

Promoting emotional wellbeing and mental health across RHS



Welcome

Welcome to the first edition of the RHS wellbeing bulletin.

Did you know that our school is taking part in a Wellbeing award? All that and more is discussed in this edition of the newsletter.

Mrs Eales discusses men's mental health month and reminds us of the significance of supporting the men in our lives.

From an international boarder perspective, Luca shares his experiences and gives advice on how to settle in as an international encouraging new pupils

to RHS to get involved.

Eve interviews the independent person, Mrs Steer, who plays a vital role in the school community in wellbeing and supporting students, however who is she and why should you make use of her?

And lastly, we shall be showcasing some of the highlights of last week's odd socks day and some standout wellbeing moments within the boarding houses.

Izzy Scragg (Yr13)



What is the Wellbeing Award?

This award aims to actively promote wellbeing and mental health for our community at the Royal Hospital School. A team of enthusiastic staff, pupils, parents and governors make up the 'Change Team'.

Our role

Our role is to promote a positive culture at our school, ensuring that wellbeing and mental health is regarded as a responsibility of all.

Through recognising the importance of wellbeing, we have been working hard to promote and improve wellbeing with across the school.

We have had an independent award advisor, Jo Morton-Brown, who has visited the school to help us identify areas we can improve, and how we can achieve the award recognising the excellent work

that already takes place.

How to find out more

If you would like to know more about the award and the steps we are taking to improve wellbeing at RHS, you can either ask our student representatives, Luca Baretton (Y13) or Isabel Scragg (Y13).



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Eve Hughes talks to the independent person

On Monday afternoon, I had a lovely chat with our Independent person Ms Steer, asking about her role at RHS, she was very happy to talk to me about her life and her connection with our school along with her responsibility as the independent person.

A background in helping others

She was an English teacher for most of her life and worked as the head of sixth form at what is now Ipswich High School (previously Woolverstone Hall), she moved to RHS with her husband in 1974 as he was the housemaster of Howe House. She taught here briefly and got to understand the school and our traditions. She said that being a teacher both here and at other schools meant she frequently saw children with no outlet or anyone they felt they could speak to so when she was offered the position of independent person around 6 years ago (she can't quite remember, it's been so long) she felt it would be a new, exciting opportunity to re-engage with her previous role as she had loved her career so much and wanted to do something in that avenue once more.

Why speak to a stranger?

When I spoke to her about whether she thinks the option to speak to a stranger is useful she said that she thinks having several avenues is helpful as she saw many children without any options. We can make a decision even if that isn't her, she is still an option. She hopes no one needs it but in moments of distress people know that they can turn to her.

Does the system work?

She told me that in her 6 years (roughly) as an independent person, she has had one phone call. This, to her, was excellent as she knew the system works but that there are still qualified people here at RHS that can help children in distress.

Eve Hughes, Howe, Year 12



From Dresden to Holbrook - settling in as a new international pupil

Moving to a different country is always difficult - no matter if it's in Year 10 or for university. Usually you settle in very quickly. Of course, the language barrier is difficult to overcome at first, but once you have settled in, you will notice the cultural differences between your home country and England. However, this can be an opportunity to discover something new.

A new challenge

Take up the challenge and try to get to know different people. There is a very good chance that there will be other students from your home country. These pupils can help you settle in and get to know your surroundings. Sometimes you miss home and talking to someone who is in the same situation can help a lot. Be sure that there will always be someone you can talk to, whether it is a classmate, a teacher or the independent person.



Who can I talk to?



We all have good days and bad days. One day you may feel on top of the world, the next you might be struggling to deal with what life is throwing at you. You are not alone at RHS!

There is always someone here to listen. This may be a friend, a teacher, or maybe someone from the list below:

- Your Housemaster or Housemistress
- Your Tutor
- Matron
- The Chaplain
- Sister Sweeney
- Miss King, Deputy Head (Pastoral)
- Mr Dixon, Second Master
- Mr Lockyer, Headmaster
- Peer Support Mentors
- Heads of House or Prefects

If you feel you need to talk to someone outside of school:

Mrs Steer, Independent Person
01473 327166 / 07598 975873
(17:00-20:00)

If you feel you can't TALK to any of these people you can use WHISPER, in confidence, on your iPad via the Whisper icon or the link on the intranet dashboard. Alternatively, you can text ROY + your message to 07860 021584.

Anyone who has experienced sexual harassment or abuse in a school, or has concerns that someone else has, can call the NSPCC helpline - 0800 136 663.



childline
ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME
childline.org.uk | 0800 1111

NSPCC

We look out for each other. If you're worried about anybody in your class, year or house, ALWAYS tell someone. If you want to report something anonymously, you can WHISPER.

