



St David's  
Coleg Catholig Dewi Sant  
Catholic Sixth Form College

**Mae'r ddogfen hon hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg**

**This document is also available in Welsh**

## **FITNESS TO STUDY POLICY**

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## Introduction

- i. This policy has been developed as part of St David's College's commitment to realise the potential of all in our community as encompassed in our mission:  
*'A Catholic College for the community seeking to discover and realise the full potential of all, in an atmosphere of love, service and respect inspired by Christ.'*
- ii. This policy seeks to support learners to achieve their full potential by encouraging their full participation in college life so they can progress successfully, both academically and spiritually in their lives.
- iii. As a college we are committed to removing barriers to learning and will work with learners promote their inclusion in all that the college has to offer.
- iv. We recognise the profound impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) on individuals' wellbeing and development. We are committed to adopting a trauma-informed approach in our policies and practices to create a safe, supportive, and healing environment for all.
- v. We want to support all learners through a graduated, Trauma informed response to ensure that learners are able to progress and achieve.
- vi. The college follows the All-Wales Child Safeguarding procedures in relation to specific and identifiable wellbeing issues that prevent and learners from accessing their education, or where there are safeguarding concerns.
- vii. This policy is to be read in conjunction with the following documents:
  - **Learner Support Policy**
  - **Learner Attendance Policy**
  - **All Wales Safeguarding Procedures**
  - **Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy**
  - **Safeguarding and Child Protection Procedures.**
  - **Learner Complaints**
  - **Substance Misuse Policy**
  - **Equality and Diversity**
  - **Health and Safety Policy**

## Policy Scope

- i. The college expects all learners to maintain the core expectations, enabling us to create a learning environment which is safe for all.
- ii. As a Trauma-Informed college, St David's acknowledges that there may be many circumstances where wider context, specialist intervention and impact on self and/or others may mean that a learner is unable to recognise or determine that they are placing unreasonable demands on themselves, college staff or that their circumstances are having a profound and disturbing impact on the success and wellbeing of themselves and/or others.
- iii. The college is committed to supporting learners with disabilities and learning needs in ways that meets their individual needs effectively, putting in the appropriate reasonable adjustments.
- iv. This policy outlines the procedure for managing cases where a learner's physical and mental health is preventing them from benefiting from the provision of education the college can offer or is having an adverse impact on the learning experience others and has extended beyond the realms of reasonable adjustments and/or the pastoral and wellbeing support the college can offer.
- v. The college outlines the support and actions the college will undertake, where a learner is unable to meet the college expectations and College Charter and it is deemed not appropriate to apply the college's Learner Support Policy due to the learner's circumstances.
- vi. Where a learner's behaviour presents an immediate and significant risk to their own safety or the safety of others, the appropriate emergency services must be contacted without delay. The College will then review the situation and determine the learner's future involvement, taking into account the level of risk posed to the learner or others.
- vii. The College will take **reasonable** steps to ensure that all learners are not placed at a substantial disadvantage due to their disability, additional learning need, trauma experience or history.
- viii. '**Reasonable**' includes consideration that they do not compromise academic standards, the ability to achieve the requirements set out by the awarding body, health and safety or the relevant interest of other individuals.
- ix. This is not a legal document.

## Handling concerns and disclosures

Personal data is handled, processed and stored in accordance with GDPR. Sensitive personal or confidential data will be held by the safeguarding team and only shared with consent from the learner or where:

- A learners behaviour threatens their safety or the safety of others
- A member of college would be liable to civil or criminal penalty for failing to disclose.

