



# Ryhope Infant School Academy

## Well being and Mental Health Policy

**Updated:** June 2026

**Produced by:** T Allen

**Review Date:** May 2028

## **Our Vision**

At Ryhope Infant School Academy, we are committed to supporting the emotional health and wellbeing of both our pupils and staff.

We have a supportive and caring ethos and our approach is respectful and kind, where each individual and contribution is valued.

At our school we know that everyone experiences life challenges that can make us vulnerable and at times, anyone may need additional emotional support.

We take the view that positive mental health is everybody's business and that we all have a role to play.

## **Our Intent**

At our school we will:

- Support children to understand their emotions and feelings better
- Help children feel comfortable sharing any concerns or worries
- Develop children's social skills so they can form and maintain relationships.
- Promote self-esteem and ensure children know that they count.
- Encourage children to be confident and 'dare to be different'
- Guide children to develop emotional resilience and to manage setbacks.

We will create a mentally healthy environment through:

- Promoting our school values and encouraging a sense of belonging.
- Promoting pupil voice and opportunities to participate in decision-making
- Celebrating academic and non-academic achievements
- Providing opportunities for children to develop a sense of worth through taking responsibility for themselves and others
- Providing opportunities to reflect.
- Access to appropriate support that meets their needs

## **Implementation**

The skills, knowledge and understanding needed by our children to keep themselves mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our developmental PSHE curriculum.

The specific content of lessons will be determined by the specific needs of the cohort we are teaching but we use the RSE Policy to ensure that we teach mental health and emotional wellbeing issues in a safe and sensitive manner:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/relationships-education-relationships-and-sex-education-rse-and-health-education>

## **Targeted support**

Our school will offer support through targeted approaches for individual pupils or groups of pupils which may include:

- Circle time approaches
- Use of SEAL resources.
- Managing feelings resources e.g. 'mood monsters'
- Break out spaces 'the green room'
- Healthy Heads – mental health support service

We will make use of observations and planned opportunities to monitor wellbeing.

## **Key Members of Staff**

Whilst all staff have a responsibility to promote the mental health of students, staff with a specific, relevant remit include:

- Tammy Allen – Designated Safeguarding Lead, parent liaison & Lead Wellbeing Champion
- Emma Lumsden – Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, SENCO & Wellbeing champion
- Amy Scott- Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead, Wellbeing Champion & Family liaison for nursery
- Mandy Simpson – PSHE, RSHE & PE Lead, Wellbeing Champion

## **Working with Parents**

In order to support our parents we will:

- Highlight sources of information and support about mental health and emotional wellbeing on our school website:  
<https://www.ryhopeinfantschool.org.uk/wellbeing/>
- Ensure that all parents are aware of who to talk to if they have concerns about their child.
- Make our emotional wellbeing and mental health policy easily accessible to parents <https://www.ryhopeinfantschool.org.uk/policies/>
- Share ideas about how parents can support positive mental health in their children by using popular platforms such as Facebook and Class DoJo.
- Keep parents informed about the mental health topics their children are learning about in PSHE via school blogs and Class DoJo.

## **Working with other agencies and partners**

As well as being an Operation Encompass school, as part of our targeted provision we will work with other agencies to support children's emotional health and wellbeing including:

- The school Nurse
- Educational psychology services
- Behaviour support through pupil referral unit
- Paediatricians
- CAMHS (child and adolescent mental health service)
- Family support workers
- Healthy Heads

### **Identifying needs and Warning Signs**

All staff will upload and share concerns about pupils with Designated Safeguarding Lead and will document these on an electronic tracking system (CPOMS)

The intention is to quickly identify possible difficulties including:

- Attendance
- Punctuality
- Relationships
- Approach to learning
- Physical indicators
- Negative behaviour patterns
- Family circumstances
- Recent bereavement
- Health indicators

Concerns will be taken seriously and be followed up with appropriate actions.

