WELLBEING & POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

This policy relates to all sections and activities of the school e.g. Senior School, Junior School (including EYFS), Wrap around Care, Offsite Activities and School run Holiday Activities or Clubs.

1   INTRODUCTION

1.1   Mental health is a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (World Health Organisation, Mental Health: Strengthening our Response, 2018)

1.2   At Red House School, we aim to promote wellbeing and positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body. We pursue this aim using both whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable pupils.

1.3   In addition to promoting wellbeing and positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for pupils affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

1.4   It should be read in conjunction with the following School policies:

- Child Protection (Safeguarding)
- Anti-Bullying
- E-Safety and Pupil Acceptable Use of ICT
- SEND
- RSE
- PSHE
- Staff Email

1.5   This policy has been drawn up with regard to the following documents:

- DfE, Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (September 2023)
- World Health Organisation, Mental Health: Strengthening our Response, (30 March 2018)
- DfE, Working Together to Safeguard Children, (2015, updated in 2018 and 2022)
- DfE, Promoting and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools and Colleges (2021, updated in 2022)
- DfE, The Education Hub, How we're helping look after the mental health of children and young people (10 October 2023)
- DfE, The Education Staff Wellbeing Charter, (November 2021)
- ISI, Framework for the inspection of association independent schools, including residential (boarding) schools and registered early years settings (from 1 September 2023)
- ISI, Handbook for the inspection of association independent schools, including residential (boarding) schools and registered early years settings (from 1 September 2023; last updated 12 September 2023)

1.6   Prevalence of mental health and emotional wellbeing issues:

- 1 in 10 children and young people aged 5 - 16 suffer from a diagnosable mental health disorder - that is around three children in every class.
- Between 1 in every 12 and 1 in 15 children and young people deliberately self-harm.
- There has been a big increase in the number of young people being admitted to hospital because of self-harm. Over the last ten years this figure has increased by 68%.
- More than half of all adults with mental health problems were diagnosed in childhood. Less than half were treated appropriately at the time.
- Nearly 80,000 children and young people suffer from severe depression.
- The number of young people aged 15-16 with depression nearly doubled between the 1980s and the 2000s.
- Over 8,000 children aged under 10 years old suffer from severe depression.
- 3.3% or about 290,000 children and young people have an anxiety disorder.
- 72% of children in care have behavioural or emotional problems - these are some of the most vulnerable

people in our society.

2   AIMS
2.1   The policy aims to:

- Promote positive mental health in all staff and pupils.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Alert staff to early warning signs of mental ill health.
- Provide support to staff working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide support to pupils suffering mental ill health and their peers and parents or carers.

3   KEY MEMBERS OF STAFF
3.1   Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the wellbeing and the positive mental health of pupils, staff with a specific and relevant remit include:

- Rebecca Ashcroft – Head
- Claire Thompson – Deputy Head and Head of the Senior School and Joint Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
- Samantha Lindsay-Symington – Director of Wellbeing and Pastoral Care and Joint DSL
- Simon Haywood - Head of the Junior School
- Victoria Smith - Assistant Head of the Junior School, Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL) and KS2 Coordinator
- Tom Thorogood – Head of Years 9-11 and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)
- Susan Casey – Head of Years 6-8 and Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead (DDSL)
- Nicola Cooper – Wellbeing Lead (Junior School) and KS1 Coordinator
- Ian Barnbrook-McKay – EYFS Coordinator and SEND Lead (Junior School)
- Eileen Auty – SENCo
- Fiona Hunt – Wellness Governor and Deputy Safeguarding Governor
- Leanne Boyd-Smith - Safeguarding Governor
- Lucy Waldock, Rachel Dring, Tom Thorogood, Sam Lindsay-Symington, Claire Thompson and Rebecca Ashcroft – Staff Wellness Ambassadors
- Wendy Morris – School Counsellor

4   OBJECTIVES
4.1   All governors, teaching and support staff, pupils and parents should have an understanding of what wellbeing and positive mental health is.

4.2   School staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a pupil is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should share their concerns with the Designated Safeguarding Lead team, the pupil's form tutor and the pupil's head of year.

4.3   Possible warning signs include:

- Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental.
- Changes in eating or sleeping habits.
- Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn.
- Changes in activity and mood.
- Lowering of academic achievement.
- Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide.
- Abusing drugs or alcohol.
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope.
- Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather.
- Secretive behaviour.
- Skipping PE or getting changed secretively.
- Lateness to or absence from school.
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause.
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism.
- Withdrawal from social media contact.
- Increasing coping behaviours e.g. hand washing.
- Struggling to make decisions.
- Giving away possessions.