## Initial support and guidance

- i. Prior to this process being invoked, in the majority of cases, there must be evidence which demonstrates an ongoing supportive dialogue between the learner, staff and, if appropriate, parent/guardian. Evidence of these must be uploaded on to the college's MIS system and MyConcern.
- ii. Pastoral tutors retain responsibility for attendance monitoring and updating staff on any actions agreed in meetings with the learner and/or parents. In a case regarding a safeguarding issue, the urgency of the situation may require the process being actioned without such a prior dialogue.
- iii. Where a disclosure is made during the course, the LSC or Wellbeing team should be notified immediately. Any safeguarding matters arising from this disclosure need to be raised with a member of the safeguarding team.
- iv. Where attendance, behaviour and/or engagement with learning is impacted by health concerns, pastoral tutors will support learners through a Health and Additional Support plan (Appendix 1)

## Admission processes

- i. As a Trauma-Informed college, St David's recognises the importance of ensuring that all learners have fair access to appropriate learning opportunities which enables them to fulfil their highest potential. It is essential that the college fulfils its own duties in ensuring that applicants are physically and emotionally fit and able to undertake and participate in all aspects of learning.
- ii. The College has a duty of care to protect the safety, health, wellbeing, and safeguarding of its learners and staff. If the College considers that there is not enough information to make an informed decision about managing risk following a disclosure, we will seek the applicant's explicit consent to obtain additional information or evidence from relevant professionals. If the learner chooses not to

grant this permission, the College reserves the right to record this in any risk assessment or to withdraw its offer.

- iii. It is not necessary to progress through each stage of the process in every case. Identification of the appropriate stage of the procedure to use will be determined following a risk assessment by the college. Where a serious risk is identified, the procedure may be entered at stage 3 or 4 depending on the level of risk. Should a learner be unwilling to participate in the procedures, the process will continue in their absence with all options remaining available

## Stage 1: Emerging Concerns

**Stage 1 applies where initial concerns are raised about a learner's behaviour, health, safety, or wellbeing. These concerns may include, but are not limited to:**

- **Behaviour that makes learning impossible**
- **Angry Outbursts**
- **Complete disengagement**
- **Symptoms of Psychosis**
- **Declining poor mental and emotional health requiring risk management**
- **Extended periods of absence due to poor mental or physical health**
- **Any behaviour that adversely impacts others.**

- i. A supportive exploratory meeting will be arranged, involving relevant staff such as the learner's Pastoral Tutor, subject teachers, the appropriate Learning Area Lead, members of the Wellbeing and Safeguarding Team, and/or staff from the Learner Support Centre.
- ii. In all cases where a learner is under the age of 18, a parent / carer should be contacted and present wherever possible, provided the College considers this to be in the learner's best interests. If the learner is over 18 years of age, they are entitled to support from a "trusted adult" but not from any legal representative.
- iii. Evidence for the need for a stage one meeting must be provided and an action plan will be drawn up with the learner. Permission will be sought to disclose pertinent information to relevant staff as appropriate.
- iv. While at Stage 1, if any further disclosure raises a safeguarding concern, it must be escalated immediately to the Safeguarding Team in line with College safeguarding procedures. All information will be shared strictly on a 'need to know' basis, in accordance with data protection requirements

## Stage 2: Continuing or strong initial concerns.

**Applies when continuing or serious concerns about a learner's health, safety or mental wellbeing are raised. Staff should refer to a member of the wellbeing or safeguarding team.**

- i. A supportive exploratory meeting will be arranged, involving relevant staff such as the learner's Pastoral Tutor, subject teachers, the appropriate Learning Area Lead/Manager, members of the Wellbeing and Safeguarding Team and/or staff from the Learner Support Centre. External agency representatives may also be invited where appropriate.
- ii. In all cases involving learners aged under 18 a parent/carer should be contacted and present wherever possible, provided this is considered in the learner's best interests. If the learner is aged over 18 years, they are entitled to support from a trusted adult, but not from any legal representative.
- iii. Discussions will involve establishing whether further reasonable adjustments or support can be put into place to enable the learner to continue their studies.
- iv. Possible outcomes of a Stage 2 meeting may include:
  - Withdrawal from the course with a view to re-enrolling at a future date.
  - Transfer to an alternative course
- v. If a learner is asked to withdraw from a course of study, they will be asked to do so voluntarily. If a learner refuses, then the case will be passed to The Learner Welfare Panel for consideration for exclusion.

