *Hearts and Minds* at MBC and *Five to Thrive* at MBBC.

The Colleges affirm that positive mental health and wellbeing are fundamentally important factors that enable school students:

- to focus on, and engage successfully in, learning
- to develop positive social and life skills which allow them to establish and sustain meaningful and positive relationships with others; and
- to become well-balanced, resilient adults who have the skills to participate and contribute productively to society and enjoy satisfaction and fulfilment in both their personal and professional lives.

Mental health problems occur when young people experience disturbances in their thoughts, their feelings, their behaviour, their ability to learn and their social relationships, as well as their physical health and wellbeing. Unlike some medical conditions that have a direct cause, mental health difficulties and mental disorders are influenced by multiple factors that interact in different ways depending on the individual, family, social, economic and cultural circumstances.

The purpose of this strategy is to ensure that school staff are:

- cognisant of the positive contribution wellbeing and mental health has on creating the conditions central to the pursuit of academic and personal fulfilment and
- can recognise mental health warning signs in students and know the process for facilitating support.

RESPONSIBILITIES

The earlier a young person obtains support for emotional, behavioural or social difficulties, the better the chance they have of overcoming those issues, and of reducing the chances of more serious mental health concerns.

Parents also have responsibilities with respect to their child's mental health and wellbeing. These include:

- contacting the relevant senior member of staff if they are concerned about their child.
- providing full information about their child's history of behaviours or mental health conditions.
- working closely with the relevant staff to support their child.
- Following any directions to seek external specialist advice when a referral or recommendation is made.
- notifying the relevant senior staff immediately if concerned about their child's mental state and/or if the child is at risk of self-harm.

Students have a role to play in fostering a positive and supportive environment by:

- abiding by the College Code of Conduct and Positive Behaviours Policy and Procedures with regard to relationships with other students.
- respecting, caring for and supporting friends and other students.
- sharing any worries or concerns for self or others with a staff member.

Staff

For the majority of school staff, providing support does not require them to be a mental health professional or to find a solution to the problem themselves. They are, however, an important part of the early warning system that helps to identify potential mental health difficulties earlier so that appropriate support and action can be provided as soon as possible.



Mental Health Signs and Symptoms

Student behaviour can be difficult to interpret. With so much going on, sorting out what is 'normal' adolescent behaviour and what is something more concerning can be challenging.

The table of signs and symptoms (below) can help staff determine when a student may be experiencing mental health difficulties.

Emotions/Feelings	Cognition/Thinking	Behaviour	Physical
Prolonged periods of sadness	Difficulty concentrating on tasks	Social withdrawal or avoidance	Tiredness and fatigue
Prolonged periods of irritability	Difficulty paying attention	Talking about, writing about or making artworks about death or suicide	Complaining of lots of headaches, stomach-aches
Anxiety or excessive worry	Confusion	Increased impulsivity or risk-taking	Loss of appetite or big increase in appetite
Loss of motivation	Hopeless thoughts, for example, "Nothing will ever get better", "Nobody cares".	Increased alcohol or other drug use	Sleeping lots, or difficulties getting to sleep and staying asleep
'Flatness' or apparent loss of enjoyment in things that used to be enjoyable	Helpless thoughts for example, "I can't do it", "There's no way I'll be able to..."	Drop in academic functioning – handing in things late, handing in poorer work than usual	Restlessness or fidgeting
Excessive anger	Suspicion	Absenteeism	Significant weight loss or gain
Excessive fear	Unrealistic expectations on self that is causing distress	Frequent fights with friends or family	
	Anxious thoughts, for example, "Something bad will happen if..."	Self-harm	
	Self-critical thoughts, for example, "I'm not good enough."	Rigid behaviours, for example eating certain foods at fixed times and over-exercising	
		Uncharacteristic, odd or unusual behaviour	

Process for determining level of action if a staff member notices concerning changes in a student's thinking, behaviour and/or feelings.

The model below can be used as a general guide for responses to different types of observations in students.

