



School Mental Health Award Final Assessment Validation Report

School: The Royal Grammar School, High Wycombe

School Lead: Luke Pettengell

Coach: Kathryn Grice

Date: 10th July 2023

| Competency | Statements as Assessed by the School |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| Leadership and Strategy | Embracing |
| Organisational structure and culture - staff | Embracing |
| Organisational structure and culture - pupils | Embracing |
| Support for staff | Embracing |
| Professional development and learning | Embracing |
| Support for pupils | Embracing |
| Working with parents and carers | Embracing |
| Working with external services | Excelling |

The Royal Grammar School has presented a compelling profile of evidence that demonstrates that they meet the requirements to be awarded the School Mental Health Silver Award. The school has used the framework and content of the Award to great effect to develop their mental health and wellbeing strategies, structures, and practices. Completing the School Mental Health Award has clearly given the school a framework to evaluate, improve and develop their practice.

The school leaders and governors have been extremely supportive and active with regards to the award's focus. The school appointed a governor for Mental Health and Wellbeing who is active in their role and has now qualified in Strategic Leadership in Mental Health and Wellbeing through the National College. The headmaster demonstrates the school's commitment to wellbeing, he chairs a staff Wellbeing Group, which meets once a half-term, looking at implementing changes to make meaningful impact and support Staff Wellbeing and Mental Health. The school lead talks of how the head leading on this has raised the profile of the school's genuine commitment to Mental Health and Wellbeing for all. The award has also prompted the school to evaluate and improve upon a wide range of policies which have ensured that mental health and wellbeing is now moving towards a core aspect of the day-to-day running of the school. Job adverts, performance management are just two examples of many core school documents that now refer to mental health and wellbeing and demonstrate the school's commitment to mental health and wellbeing being central to their provision.

The school mental health lead talks about the school being a positive working environment where staff feel safe and supported to be and do their best and to share concerns which affect their mental health. There is a yearly WellBee Survey of which anonymous results are shared with staff and Governors. The most recent Wellbee staff survey gave very positive results, with an overall score of 4.02, placing RGS in the top decile for both schools and HSE (average 3.6). The school acknowledges, like many schools at present, that workload can be high. It is refreshing to hear this acknowledged, alongside a commitment to evaluating and easing pressures on the staff at RGS. One such attempt to mitigate pressures is the school's centralised exam week where a large portion of teaching is removed to support staff with their marking load. In addition, the school operates a 'no questions' policy in terms of providing paid leave for personal events that go far beyond standard absence policies such as weddings, children's sports days, nativity plays etc. There is also a school sabbatical policy allowing staff formal career breaks to support their mental health and wellbeing which has been utilised by three school staff since 2020. The school also ensure there supportive provision for staff to manage their wellbeing such as activities, events, regular celebrations of



life event alongside provision for those who may need additional support for mental health and wellbeing such as formal coaching or their free staff counselling slots available to staff who many need additional support.

The provision for students at the Royal Grammar School is strong, the school have fifty trained Mental Health Champions, three Youth Mental Health First Aiders, three Papyrus trained Suicide prevention Specialists. All staff in pastoral roles, Heads of Year, Boarding Staff, LSAs are trained as Mental Health Champions. The school also provides counselling on site with three qualified counsellors managed by the Student Development Administrator. Sixth form students trained as mental health champions who support lower year groups are cited as one of the biggest impacts across the timeframe of the award. The interest in the course from both sixth form students and younger students was high and the lead talks about the positive impact of the older students supporting their younger students in reducing stigma and exemplifying a supportive culture. The school lead talks about the importance of their provision and their work to end the stigma around mental health, he states that there has been a noticeable cultural shift where students feel able to identify when their friends need support and that they can turn to each other or staff within school to help them. The lead also talks about how the Royal Grammar school has started to be recognised as a school with strong pastoral support in the local area and that more parents wish for their child to attend the school for this reason. The school is a centre for Co-Curricular Excellence and the lead talks of the wide range of co-curricular activities that the school provides and is proud to mention that the activities are not solely centred around sporting activities, that the school caters for a wide range of interests, an example of one such club being the successful Warhammer club.

The school is committed to removing the stigma regarding mental health. As a boy's grammar school, RGS have been acutely aware of their responsibility to remove the stigma and challenge unhelpful male stereotypes that see some boys viewing communication and confiding in their peers or teachers as a weakness. The school presents a strong message of "it's ok not to be ok". Support cards from the Molly Rose Foundation play a part of all mental health and wellbeing pastoral interactions. The school runs a positive masculinity group which focuses on mental health in men and is doing some exemplary work in this field. The Royal Grammar School has started to share their practice around positive masculinity with three local schools in the area and is even taking their work in the area internationally with a member of staff invited to discuss their work in Auckland, New Zealand. Staff also lead by example and regularly speak to students about their own mental health experiences, for example, a member of staff ran sessions for



students discussing his own journey after the death of his own father and how this affected his mental health.