## Stage 3: Immediate and serious concern or no progress from stage 2.

Stage 3 applies when:

- There are immediate and serious issues, or
- No progress has been made following Stage 2 interventions, and
- The learner's actions or behaviours place their own health, safety, wellbeing or academic progress — or that of others — at significant risk, or risk adversely affecting the reputation of the College.

- i. Where an incident meets the above criteria, the College will take immediate steps to minimise risk to the learner or others.
- ii. The Deans, Designated Safeguarding Person, the Safeguarding and Wellbeing Manager and Learner Formation Lead, or a member of the Senior Leadership Team

(SLT) must be informed without delay. The learner will be required to work remotely until a case conference is convened.

- iii. A case conference must be convened within five (5) working days of the incident or escalation, or within a reasonable extended period where further information is required from an external agency
- iv. A formal stage 3 letter will be sent to the learner's home address and parents if the learner is under the age of 18.
- v. A case conference will be held with relevant parties from the following: Learner Formation Lead, Wellbeing and Safeguarding Manager, Member of the Learner Support Centre and a relevant Dean or Learning Area Lead.
- vi. In all cases where the learner is under 18, a parent or carer will be requested to attend, where the college considers this appropriate for the learner. Any medical or legal reports relating to the learner should be presented to the panel to support the construction of a risk assessment.
- vii. If the case conference was convened as a result of an immediate and serious incident the risk assessment will inform whether a supportive action plan can be put in place in order for the learner to remain at the college. If this is the case, the action plan/ risk assessment should be revisited within three college weeks to ensure progress is being made.
- viii. If the panel has met as a result of no progress against concerns, a decision should be made about whether the learner remains on their course.

The following outcomes may be considered:

- Exclusion from college
- Completion of course as a distance learner

## Appeals

- i. Learners may appeal an exclusion or withdrawal decision in writing within five working days.
- ii. Appeals will be reviewed by the Assistant Principal – Learner Culture. Their decision will be final.
- iii. For learners under 18, a parent or guardian may submit the appeal on their behalf.

- iv. Exclusion may be immediate where behaviour presents a serious risk to self or others.

## Appendix 1 – Health and Additional Support Plan

### Health and Additional Support Plan

**Date of Plan:**

**Completed by:**

#### Learner Information

Learner Name	
Learner Number	
Mobile Number	
Current Attendance	

#### Next of kin contact information

Contact Name, Email	
Mobile Number	
Relationship to learner	

#### Details of Learner's needs:

*(Please discuss this with learner)*

Area of need	What can college do?

#### Plan of support

Action	Person responsible	To be completed by (date)	Review Comments

#### Student agreement:

- I must engage with the support offered by college
- If I am absent, I must inform my tutor and subject teacher
- If I am absent, my parent/guardian must authorise my attendance through Parent Advantage and contact my tutor
- I will aim to meet the college target of 95% attendance and be punctual to all lessons

#### Partnership agreement:

I sign here in agreement to complete the actions above and use this document jointly with the college attendance policy:

Name (role)	Signature	Date

#### Review Date

Date	Reviewed by	Any Changes to plan?

#### Additional meeting notes

Date	Present at meeting	Notes

#### Internal Support at St David's College:

Department	Information	Link
Pastoral Support	We have a dedicated and professional teaching staff assisted by excellent support staff. All students will meet with their Pastoral Tutor twice a week to review their progress and follow our pastoral programme on Wellbeing.	<a href="https://www.stdavidscollege.ac.uk/study-and-subject-information/">https://www.stdavidscollege.ac.uk/study-and-subject-information/</a>
Learner Support Centre	The Learner Support Centre (LSC) provides an inclusive and individualistic learning experience for our neurodiverse learners. The LSC is the place to go for support and advice for students struggling with any aspect of College Life, including those with Additional Learning Needs (ALN).	<a href="https://www.stdavidscollege.ac.uk/learner-support/">https://www.stdavidscollege.ac.uk/learner-support/</a>

