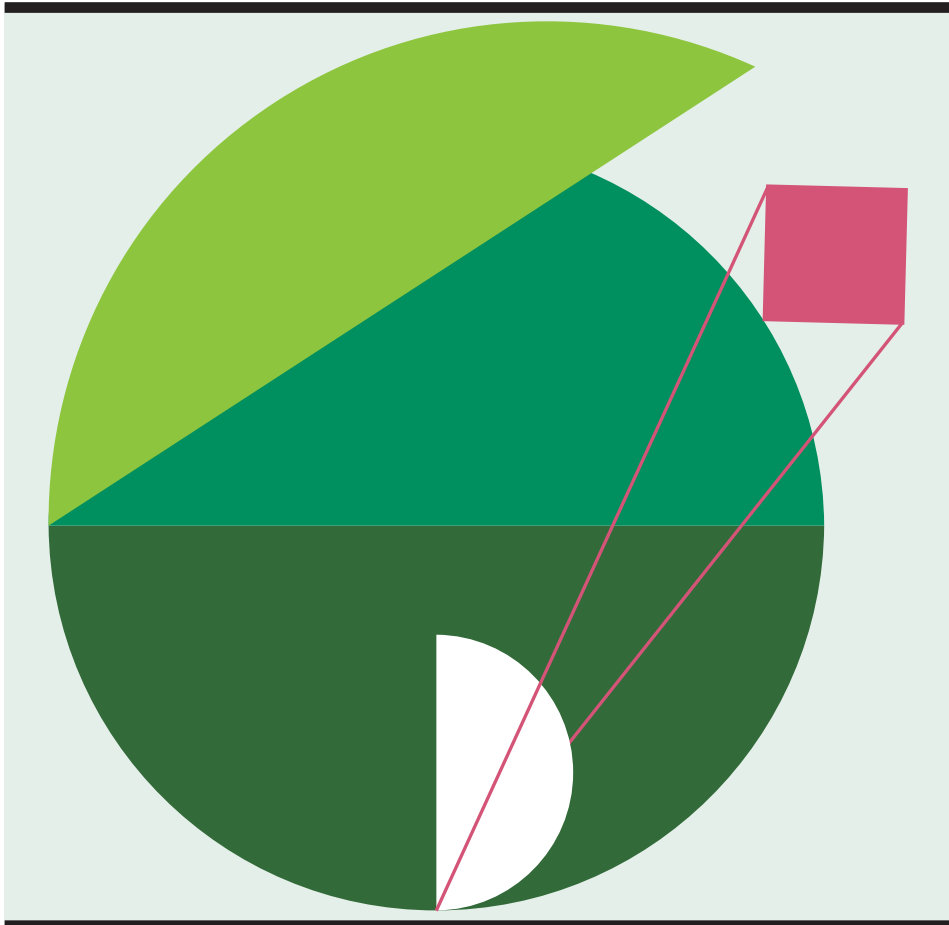


RSA Academies' Wellbeing and Mental Health Commitment



RSA Academies are inclusive schools that welcome and support all children, giving priority to their wellbeing and mental health alongside their academic progress

RSA Academies

RSA Academies recognise that many children will at certain times have difficulties in their lives out of school that may cause a barrier to learning.

Our schools strive to work with the child, their family, and other agencies as needed to ensure that the child has the support they need to achieve their full potential.

This commitment aims to:

- 1 To deliver a whole school approach to wellbeing and mental health in which all parts of the school work together coherently
- 2 Empower staff and pupils to take part in activities to improve wellbeing and emotional intelligence

We are adopting the widely accepted World Health Organisation definition of mental health and wellbeing:

“Mental health is defined as 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.”

Alongside the Mentally Healthy Schools' definition of whole school approach:

“A mentally healthy school is one that adopts a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing. It is a school that helps children flourish, learn and succeed by providing opportunities for them, and the adults around them, to develop the strengths and coping skills that underpin resilience. A mentally healthy school sees positive mental health and wellbeing as fundamental to its values, mission and culture. It is a school where child, staff and parent/ carer mental health and wellbeing is seen as 'everybody's business'.”