### **Staff Well Being and Mental Health**

We acknowledge the potential impact that work has on an individual's physical and mental health, and that there is a persuasive case, as well as a moral and legal duty for taking steps to promote staff wellbeing as far as reasonably practicable.

At Ryhope Infant School Academy we are committed to fostering a culture of co-operation, trust and mutual respect, where all individuals are treated with fairness and dignity, and can work at their optimum level.

We also recognise that work-related stress has a negative impact on staff wellbeing, and that it can take many forms and so needs to be carefully analysed and addressed at an organisational level.

*We encourage all staff to:*

- Treat others they interact with during the course of their work with fairness, consideration and respect
- Raise concerns with their line manager if they feel there are work issues that are causing them stress and having a negative impact on their wellbeing
- Be liable for their own health and wellbeing as far as is practically possible.

- Take ownership of managing own time and setting personal goals and as appropriate which allows the individual to work effectively in their team and reduce the risk of stress.
- Take responsibility for working effectively in their assigned roles, supporting others as appropriate and helping to avoid causing stress to their colleagues.

### **Initiatives in School to support staff Well-being**

In school, our 'Well-being team' will organise appropriate activities to promote health and wellbeing. In our staffroom we have a 'Wellness Wall' which is used to engage staff in friendly activities and to plan team events. Events in the past have been visits to restaurants, day trips and Yoga.

### **Support for Staff**

In the event that teachers need to seek support linked to their health and well-being their primary contact would be their manager. Support will be offered within school and if further is required, management can refer to external agencies.

### **Monitoring and Evaluating Impact**

Our head teacher will work in conjunction with children, their parents and teachers to monitor how effective interventions are and to signpost parents and their child(ren) to the best support. She will also maintain regular contact with families, updating school records accordingly and amending actions as appropriate.

### **The child support and referral pathway**

For infant-aged children, early intervention is essential. Our pathway operates on a tiered system of need:

- **Tier 1: Universal Support (All Children)**
  - High-quality PSHE curriculum, nurture-based classroom environments, and emotional regulation tools (zones of regulation).
- **Tier 2: School-Based Interventions & Signposting**
  - If a teacher, parent, or the child themselves highlights a wellbeing concern, it is logged onto the school's safeguarding system (CPOMS).
  - 1:1 check-ins with the adults in the class (class teacher and teaching assistant), work with Healthy Heads (small group work).
  - Head teacher (Mental Health Lead) and/or SENCO assesses need and meets with parents/carers to agree on an in-school intervention plan.
- **Tier 3: Specialist External Support**
  - If needs are complex or severe, the school makes a targeted referral to external services.
    - Together for Children (TfC): Multi-agency services supporting children and families.

- CYPS (Children and Young People's Service - NHS): For specialist mental health assessments and therapies.
- Early Help Assessment (EHA): Accessing broader community and family support services.
- SCCYPMHS (Sunderland Community Children & Young people's Mental Health Service).
- 0-19 service.

## The Staff Support & Referral Pathway

We recognise that staff wellbeing is the foundation of a healthy school environment.

- **Self-Referral & Signposting:** Staff experiencing stress or mental health concerns can directly contact the school's Headteacher. There are also signposts in the staffroom to self-help services such as Washington Mind.
- **Confidential External Services:**
  - Education Support: A UK-wide charity providing a free, confidential helpline for all education staff available 24/7. Access and find resources via the Education Support platform - <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk>
  - Occupational Health: Staff can be referred via the school for structured occupational health support, counselling, and reasonable workplace adjustments.
  - Staff are encouraged to contact their local GP and can self-refer directly to NHS Talking Therapies.

## Working with Parents and Carers

We work in active partnership with families, recognising that parents play a critical role in a child's wellbeing.

- Parents will be consulted at every stage of the in-school referral pathway and involved in creating action plans.
- The school will signpost parents to helpful resources and local parent support groups - <https://www.togetherforchildren.org.uk/family-hubs>
- General guidance on supporting children's emotional health can be found via the NSPCC Child Mental Health hub <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/advice-for-families/mental-health-parenting/>