Wellbeing and Safeguarding	<p>Looking after your wellbeing and health plays a key role in being a successful student, managing your workload, and building necessary skills to deal with what life can throw your way. Our Wellbeing Team is available to speak with you and give you additional support throughout your time at St David's.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.stdavidscollege.ac.uk/wellbeing-safeguarding/">https://www.stdavidscollege.ac.uk/wellbeing-safeguarding/</a></p>
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#### Helpful External Resources:

Organisation	Information	Link
Samaritans	<p>If you need someone to talk to, we listen. We won't judge or tell you what to do.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.samaritans.org/wales/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/">https://www.samaritans.org/wales/how-we-can-help/contact-samaritan/</a></p>
Childline	<p>We're here for you, whatever's on your mind. We'll support you. Guide you. Help you make decisions that are right for you. Our tips and techniques, ideas and inspiration, can help you feel more in control. And you can access them in your own time, at your own pace!</p>	<p><a href="https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/">https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/</a></p>
Mind	<p>We won't give up until everyone experiencing a mental health problem gets support and respect.</p>	<p><a href="https://www.mind.org.uk/">https://www.mind.org.uk/</a></p>
Careers Wales	<p>At Careers Wales we can help you to plan your career, prepare to get a job, and find and apply for the right apprenticeships, courses and training.</p>	<p><a href="https://careerswales.gov.wales/">https://careerswales.gov.wales/</a></p>
Working Wales	<p>At Working Wales, we're here to support you through these changing times with free advice, guidance and access to training to help you get into work or further your career.</p>	<p><a href="https://workingwales.gov.wales/">https://workingwales.gov.wales/</a></p>
Rate My Apprentice	<p>Find Apprenticeships, Degree Apprenticeships, School Leaver Programmes &amp; Jobs For School Leavers</p>	<p><a href="https://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk/">https://www.ratemyapprenticeship.co.uk/</a></p>

	Search for apprenticeships and jobs for school and college leavers near you.	
Network 75	Graduate with a degree, 5 years work experience and no student debt! Network75 is a combined work placement and part-time study route to a degree allowing students to Work, Earn and Learn!	<a href="https://network75.southwales.ac.uk/">https://network75.southwales.ac.uk/</a>
Cardiff Family Advice and Support	Cardiff Family Help Team are an early intervention service offering high quality information, advice and assistance to children and young people aged 0-18 (or up to the age of 25 in the case of a vulnerable young person) and their families living in Cardiff.	<a href="https://www.cardifffamilies.co.uk/">https://www.cardifffamilies.co.uk/</a>
Dewis Cymru	Dewis Cymru is the place to go if you want information or advice about your well-being – or want to know how you can help somebody else. Find help, services, and information near you.	<a href="https://www.dewis.wales/">https://www.dewis.wales/</a>

## Appendix 2 – Learner Risk Assessment

<b>Name:</b>	<b>DoB:</b>	<b>Student ID:</b>
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### Background Information

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<b>Threat:</b>	<b>Risk:</b>
<b>Aggravating Features:</b>	<b>Mitigating Features:</b>

<b>Risk Severity:</b>	<b>Risk Likelihood:</b>	<b>Impact Level:</b>
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<b>Parties Responsible:</b>
<b>Contact Telephone numbers:</b>

	Acceptable	Tolerable	Undesirable	Intolerable
<b>Improbable</b> <b>Risk is unlikely</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>MEDIUM</b>	<b>MEDIUM</b>	<b>HIGH</b>
<b>Possible</b> <b>Risk will likely occur</b>	<b>LOW</b>	<b>MEDIUM</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>EXTREME</b>
<b>Probable</b> <b>Risk will Occur</b>	<b>MEDIUM</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>HIGH</b>	<b>EXTREME</b>