The school is also active in supporting parents as well as students with their mental health. This year a student was provided with a fully funded place in their Boarding House whilst his mother received support with her own mental health. More generally, there is a parent's yoga and wellbeing event alongside classes that promote community within the school, run by the RGSPA along with more regular events.

The Royal Grammar School is now sharing their strong provision and impacting on the local and regional area. The RGS is acting as mentor school for newly qualified DSLs from a school in Stratford to look at Mental Health, Wellbeing and Safeguarding. The school is also an active member of the Challenge Partner hub, in which they regularly send senior members of staff to local schools in an 'SLE-style' capacity to offer support in areas such as behaviour. Equally as a Centre for Co-Curricular Excellence, they are supporting schools nationally in an SLE-role, helping other schools improve their co-curricular provision and talk about how vital this is to supporting students with their wellbeing.

To take the focus of the award further, the school will continue their local and regional outreach work and intends to explore further ways to continue outreaching at a national level. I would encourage the school to seek opportunities to share practice at national level and to apply for re-verification when they feel they are ready.

I am delighted to recommend The Royal Grammar School for consideration to be awarded the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools School Mental Health Award at Silver standard.

Kathryn Grice

Coach

School Mental Health Award

10th July 2023



LEEDS BECKETT UNIVERSITY
CARNEGIE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Minds
Ahead

Competency profiles provided by the school.

| Leadership and Strategy | |
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| The school has a named senior lead for mental health of pupils and staff | Y |
| The school has a named Governor for mental health of pupils and staff | Y |
| Governors understand, embrace, and lead the ethos and business case for a comprehensive mental health and wellbeing approach within the school | 4 |
| Governors hold school leaders to account for the mental health of staff and pupils | 4 |
| Senior Leaders develop and implement the strategies and structures needed to improve mental health in the school | 4 |
| Staff have mental health as a core part of their job description and role requirements | 3 |
| Leaders' performance management includes a focus relating to mental health | 3 |
| The school has a range of robust staff-focussed policies that support mental health which were developed in consultation with all staff groups and leaders and approved by Governors | 4 |
| The school has pupil-focussed policies that support good mental health that were developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents and approved by governors. | 4 |
| Senior leaders use regular reports and updates including data about the mental health of staff and pupils to implement future actions, channel resources and commissioning external agencies | 4 |

| Organisational Structure & Culture - Staff | |
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| The school is a positive working environment where staff feel safe and supported to be and do their best and to share concerns which affect their mental health | 4 |
| Leaders regularly consult with a range of employees from across the school to gain informal and formal feedback on stress-related issues and how to improve and support mental health and wellbeing | 4 |
| Communication protocols are well established and adhered to e.g., restrictions on unnecessary emailing in evenings, overnight and weekends | 3 |
| Workload expectations are made explicit and are well managed, such as marking & assessment, hours in school, working at home | 3 |
| Staff self-care is encouraged | 4 |
| Senior leaders model the expectations they have of all staff to promote good mental health | 2 |
| All staff in school are responsible for the health and wellbeing of themselves and promoting that of others | 3 |
| The norms of professional dialogue are developed, and positive language is modelled and used by all staff | 4 |
| A culture of tolerance, trust and openness is developed | 4 |
| Stigma regarding mental health and support for individuals and groups is challenged | 4 |
| Job flexibility is supported where possible within a secure business case | 4 |



| Organisational Structure & Culture -Pupils | |
|---|---|
| The school values, acknowledges and utilises knowledge and expertise of staff, parents and professionals working with the school with regards to mental health and wellbeing | 4 |
| Strategies that promote and develop mental health and wellbeing are embedded in the curriculum and is designed to meet the needs of the pupils specific to their social and emotional needs and developmental age | 4 |
| The school has clear strategies which are understood by pupils, school staff and parents to support pupils whose mental health is a cause for concern | 4 |
| The school has clear strategies on how to support the mental health and wellbeing of pupils with special educational needs, disabilities, disadvantaged and vulnerable children | 4 |
| The school ensures that pupils expressing concerns are listened to | 4 |
| The school has clear pathways and provisions available to discuss mental health concerns, managing student difficulties and create strategies with follow ups | 4 |
| Talk about mental health is normalised, any stigma is challenged by creating a culture of empathy and openness through an ongoing forum of discussion and exploration | 4 |
| The school promotes positive and healthy relationships amongst pupils, staff and with parents | 4 |
| Pupils are engaged through encouraging pupil voice, authentic involvement in learning, decision making and peer-led approaches. | 3 |