4.4   We will ensure that staff, pupils and parents are aware of sources of support within school and in the local community and support that is available within Red House School.

4.5   We will display relevant sources of support in communal areas, such as, the staff room and the pupil Wellness and Positive Mental Health notice board. In the Junior School, this information will be shared in the staff room and on the parent board. We will regularly highlight sources of support to pupils within relevant parts of the curriculum e.g. via PSHE, RSE, Key Stage assemblies and whole-school assembles.

5   STAFF TRAINING

5.1   As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular safeguarding and child protection training during INSET in September with the DSL to enable them to keep pupils safe.

5.2   We will publish relevant information for staff who wish to learn more about mental health. For example, the MindEd learning portal provides free online training suitable for staff wishing to know more about a specific issue. In addition, Future Learn offer a range of free MOOCS which staff will be encouraged to explore.

5.3   Training opportunities for staff who require more in-depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due to developing situations with one or more pupils.

5.4   Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to wellbeing and encouraging positive mental health.

5.5   Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD or MOOCS should be discussed with the Deputy Head (Head of Senior School and DSL) and the Head of the Junior School.

5.6   A large proportion of our staff body, across both the senior and junior sites, completed the SSS Learning course – 'Supporting Mental Health and Well-being of Children and Young People' in the 2022-2023 academic year.

6   TEACHING ABOUT WELLBEING AND POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

6.1   The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our pupils to keep themselves and others physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE and RSE curriculum and our form tutor programme.

6.2   The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but there will always be an emphasis on enabling pupils to develop the skills, knowledge, understanding, language and confidence to seek help, as needed, for themselves or others.

6.3   We will follow the PSHE Association Guidance to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner which helps rather than harms.

6.4   A Wellbeing and Positive Mental Health SharePoint for staff has been created and is regularly being updated by the KS1 Coordinator (Junior School) and the Deputy Head - Head of Senior School (Senior School).

6.5   The Wellbeing and Positive Mental Health notice board in the Senior School and the infographics in the classrooms and communal areas of the Junior School will provide further information and sources of help for pupils.

6.6   Aspects of wellbeing and positive mental health are discussed and promoted in whole school and year group assemblies.

7   SUPPORTING PEERS

7.1   When a pupil is suffering from negative mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their friends. Friends often want to support but do not know how. In the case of self-harm or eating disorders, it is possible that friends may learn unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

7.2   In order to keep peers safe, we will consider on a case by case basis which friends may need additional support.

7.3   Support will be provided either in one to one or group settings and will be guided by conversations with the pupil who is suffering and their parents with whom we will discuss:

- What it is helpful for friends to know and what they should not be told.
- How friends can best support.
- Things friends should avoid doing or saying which may inadvertently cause upset.
- Warning signs that their friend may need help (e.g. signs of relapse).
- Where and how to access support for themselves.
- Safe sources of further information about their friend's condition.
- Healthy ways of coping with the difficult emotions they may be feeling.

8   WORKING WITH OUR PARENT BODY

8.1   Parents are very welcoming of support and information from the school about supporting their children's wellbeing and emotional mental health.

8.2   In order to support parents, we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about common mental health issues via RHS News.
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to, and how to go about this, if they have concerns about their own child or a friend of their child.
- Make our Wellbeing and Positive Mental Health Policy easily accessible to parents.
- Share ideas about how parents can support wellbeing and positive mental health in their children through our weekly RHS News.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE through our weekly RHS News and termly curriculum updates from the Assistant Head (Academic) and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home. This will be shared to EYFS and KS1 parents by the KS1 Co-ordinator.
- A Parent Wellbeing Group has been established by the KS1 Coordinator. Parents will be sent a regular Wellbeing and Positive Mental Health survey to complete. This will provide a baseline for the school from which to build upon and review provision.

9   PROCEDURES TO PROMOTE STAFF WELLBEING

9.1   It is recognised at Red House School that promoting staff positive mental health and emotional wellbeing should be an integral part of the whole school approach. Therefore training and signposting to materials about positive mental health and emotional wellbeing will be made available for all staff.

9.2   An open-door policy to the Senior Management Team (SMT) is always made available if staff is in need of speaking to someone about any issues of concern and a fully committed supportive Board of Governors.