Additional information is available on house noticeboards

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A familiar face, in a brand new exciting role

Pupil Welfare Assistant is a brand-new role which I was incredibly lucky to be appointed to as of September of this year. I am not a counsellor, but someone with a listening ear who is available for pupils if they need a little extra support or advice.

What to talk about

Pupils often use time with me to talk about how they are feeling. I will always listen and then try to offer some insight and coping strategies based on what they have chosen to share with me.

Events across the school

Each week I like to acknowledge an event and circulate some wellbeing activities and information around that theme. Upcoming themes include:

Men's Mental Health month, The power of gratitude (U.S. Thanksgiving), Be 'Appy! (National App Day), The gift of giving (Christmas). If my door is open, please pop in and say hello!

Mrs Eales,
Pupil Welfare
Assistant

**Peer mentoring–reflections on anti bullying**

As Peer Mentors, our job is to look after and take care of others, as well as being someone who is easily approachable and, moreover, open to people, as sometimes the most important thing is to be heard and listened to, rather than being given some advice.

Reaching out

It is very important to reach out. That was the theme from Anti-bullying week, but what we are trying to emphasize is that it is not a temporary event. As Miss Taylor-Payne's Chapel speech showed, bullying results in long term challenges, effecting even the people you wouldn't expect.

Moving on

As members of Sixth Form, we will all be moving on from RHS at some point soon, to a place that might not celebrate anti-bullying week, but may certainly have bullies. This is why it is important to talk about. By reaching out, strides can be made to overcome these challenges. Reaching out can be about the big or the little things. Mr. C, one of the house parents in Nelson, who many of us know and love, speaks about the importance of your reaction over the importance of whatever situation occurred. If things are not working in your favour, or you are struggling, respond to this in a healthy way by reaching out.

Who can I talk to

The school talks about 'who can I talk to?' and we agree there is a huge range of people you could confide in. This list on the posters is obviously not extensive, and everyone will have a different person they feel comfortable with, but we hope this is a good starting place.

Who do we represent?

We do not represent just women, or just teenagers or just peer mentors. What we do represent is an idea of a society, where victims of bullying can reach out to others to be heard. Always reach out for help if you need it.

Jaz Wright, Lily Ironmonger and Katya Demchenko



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Wellbeing across the houses

There has been plenty going on around the houses in terms of wellbeing. As part of 'Feel good Friday', Hood house have been carefully decorating mugs with positive affirmations and kind words. Mrs Skau has been baking the girls banana bread and cakes, providing them with ice cream and hot dogs. They

even have attempted post half-term face masks! Although no photos officially exist!

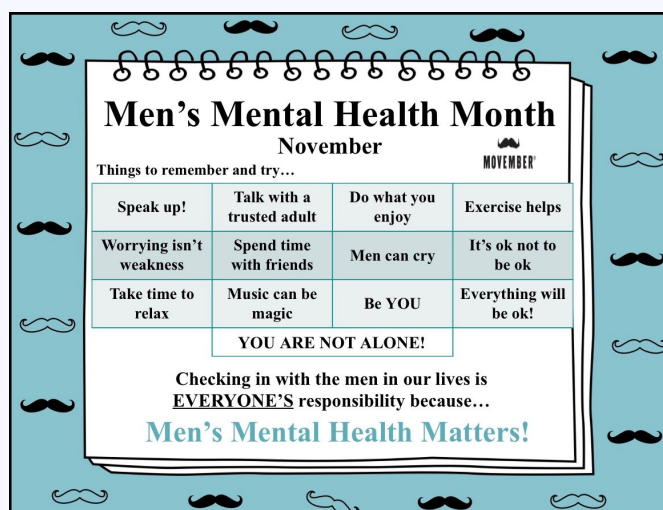
Wellbeing books

Mrs Eales and Miss King have been busy dropping off new additions of Liggy Webb's brilliant wellbeing books. Each Housemaster and

Housemistress has been provide with the twelve books, ranging from sleeping well to relaxation.

St Vincent

Across in St. Vincent, Mr Eales and Matron have been using family time to discuss men's mental health month. Mr Eales gave an insightful and compelling speech on the importance of being aware and looking after ones mental health.



Nelson

Nelson's ever popular 'Wellness Wednesday' continues to attract many pupils each week. Mr C has been taking pupils on an early morning run around the parade



square. At lunch the Chaplain's been in Nelson to host 'Chatlain' - a time and space to talk. In the evening, there has been meditation, yoga and celebrity appearances from the immensely cute Bouks the cat!



Odd Socks Day!

And finally, would it be the Michaelmas term without odd socks being worn across the houses. There was even a competition to see who could come up with a 'Catchy Caption', eventually the top three were



Raleigh, Collingwood and St. Vincent. Rumour has it that the winning houses were rewarded with donuts! We look forward to seeing the wellbeing activities taking place as we move towards Christmas.