1

LEVEL

LEVEL 1 – GATHER MORE INFORMATION

Speak to student, and senior staff, continue to monitor and check in with others:

- if you have noticed minor changes that are out of character for the student, for example they are a little less talkative than usual, turning up late, appearing more tired or less focussed.

ACTION

Report concern to **Head of House / Assistant Head of Sub School – Pastoral** who will place note of concern on TASS Confidential Notes

2

LEVEL 2 – PROVIDE ASSISTANCE

Advise appropriate senior staff, support the student, and refer for additional support:

- if you have noticed any evidence of personal self-harm
- if you have noticed multiple changes such as not attending class, frequent lateness to class, grades dropping, difficulties with friends, tearful, withdrawn, moody or angry
- if you have noticed a lack of concentration, reduced participation in class
- if you have noticed that changes have occurred in multiple settings, for example home, school or sports practice
- if the symptoms have been going on for a while and things aren't improving
- if problems are occurring frequently
- if problems are causing difficulties in the person's relationships, school work, usual activities

ACTION

Head of House/Assistant Head of Sub School - Pastoral contact parents

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Head of House/Assistant Head of Sub School - Pastoral share support strategies with teachers

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Head of House/Assistant Head of Sub School - Pastoral place notes of any assistance, support provided on TASS Confidential Notes

3

LEVEL 3 – ACT IMMEDIATELY

Alert appropriate senior staff, seek immediate mental health or emergency support for alarming observations such as:

- risk to self that is suicidal or ideas of self-harm
- behaviour that is odd, unusual, extremely out of character, not making sense
- risk to others, for example making threats to harm another student/member of staff

ACTION

Do not leave student alone

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Contact **DHSS/DHOP/Head of Sub School** immediately

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Wellbeing Plan developed with parents and senior staff

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Wellbeing Plan shared with teachers/staff



DOCUMENT CONTROL INFORMATION

Document Status

The current status of this document is shown below.

Policy	Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy
Version	V1
Issue Date	May 2018
Revision Date	May 2019
Owner	Head of College
Confidentiality	

Document History

The history of changes made to this document is shown below. The most recent changes are listed first.

Version	Date	Summary of Changes
1.0	May 2018	First release of joint strategy.

