



Ruislip High School Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy

November 2024

Approved by Local Governing Body

Chair of Governors: John Garner

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1. Aims

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: “in order to help their children succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy”. At Ruislip High School, we aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is to our lives in just the same way as physical health.

We recognise that a students’ mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. Our role in school is to ensure that our students are able to manage times of change and stress, and that they are supported to reach their potential or access help when they need it. We endeavour to ensure that students learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues, and where they can go if they need help and support.

Our aim is to help develop the protective factors which build resilience to mental health problems and to be a school where:

- all students are valued and have a sense of belonging and feel safe
- all students are able to talk openly with trusted adults about their problems without feeling any stigma
- positive mental health is promoted and valued

In addition to student’s wellbeing, we recognise the importance of promoting staff mental health and wellbeing.

2. Scope

This policy is intended to:

- provide guidance to school staff on our school’s approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across all communities in the school
- inform students and parents/guardians about the support that they can expect from the school in respect of supporting mental health and wellbeing

3. Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across the school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a student’s mental health or wellbeing, they should inform a member of the safeguarding team.

There are a number of members of staff who are mental health first aid trained and this is advertised on the school’s digital signage.

The Designated Safeguard Lead is also the mental health lead for the school and has developed a whole-school mental health approach so as to provide clear leadership, vision and strategy.

4. Warning signs

All staff should be on the lookout for signs that a student’s mental health is deteriorating. Some warning signs include:

- changes in mood or energy level
- changes in eating or sleeping patterns
- changes in attitude in lessons or academic attainment
- changes in level of personal hygiene
- social isolation
- poor attendance or punctuality
- expressing feelings of hopelessness, anxiety, worthlessness or feeling like a failure
- abuse of drugs or alcohol
- weight loss or gain
- secretive behaviour
- covering parts of the body that they wouldn't have previously
- refusing to participate in P.E. or being secretive when changing clothes
- physical pain or nausea with no obvious cause
- physical injuries that appear to be self-inflicted
- talking or 'joking' about self-harm or suicide

5. Managing disclosures

If a student makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

In the first instance, staff will focus on the student's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

Staff will always follow the school's safeguarding procedures and pass on all concerns to the safeguarding team. All disclosures are recorded on the school's safeguarding recording system, CPOMS.

6. Confidentiality

Staff must not promise a student that they will keep a disclosure secret, instead they will be transparent about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- being the sole person responsible for a student's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing
- the support put in place for the student will be dependent on the member of staff being at school
- other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the student in question
- this will contravene the schools safeguarding procedures and staff code of conduct

Staff should always share disclosures with a member of the safeguarding team.

Before sharing information disclosed by a student with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the student and explain:

- who they will share the information with
- what information they will share
- why they need to share that information

Staff will always attempt to receive consent from the student to share their information, however, the safety of the student is always the priority.

Parents/guardians will be informed unless there is a child protection concern.

7. Supporting students

7.1 Baseline support for all student

As part of the school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all students, the school offers support to all students by:

- raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, tutor time and RSE
- signposting all students to sources of online support on the school website
- having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- providing students with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of the school that is negatively impacting their mental health
- appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- offering pastoral support through Heads of Year, Pastoral and Assistant Pastoral Directors

7.2 Assessing what further support is needed

If a student is identified as having a mental health need, the pastoral team will take a graduated and case-by-case approach to making an assessment and providing tailored support, further to the provision of the baseline support as detailed above.

7.3 Internal mental health interventions

Where appropriate, a student will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. The support offered at our school includes:

- Mentoring
- Nurture groups
- Counselling
- Study support groups

If a students' needs cannot be met by the internal offer the school provides, the school will make, or encourage parents/guardians to make, a referral for external support.

A student could be referred to:

- GP or paediatrician
- CAMHS
- Mental health charities (e.g. Samaritans, Mind, Young Minds, Kooth)
- Local counselling services

8. Supporting and collaborating with parents and guardians

We will work with parents and guardians to support students' mental health by:

- asking parents/guardians to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- informing parents/guardians of mental health concerns that we have about their child

- highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website
- liaising with parents/guardians to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health for their child
- providing guidance to parents/guardians on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent forums)

9. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be extremely challenging for students. Students may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all students impacted by mental health directly and/or indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- strategies they can use to support their friends
- warning signs to look out for
- signposting to sources of external support

10. Signposting

Sources of support are displayed on the school website so that students and parents are aware of how they can get help.

The pastoral team are available to provide further information to students and parents/guardians if they want to learn more about what support is available.

11. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

11.1 Mental health is taught as part of the RSE curriculum.

Students are taught to:

- develop healthy coping strategies
- challenge misconceptions around mental health
- understand their own emotional state
- keep themselves safe

For more information, see the school's RSE Policy which is on the school's website..

11.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with students in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging students to disclose when they think their mental health is deteriorating

12. Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a student experiencing poor mental health can be distressing for staff. To combat this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Offer staff support sessions
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment

13. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by the Designated Safeguard Lead annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.

14. Links to other policies

Please click [here](#) to view the policies below.

Safeguarding Policy

Ruislip High School RSE and PSHE Policy

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Policy

Behaviour Policy