

Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

2022 - 2023



This policy will be reviewed on an annual cycle

Person responsible for the Policy:	Headteacher and Wellbeing Team
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1. KEY STAFF MEMBERS

All staff members have a responsibility to promote the mental health of children and of each other. As adults, staff colleagues are responsible for managing their own wellbeing, knowing that they are encouraged to raise concerns or issues affecting their wellbeing, within our supportive, listening culture, with a member of SLT, or through our free, confidential Employment Assistance Programme (EAP).

However, certain staff members have a specific role in the process. These are:

- SLT: Dayle Harrison (HT), Paul Osborne (DHT), Andrea Wood (Business Lead), Susan Haley (SENDCO), Caroline Shacklady (SEND Teacher), Helen Raistrick (KS2 AHT), Kerry Buckley (EYFS and KS1 AHT), Alison Turner (Engagement Manager) and Donna Rose (DSL)
- Designated Safeguarding Leads: Donna Rose (DSL) and Paul Osborne (DDSL)
- Well Being Team: Caroline Shacklady, Donna Rose and Dayle Harrison
- Engagement Team: Alison Turner (Manager) and Lisa Shepherd and Rachel Irving (Engagement Officers)
- SENDCO: Susan Haley
- Learning Mentor: Megan McGrath
- Headteacher: Dayle Harrison
- Governor: Ashley Hackett (Chairperson)

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health and wellbeing of a child, or a colleague, then in the first instance, they should speak to one of the above colleagues. Staff are strongly encouraged to use our **confidential staff email service** to inform RLA's Wellbeing Team of requiring support: **wellbeing@revoelearningacademy.co.uk**

Each class has its own 'Ask It Basket' where children can self-post concerns that they may have about their wellbeing, which the class teacher then quickly responds to. If a child feels stressed about doing this in school, they can use our Dojo reporting system to 'talk' with their class teacher initially between 8:30am and 4.00pm.

2. POLICY STATEMENT

We are committed to supporting the positive mental health and wellbeing of all children and staff. We fully believe that maintaining positive mental health is everybody's responsibility and that we all have a role to play. RLA's ethos and culture is supportive, nurturing, inclusive and respectful. We encourage children and staff to trust RLA adults to be proactively open and honest.

At RLA, we know that everyone experiences different life challenges, and that each of us may need support and guidance to cope with them at any given point in time. This policy is a guide to all staff, governors, and non-teaching staff. It outlines our approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing at RLA, regardless.

3. POLICY AIMS

To demonstrate our commitment to positive mental health and wellbeing, we always encourage:

- ✓ self-awareness and understanding of emotions and experiences
- ✓ active listening to understand a person's perspective
- ✓ positive, respectful and understanding relationships
- ✓ the nurturing of self-esteem and resilience

At RLA, our environment and ethos supports positive wellbeing by:

- ✓ adopting a whole school, non-judgemental approach
- ✓ offering timely support to any child or colleague who needs it
- ✓ celebrating both academic and non-academic achievements
- ✓ encouraging a sense of family belonging and community
- ✓ valuing children's and adult voices, making every person feel valued and respected
- ✓ educating our community about mental health and wellbeing issues, their signs, symptoms and support
- ✓ empowering staff to respond to early warning signs of mental ill-health in children and colleagues.

4. TEACHING MENTAL HEALTH

Our Curriculum, enhanced by Nurture UK and Resilience Frameworks, aims to give RLA children the skills, knowledge, strategies and understanding they need to keep themselves mentally healthy. This includes resilience techniques and training. In addition to this universal teaching, we have more targeted and specialist programmes available for identified children through our tiered curriculum offer. We regularly review our PHSE policy and curriculum to ensure that our provision meets our aims outlined in this policy; and to ensure that our full Curriculum Offer is underpinned by PSHE as a core subject at RLA.

5. SUPPORT AT RLA AND IN OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY

We have a range of support resources available for any child who presents with mental health needs, including: Circle Time, Peer discussions; Counselling Services; Therapy programmes; and Poppy, our trained Therapy Dog. If we identify that a child would benefit from a nurturing intervention, staff liaise with parents and carers to inform a profile assessment, completed to act as a baseline. This profile is then used to prioritise areas of need and suggest suitable interventions to meet the needs of the individual child within our tiered curriculum offer.

If a family or RLA staff member have concerns about the mental health of a child who may need an intervention from expert, external services eg Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), they need to be discussed with our SENDCO so that the case can be discussed and triaged with relevant professionals eg Primary Mental Health Worker. Following this meeting, a referral may be made to the service, who will operate an opt in appointment before starting any assessments.

6. SIGNPOSTING

Children are encouraged to self-report their concerns affecting their own or other's wellbeing using the class Ask It Basket or Class Dojo system. There is a lot of support networks available for our local community, including: GP surgeries; CAMHS; Community Autistic Support Pride Advocacy (CASPA); Revue Family Hub; and on line services. Our in-house Engagement Team is excellent at signposting to such services should support beyond RLA be required.

7. MANAGING DISCLOSURES

If a child discloses concerns about themselves or a friend to any staff member, staff will respond in a calm, supportive and non-judgemental manner. All disclosures will be immediately referred on to Designated Safeguarding staff (see front cover) and recorded on CPOMS and only shared with appropriate authorities if it is necessary to keep the child safe. Leaders, including the Wellbeing Team, make themselves available for informal and formal supervision and debriefing post a traumatic incident.