Approval

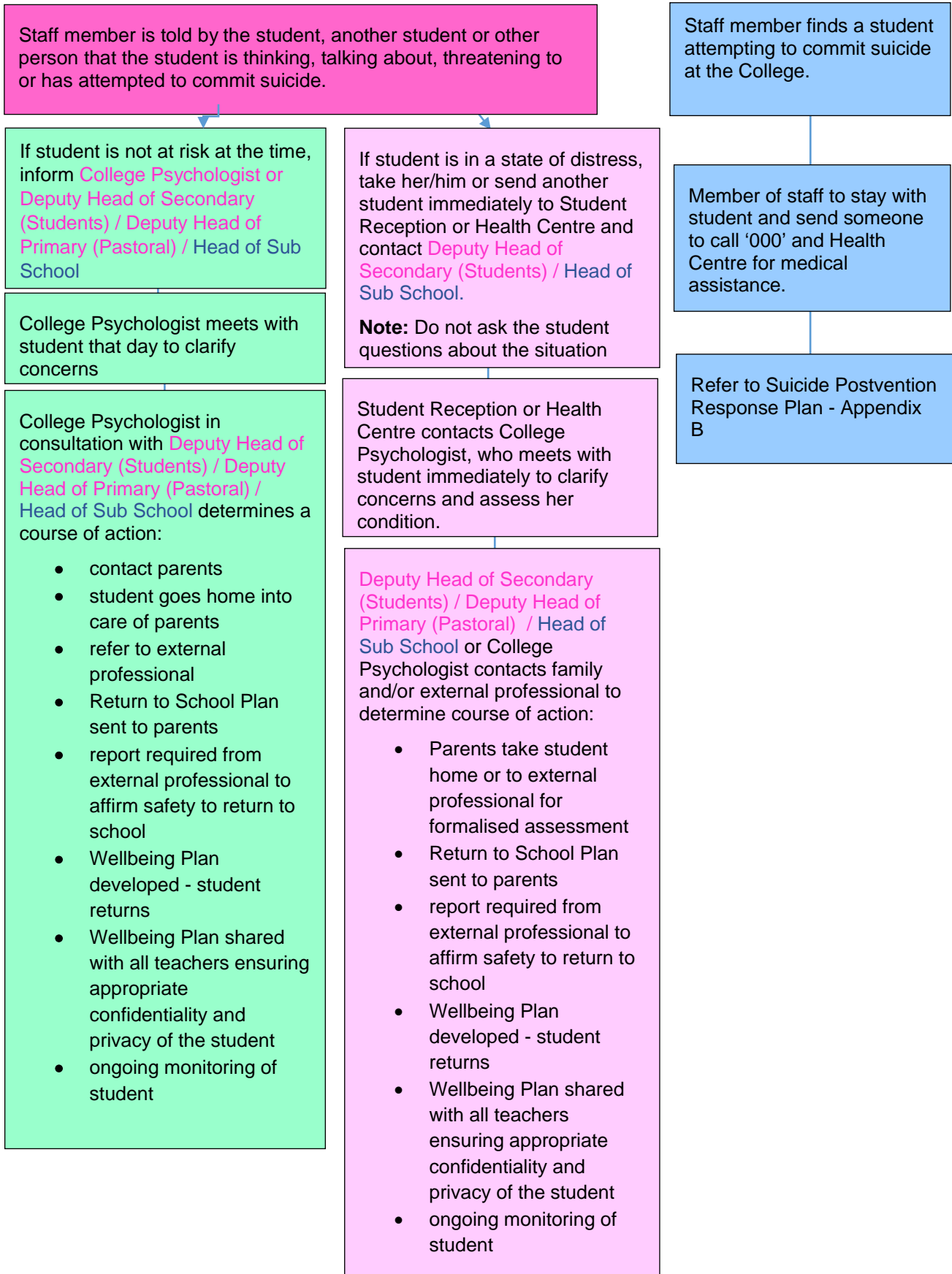
This document has been approved for publishing by:

Reviewed by	Head of College
Authorised by	ELT



Appendix A

Process for staff when dealing with a student at risk of suicide



MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY

Appendix B

Suicide Postvention Response Plan

This plan outlines the essential tasks for the first 24 hours and should be used by the Emergency Action Team (EAT) to guide their roles and responsibilities. This plan should always be used in conjunction with the Suicide Postvention Toolkit/Guidelines and Fact Sheets. headspace School Support can be accessed on 1800 688 248.

This Suicide Postvention Response Plan has been developed between headspace School Support and the Moreton Bay Colleges

Inform

Staff	Who
Inform staff ASAP and keep them well-informed about all available information regarding the suicide and the response plan (inclusive of staff on leave)	Head of College
Inform staff of the option of not being involved if their own wellbeing is at risk	
Inform staff of support they can access (Employee Assistance Program – 1800 618 723)	
Inform staff that the students will be notified in small groups (Form classes) via script.	

Parents

Who
Inform the parents of close friends and vulnerable students to ensure support at home
Inform parents via letter/email to give them immediate and accurate information about the school's response to the suicide
Provide parents with contact information for support for them and their children
Resources needed: headspace School Support Toolkit p35 for script

Students

Who
Inform close friends and vulnerable students personally and provide sources of immediate and ongoing support
Inform students using the agreed script in small groups, with consideration of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Friends closest to the student – Students in the same year level – Students in the same class as a sibling – Home groups or year level groups preferable
Resources needed: headspace School Support Toolkit p33-34 for script

Community

Who
Inform all auxiliary adults who will have contact with students in the following 24 hours
Inform Principals of schools within the area, specifically those attended by the student's siblings or known close friends

Support

Staff	Who
Identify and plan support for staff at risk	
Encourage staff to contact Employee Assistance Program if they require additional support	
Inform staff of identified liaison person	
Provide staff with the details of the information being provided to parents and students	
Check in with staff at the start and end of the day for wellbeing and consistent messaging	