9.3   Weekly communication via morning staff briefings in the Senior School and the weekly staff meeting in the Junior School.

9.4   Continuing professional develop for all staff and signposting to additional CPD courses e.g. via SSS Learning or via free MOOCS at https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/introduction-to-work-and-wellbeing-at-work

9.5   Staff wellbeing is also promoted through:

- Yearly social events.
- Performance management.
- All staff encouraged to contribute to the School Development Plan (SDP) and this is monitored in the yearly appraisal process.
- All staff invited to INSET days and twilight sessions.
- Recognition on staff birthdays/special occasions.
- A room for staff to relax, work and support colleagues (during the current pandemic, strict social distancing must be adhered to and the staff room is limited to the numbers who can enter at any one time).
- 'The Attitude of Gratitude' wellbeing boards in each staff room.

10   SMT PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING ISSUES OF STAFF WELLBEING

10.1   The Senior Management Team (SMT) will encourage the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where all staff members feel comfortable asking for help or raising concerns.

10.2   The SMT to highlight to staff that there is no expectation to respond to emails in the evenings and the weekends and that a holding email will suffice in most incidences. If there is an urgent communication which requires more immediate attention, the staff member may forward it to a member of the SMT to deal with on their behalf.

10.3   The SMT will support all staff in dealing with any difficult conversations with parents (in person or via email).

10.4   The SMT should be sensitive to any problems which may cause the employee stress-related issues and should act in a professional, fair, consistent and timely manner when a concern arises.

10.5   Where additional, professional advice is required, the school may contact Occupational Health Professionals and this avenue should be utilised.

10.6   The School will provide support to any employees facing high-levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work-related issues which are having/have the potential to have negative impacts on the staff member's positive mental health and wellbeing. The various options for dealing with such issues should be discussed with staff members where appropriate. In some cases, this may include external support such as the teacher helpline or counselling.

10.7   During this time, the School will ensure that at all times the staff member's privacy and dignity is respected. This means maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employee's rights and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity.

Reviewed by: Miss C Thompson and Mrs S Lindsay-Symington
November 2023

Ratified by: The Board of Governors
November 2023

APPENDIX 1: GUIDANCE AND ADVICE DOCUMENTS

Mental health and behaviour in schools - Departmental advice for school staff
Department for Education (November 2018)

Mental health: Strengthening our Response
World Health Organisation (30 March 2018)

Working Together to Safeguard Children
Department for Education (2015, updated in 2018 and 2022)

Promoting and Supporting Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools and Colleges
Department for Education (2021, updated in 2022)

The Education Hub, How we are Helping Look after the Mental Health of Children and Young People
Department for Education (10 October 2023)

Framework for the inspection of association independent schools, including residential (boarding) schools and registered early years settings
Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) (from 1 September 2023)

Handbook for the inspection of association independent schools, including residential (boarding) schools and registered early years settings
Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) (from 1 September 2023; last updated 12 September 2023)

Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future - Departmental advice for school staff and counsellors
Department for Education (February 2016)

Teacher Guidance: Preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing (2019)
PSHE Association. Funded by the Department for Education

Keeping Children Safe in Education - statutory guidance for schools and colleges.
Department for Education (September 2023)

Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions - statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England. Department for Education (2016)

Healthy child programme from 5 to 19 years old is a recommended framework of universal and progressive services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing. Department of Health (2009)

Future in mind – promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing - a report produced by the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce to examine how to improve mental health services for children and young people. Department of Health (2015)

NICE guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in primary education
https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph12

NICE guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in secondary education
https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph20

What works in promoting social and emotional wellbeing and responding to mental health problems in schools?
Advice for schools and framework documents written by Professor Katherine Weare. National Children's Bureau (2015)

APPENDIX 2: FURTHER SOURCES OF SUPPORT

Below, we have sign-posted information and guidance about the issues most commonly seen in school aged children. The links will take you through to the most relevant page of the listed website. Some pages are aimed primarily at parents but they are listed here because we think they are useful for school staff too.

Support on all these issues can be accessed via Young Minds (www.youngminds.org.uk), Mind (www.mind.org.uk) and (for e-learning opportunities) Minded (www.minded.org.uk).

SELF-HARM
Self-harm describes any behaviour where a young person causes harm to themselves in order to cope with thoughts, feelings or experiences they are not able to manage in any other way. It most frequently takes the form of cutting, burning or non-lethal overdoses in adolescents, while younger children and young people with special needs are more likely to pick or scratch at wounds, pull out their hair or bang or bruise themselves.

