



BrighterU Education Mental Health Policy

1. Introduction

BrighterU Education is committed to supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of all international students under its care. As a UK-based guardianship organisation, we recognise that international students may face unique challenges, including cultural adjustment, academic pressure, loneliness, and language barriers.

This policy outlines our approach to promoting, protecting, and responding to the mental health needs of students and defines the roles and responsibilities of our Guardians and Homestay providers.

2. Policy Aims

- To ensure all students are cared for in an environment that promotes emotional and psychological wellbeing.
- To provide clear procedures for identifying, supporting, and referring students who may be experiencing mental health difficulties.
- To ensure that Homestays and Guardians are equipped with the knowledge to respond appropriately to mental health concerns.
- To signpost to appropriate UK-based mental health services and crisis support.
- To uphold the standards required by AEGIS (Association for the Education and Guardianship of International Students) and UK safeguarding guidelines.



3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students under BrighterU Education's care.
- All Guardians employed or contracted by BrighterU Education.
- All Homestay families affiliated with BrighterU Education.
- All administrative and support staff.

4. Definitions

- **Mental Health:** A person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being.
- **Safeguarding:** Protecting children from abuse, neglect, and exploitation.
- **Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL):** The individual responsible for managing and reporting safeguarding concerns.

5. Responsibilities

5.1 BrighterU Education Staff

- Ensure that all staff receive annual safeguarding and mental health awareness training.
- Maintain up-to-date records of any mental health concerns or interventions.
- Monitor student welfare and provide regular check-ins.
- Provide access to an on-call Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) 24/7.



5.2 Guardians

- Maintain regular contact with students and Homestays.
- Attend mental health and safeguarding training annually.
- Immediately report any concerns to the DSL.
- Provide students with guidance on accessing support services.

5.3 Homestays

- Create a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment.
- Observe and report changes in a student's behaviour, mood, or health.
- Encourage open communication while respecting the student's privacy.
- Know how and when to escalate concerns to BrighterU Education.

6. Identifying Mental Health Issues

Homestays and Guardians should be aware of the following signs that may indicate a student is experiencing mental health difficulties:

- Withdrawal or isolation
- Mood swings or emotional outbursts
- Changes in appetite or sleep
- Self-harm or talk of hopelessness
- Decline in personal hygiene
- Talking about feeling overwhelmed or anxious

Any of the above should be documented and reported to BrighterU's DSL immediately.



7. Responding to a Mental Health Concern

1. Immediate Risk:

If a student is in **immediate danger** or poses a risk to themselves or others, call **999** and inform the DSL as soon as it is safe to do so.

2. Non-Urgent Concerns:

Contact the BrighterU DSL to assess the situation and determine the appropriate course of action, including:

- a. Referring to a GP
- b. Signposting to mental health services
- c. Arranging a wellbeing check
- d. Notifying parents (in line with safeguarding protocols)

8. Mental Health Support and Signposting (UK)

Students will be supported to access the following UK-based services as appropriate:

General Support

- **GP (General Practitioner)** – First point of contact for ongoing concerns. Students should be registered with a GP during their stay.
- **NHS 111** – For non-emergency medical advice (available 24/7).

Helplines & Crisis Support

- **Samaritans:** 116 123 (free, 24/7) – Confidential emotional support.
- **Childline:** 0800 1111 – For students under 19.



- **Shout:** Text “SHOUT” to 85258 – 24/7 crisis text line.
- **Papyrus (HOPELINEUK):** 0800 068 4141 – For young people struggling with suicidal thoughts.
- **Mind UK:** 0300 123 3393 – Mental health advice and support.
- **YoungMinds Crisis Messenger:** Text “YM” to 85258 – Free, 24/7 support for young people.

9. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

All mental health concerns are recorded confidentially in accordance with GDPR and BrighterU’s safeguarding policies. Information will only be shared on a need-to-know basis with:

- Guardians
- Homestays (if directly responsible for care)
- Medical professionals
- Parents/guardians (where appropriate and safe)

10. Training and Awareness

BrighterU Education is committed to the ongoing training of all staff, Homestays, and Guardians. This includes:

- Annual safeguarding and mental health awareness training.
- Resources on recognising and responding to common mental health conditions.
- Scenario-based training for emergencies (online).



11. Review and Evaluation

This policy is reviewed annually or following any significant change in legislation or safeguarding procedures. Feedback from students, Homestays, and staff will be considered in each review.

12. Contact Information

BrighterU Education – Safeguarding Team

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL): Alex.Whitlam@brighteru.co.uk

Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Sue.Li@brighteru.co.uk

24/7 Emergency Contact: +44 (0)752 59 48 222

Website: www.brighteru.co.uk

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Reviewed Annually

Next Review Due: 30 April 2026