Parents

Who
Establish a line of support with the family of the deceased student
Gather and protect student's belongings
Encourage parents in the school community to access mental health services and referral pathways if needed
Determine time, location, and personnel for a parent information and support session
Resources needed: See p16 of the headspace School Support Toolkit

Students

Who
Immediately follow up all unexplained student absences
Set up a student support room that is staffed with appropriate personnel – sign in and sign out sheet
Work collaboratively with headspace School Support and others to identify and plan support for students at risk
Monitor students and, in collaboration with mental health agency, begin assessments of students identified as at risk
Resources needed: headspace School Support Toolkit p11-12 for more information

Other Considerations

Who
Consider who needs information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Identify risk factors for suicide – Understanding grief responses – Referral pathways to support services
Has can run information sessions (in conjunction with EP)

Manage

Media	Who
Consider the need for an appropriate media response	Principal
Contact School's Governing Body, Media Unit or headspace School Support for advice	Principal to contact governing body
Consult Suicide Postvention Toolkit/Guidelines or headspace School Support fact sheet	Emergency Action Team (EAT)

Social Media

Who
Consider the impact of social media
If the use of social media escalates distress consider intervening
Use social media for consistent messaging around help seeking and information sharing
Consult with headspace School Support for ongoing management of social media
Resources needed: headspace School Support Toolkit p30

Emergency Response Team

Who
Undertake self-care: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Debriefed everyday – Identify a self-care activity for each member – Discuss coping mechanisms – Watch for signs of vicarious trauma
Ensure that staff can take a break from the response if required
Psychologist
Chaplains

Next Steps

Who
Document the incident and all actions undertaken
Organize a meeting with key players to develop a plan for foreseeable future
Resources needed: headspace School Support Toolkit p15-21





Appendix C

Return to School Plan
- outlining requirements to ensure the College's duty of care

The Moreton Bay Colleges have a duty of care to all students while they are at school or participating in school-related events. At all times, the Colleges offer the best possible tailored care, regardless of the individual student's needs (e.g. epilepsy, asthma, diabetes, depression, anxiety, eating disorder). The Moreton Bay Colleges do not discriminate in any way but we require specific medical and psychological information in order to adequately care for every student. In keeping with this, all students with medical and psychological needs require information to be provided.

We require all the following information to assist us in managings wellbeing while they are in our care. This return to school plan is strictly confidential. We are seeking from you details of the following:

- Diagnosis for
• Formulation
• Medications
• A copy of any recommended wellbeing plan
• The preferred method of contact if is very unwell (tick):
 Telephone:
 Email:.....
• My preference for a case conference is (tick):
 In person
 Telephone

This return to school plan will only be discussed with the following people at school:

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Please return this document to the Head of College MBC / Head of College MBBC.

Signed

Head of College
Moreton Bay College / Moreton Bay Boys' College



Appendix D

WELLBEING PLAN

Year:

STUDENT:	YEAR LEVEL:	FORM
SAFETY PLAN COORDINATORS:		
MENTAL HEALTH ISSUE:		
ASSOCIATED BEHAVIOURS of CONCERN: • •		
POTENTIAL TRIGGERS (if applicable) • •		
PROCEDURES and GUIDELINES for STAFF TO FOLLOW: During class time: During breaks: Modification to academic routine: Modification to College Uniform and/or Behaviour Management Policies: Procedure for monitoring student wellbeing:		
OTHER MEDICAL INFORMATION:		

ALL EXCURSIONS, CAMPS, SPORTS & OUT OF HOURS ACTIVITIES will require a specific risk management plan for that activity. This will be included into the risk assessment document.

MBC Copies to: TASS Confidential Notes, Deputy Head of Secondary (Students), Head of House, College Psychologist, Parents, Learning Enrichment Centre, Health Centre. MBBC Copies to: TASS Confidential Notes, Head of Sub School, Assistant Head of Sub School, Parents, and Learning Enrichment Centre.