Online Support
- SelfHarm.co.uk: www.selfharm.co.uk
- National Self-Harm Network: www.nshn.co.uk

Books
- Pooky Knightsmith (2015) Self-Harm and Eating Disorders in Schools: A Guide to Whole School Support and Practical Strategies. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Keith Hawton and Karen Rodham (2006) By Their Own Young Hand: Deliberate Self harm and Suicidal Ideas in Adolescents. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Carol Fitzpatrick (2012) A Short Introduction to Understanding and Supporting Children and Young People Who Self-Harm. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

DEPRESSION
Ups and downs are a normal part of life for all of us, but for someone who is suffering from depression these ups and downs may be more extreme. Feelings of failure, hopelessness, numbness or sadness may invade their day-to-day life over an extended period of weeks or months, and have a significant impact on their behaviour and ability and motivation to engage in day-to-day activities.

Online Support
- Depression Alliance: www.depressionalliance.org/information/what-depression

Books
- Christopher Dowrick and Susan Martin (2015) Can I tell you about Depression? A guide for friends, family and professionals. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

ANXIETY, PANIC ATTACKS AND PHOBIAS
Anxiety can take many forms in children and young people, and it is something that each of us experiences at low levels as part of normal life. When thoughts of anxiety, fear or panic are repeatedly present over several weeks or months and/or they are beginning to impact on a young person's ability to access or enjoy day-to-day life, intervention is needed.

Online Support
- Anxiety UK: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

Books
- Lucy Willetts and Polly Waite (2014) Can I tell you about Anxiety? A guide for friends, family and professionals. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Carol Fitzpatrick (2015) A Short Introduction to Helping Young People Manage Anxiety. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

OBSESSIONS AND COMPULSIONS
Obsessions describe intrusive thoughts or feelings that enter our minds which are disturbing or upsetting; compulsions are the behaviours we carry out in order to manage those thoughts or feelings. For example, a young person may be constantly worried that their house will burn down if they don't turn off all switches before leaving the house. They may respond to these thoughts by repeatedly checking switches, perhaps returning home several times to do so. Obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD) can take many forms – it is not just about cleaning and checking.

Online Support
- OCD UK: www.ocduk.org/ocd

Books
- Amita Jassi and Sarah Hull (2013) Can I Tell you about OCD? A guide for friends, family and professionals. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Susan Conners (2011) The Tourette Syndrome & OCD Checklist: A practical reference for parents and teachers. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

SUICIDAL FEELINGS

Young people may experience complicated thoughts and feelings about wanting to end their own lives. Some young people never act on these feelings though they may openly discuss and explore them, while other young people die suddenly from suicide apparently out of the blue.

Online Support
- Prevention of young suicide UK – PAPYRUS: www.papyrus-uk.org
- On the edge: ChildLine spotlight report on suicide: www.nspcc.org.uk/preventingabuse/research-andresources/on-the-edge-childline-spotlight/

Books
- Keith Hawton and Karen Rodham (2006) By Their Own Young Hand: Deliberate Self harm and Suicidal Ideas in Adolescents. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Terri A.Erbacher, Jonathan B. Singer and Scott Poland (2015) Suicide in Schools: A Practitioner's Guide to Multi-level Prevention, Assessment, Intervention, and Postvention. New York: Routledge.

EATING PROBLEMS

Food, weight and shape may be used as a way of coping with, or communicating about, difficult thoughts, feelings and behaviours that a young person experiences day to day. Some young people develop eating disorders such as anorexia (where food intake is restricted), binge eating disorder and bulimia nervosa (a cycle of bingeing and purging). Other young people, particularly those of primary or preschool age, may develop problematic behaviours around food including refusing to eat in certain situations or with certain people. This can be a way of communicating messages the child does not have the words to convey.

Online Support
- Beat – the eating disorders charity: www.b-eat.co.uk/about-eating-disorders
- Eating Difficulties in Younger Children and when to worry: www.inourhands.com/eating-difficulties-inyounger-children

Books
- Bryan Lask and Lucy Watson (2014) Can I tell you about Eating Disorders? A Guide for Friends, Family and Professionals. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Pooky Knightsmith (2015) Self-Harm and Eating Disorders in Schools: A Guide to Whole School Support and Practical Strategies. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.
- Pooky Knightsmith (2012) Eating Disorders Pocketbook. Teachers' Pocketbooks.