8. IDENTIFYING NEEDS AND WARNING SIGNS

All staff are trained in how to recognise warning signs of common mental health and wellbeing conditions. This means that they are able to offer help and support to children who need it, when they need it. These warning signs will always be taken seriously and staff who notice any of these signs will communicate their concerns with a key member of staff listed on this policy's front cover. Staff can, supported with home information, identify a range of behaviour and physical changes, including:

- Physical signs of harm
- Changes in eating and sleeping habits or mood
- Increased isolation from friends and family and becoming socially withdrawn
- Talking and/or joking about self-harm and/or suicide
- Drug and alcohol abuse
- Feelings of failure, uselessness, and loss of hope
- Secretive behaviour
- Clothing unsuitable for the time of year, e.g. a large winter coat in summer
- Negative behaviour patterns, e.g. disruption.

- Attendance, absenteeism, punctuality and lateness
- Changes in educational attainment and attitude towards education
- Inappropriate on-line activity
- Additional needs arising from difficulties that may impact on a child's mental health and wellbeing, eg family and/or relationship problems; bereavement and health difficulties.

9. SUPPORTING PEERS

We know that when a child or adult is affected with mental health issues, it can be a difficult time for their peers. Therefore, we will consider, on a case by case basis, any peers who may need support e.g. in a one-on-one or group setting.

10. TRAINING

Wellbeing best practice and strategies are shared with staff regularly through Revagogy, Shout Out Board (staffroom) and planned meetings. Training records are held in staff files. We post relevant information on RLA's website so staff and families can learn more about mental health.

11. Worklife Balance

People's circumstances are different. If colleagues have any concerns or suggestions to improve workload reduction and positive worklife balance, we strongly encourage colleagues to raise them with the Wellbeing Team who will then act upon the information given.

12. Email Etiquette - Communication with Families

To support professional wellbeing and positive worklife balance, we welcome communication with parents through Class Dojo and aim to respond within 2 working school days. We can only reasonably respond to families between 8.30am and 4.00pm each work day, due to teachers' teaching timetables - teachers can only respond outside of their teaching timetable.

13. Email Etiquette - Communication amongst Staff

We do not expect an immediate response to staff email requests. E.g.: 'Because of my personal circumstances, I choose to work at times outside the normal school day. However, I do not expect colleagues to respond my emails immediately. I welcome you to respond in good time within your preferred working pattern.' Accessible communication, such as Revagogy, is the responsibility of all staff to read to ensure consistent messages and information is shared across the site.

14. Induction

Whilst we provide a comprehensive and robust induction process, we encourage our inducted colleagues to feel able to raise any queries, concerns and suggestions at induction meetings.

15. Supervision

If colleagues are anxious/upset or concerned about anything – home or work related – and wish to share/discuss with a colleague in a supportive and supervisory manner, we strongly encourage colleagues to do so. Those who are in need of urgent emotional support / advice should speak with a member of SLT on entry to work so that we can aim to support a solution and remove/reduce anxieties.

16. POLICY REVIEW

This policy will be reviewed annually, incorporating staff and pupil voice opportunities. This is so that it remains up to date, useful, and relevant. We will also regularly review it in accordance with local, Trust and national policy changes.

17. Appendix 1: Examples of Wellbeing Activities to Support Positive Staff Wellbeing and Work Life Balance

- ✓ Purchase of individual digital devices eg laptops, tablets, cameras
- ✓ Collaborative planning during PPA time to facilitate fair work distribution and efficient sharing of teaching;
- ✓ Phase planning formats to ensure fit for purpose.
- ✓ Investment in HLTA role to provide TA professional development and guaranteed, planned professional release
- ✓ Continuing to fund TAs in all classes
- ✓ Feedforward policy explicitly tells teachers not to deep mark – only when relevant in all subjects; writing editing;
- ✓ Parent reporting workload requirement reduced. Annual report format co-produced with staff. Consideration to consultations during working day to avoid late working hours
- ✓ Commercial 'schemes' purchased to scaffold subject knowledge, effective teaching whilst minimising workload eg Chris Quigley, Art, Ed Shed, Learning Village, White Rose, RWI, SCARF
- ✓ Photocopying and related teaching admin completed by non admin staff to maximise teaching team.
- ✓ Commitment to professional CPD eg PE, IT and Computing upskilling time to support bespoke and universal teaching to improve confidence and competence (within directed hours)
- ✓ Paid and unpaid leave approved to support staff leave requests incl. child performances, family events etc
- ✓ Professional union representative release to support individual and union priorities within directed time
- ✓ Directed Time policy and calculation coproduced with RLA union representative (NEU)
- ✓ 1 hr club release for professional time – November to February (10 hours)
- ✓ Personal, trusted support for sensitive, personnel matters – external eg Employment Assistance Programme
- ✓ Analysed surveys used to co-produce improvement plans and strategies
- ✓ Staff social events
- ✓ Supportive welfare checks and staff absence return meetings
- ✓ Comfortable and equitable staff relaxation facilities
- ✓ Timed agendas to ensure efficient and effective management of meetings
- ✓ Predictable planned meetings to ensure predictable planning
- ✓ Free hospitality at planned events
- ✓ Supportive and clear messaging and planning during pinch points eg COVID, industrial disputes
- ✓ Accessible leadership delivering rapid support
- ✓ Invitations and consultation opportunities so as to maintain good communication and empowerment, with appropriate periods allocated, including directed time
- ✓ Accessible de-briefing / supervision for colleagues requiring the need to voice their opinions, needs, wants etc before going home
- ✓ Accessible communication such as Revagogy
- ✓ Reduction in planning formats to support teaching and learning once at a 'good' standard
- ✓ Items of school uniform purchased for staff to nurture belonging
- ✓ Collaborative, accessible e systems eg Google drive, Arbor