Principal and Senior Leadership Team commit to:

Developing a supportive school climate and ethos which builds a sense of belonging and purpose with importance placed on emotional intelligence, respect and trusting relationships through a preventative approach.

Equipping teachers to improve wellbeing by:

- Providing CPD that embeds a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing and gives staff understanding of children's psychological development, wellbeing, resilience and mental health
- Allocating curriculum time to teach about emotional literacy, wellbeing and resilience
- Supporting teacher wellbeing initiatives, including providing time or funding if necessary, and which aim to help staff have a healthy work-life balance

- Supporting initiatives that aim to decrease the pressure of tests/ exams for pupils and staff
- Including in the Behaviour Policy, an approach to 'difficult' behaviour that involves both responding actively with clear consequences and understanding its deeper roots which separates the behaviour from the pupil

Using evidence to inform decisions through surveys on:

- Staff well-being: for example, from feedback, decrease in sickness and absence rates, improved teaching ability and performance
- Pupil well-being: for example, happiness, a sense of purpose, confidence in talking to staff about mental health, development of social and emotional skills and attitudes that promote learning, success, well-being and mental health, in school and throughout life

Governing bodies commit to:

- Nominating a lead governor for wellbeing and mental health
- Ensuring wellbeing provision as a key focus in school improvement plan

- Monitoring wellbeing and mental health interventions to ensure their effectiveness and impact

Wellbeing and mental health leads commit to:

- Offering support to parents/carers, including mental health themed events and having information about mental health and wellbeing accessible at parent meetings and open evenings
- Running assemblies on wellbeing and mental health
- Setting up wellbeing and mental health related displays and campaigns around the school
- Maintaining a bank of mental health and wellbeing resources that staff and pupils can refer to
- Identifying pupils with risk factors associated with developing mental health issues and developing appropriate targeted interventions
- Providing more intense work on social and emotional skill development for pupils in difficulties, including one-to-one and group work

- Supporting counselling services for pupils
- Putting mentors in place for vulnerable students
- Building and maintaining relationships with local providers and commissioners to improve pathways into services for children and young people
- Providing clear plans and pathways where pupils experience mental health difficulties, including in the involvement of CAHMS and GPs when possible
- Ensuring effective use of data so that changes in pupils' patterns of attainment, attendance or behaviour are noticed and can be acted upon
- Evaluating and monitoring wellbeing and mental health interventions and reporting to governors

Teachers and middle leaders commit to:

- Using resources and CPD to inform understanding of wellbeing and mental health and know the early signs of mental health problems and enable conversations around wellbeing and mental health
- Identifying pupils in difficulty, being clear about what behaviour is 'normal' or a cause for concern, and referring pupils to the SENDCO, safeguarding lead or mental health lead when appropriate
- Taking opportunities to model and teach positive alternatives to poor behaviour and celebrating positive actions for example kindness and gratitude
- Helping all pupils cope with predictable changes and transitions, and being aware of new challenges posed by technology and social media

Pupils are invited to:

- Train to be a peer buddy or an anti-bullying advocate
- Take part in activities, where possible, that are shown to increase wellbeing such as extra-curricular opportunities at school, volunteering or social action projects
- Have a regular discussion about wellbeing and mental health at the School Council
- Be sensitive to other pupils and refer any concerns to a teacher

RSA Academies and the RSA commit to:

- Building meaningful collaboration between schools to support leaders in addressing challenges around wellbeing and mental health
- Having mental health and wellbeing as a theme for events when appropriate
- Collecting and sharing resources from schools across the Family and accessing networks, including RSA Fellows to support in this area
- Support RSA Academies' Teaching School Alliance with training on mental health
- Fundraising for wellbeing and mental health projects from trusts and foundations
- Highlighting the importance of wellbeing and mental health in schools in blogs and other public statements