| Support for Staff | |
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| A comprehensive staff health and wellbeing offering supports staff mental health | 4 |
| The school consistently works towards reducing the stressors that affect staff mental health | 4 |
| School has clear pathways to staff support which are understood by all colleagues | 3 |
| Access to coaching and counselling is available and encouraged where deemed helpful | 3 |
| Staff are encouraged and supported to establish and participate in activities that foster good mental health and wellbeing, based on sound evidence of their impact | 4 |
| Successes are regularly acknowledged and celebrated | 4 |



| Professional Development & Learning | |
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| The school has a proportion of staff trained in Mental Health First Aid for adults appropriate to the size of the staff cohort | 2 |
| The school lead for mental health and other key staff are trained in evidence-based, and preferably professionally accredited mental health and wellbeing training, appropriate to the age group of the pupils in their school | 4 |
| The school's named Governor for mental health has training which develops understanding of mental health and wellbeing in schools for pupils and staff and the role of the Governing Body in supporting good mental health | 4 |
| All Governors access professional development opportunities to develop their understanding skills in mental health linked to the role of the Governing Body | 3 |
| Staff CPD relating to pupil and staff mental health is aligned to clearly defined, expected outcomes which set out the mental health requirements for their role | 4 |
| All staff access professional development opportunities to develop their skills in pupil mental health and wellbeing | 4 |
| Staff are able to develop their understanding and practice in adult mental health, wellbeing, and self-care through effective CPD opportunities and act as role models for pupils | 3 |
| Staff have access to information and have the opportunities to develop their practice in relation to new challenges posed by information technology and social media such as cyber bullying | 4 |
| All teaching and associate staff have been trained and have a broad understanding of mental health issues and promoting wellbeing in pupils appropriate to the age of the children in the school | 3 |
| ECTs and all new staff complete an induction programme which ensures they have the understanding and skills expected of all staff in the school with regards to mental health | 4 |
| All staff mental health CPD is underpinned by evidence and expertise, aligned to DfE CPD standards | 4 |
| Staff feel supported to take forward any new learning from training into their practice | 4 |



| Support for Pupils | |
|--|---|
| Mental health and wellbeing are embedded in the curriculum with supporting activities including assemblies, focus days, lessons and other events where mental health, wellbeing, social and emotional skills, attitudes, and values are explicitly taught by well trained and enthusiastic teachers using positive, experiential, and interactive methods and resources. This learning is integrated into the mainstream processes of school life | 4 |
| Pupil wellbeing is developed through implicit methods of teaching and learning such as: emotional literacy, character strengths, values, virtues, resilience, and self-awareness | 4 |
| Relationships within the school are positive providing a nurturing, safe and supportive environment which creates a sense of belonging for pupils | 4 |
| Pupils understand and can express a range of emotions and are able to share their emotions and ask for help to support their emotional awareness | 3 |
| Pupils feel able to disclose incidence of bullying and any form of discriminatory behaviours, they feel their worries and concerns are heard, respected, and taken seriously by staff | 4 |
| Staff respond wisely to 'challenging' behaviour, both responding actively with clear consequences and also understanding its deeper roots, taking opportunities to model and teach positive alternatives | 5 |
| Pupils know how to ask for support, and this is followed up by staff | 5 |
| There are clear internal referral procedures, understood by all staff, to ensure timely and appropriate support is sourced and accessed for pupils in need | 5 |
| Evidence based mental health support services are provided and accessed which draw on a sound understanding of child and adolescent development, such as: drop ins, mentoring, coaching, counselling, pastoral support, mindfulness, self-awareness, empathy, and resilience building interventions and wellbeing skills workshops group, peer support, mindfulness, self-awareness, empathy, and resilience building interventions and wellbeing skills workshops | 5 |
| Where pupils experience mental health difficulties, clear plans and pathways to specialist support exist, using a coherent teamwork approach, including in the involvement of outside agencies such as CAMHS, school nurse or GP. Help is rooted within the school environment | 5 |
| Displays and posters provide various information on evidence based mental health support and how to improve wellbeing such as self-help booklets, library books and other media resources | 3 |
| Effective early intervention support is provided and evaluated | 4 |
| Physical activity and relaxation activities are on offer that improve wellbeing | 4 |
| If peer mentoring is used, those who serve as peer mentors have training and a support structure which they can use if needed | 4 |
| Pupils are involved in the design of mental health and wellbeing initiatives and are encouraged to give feedback and provide new ideas | 4 |
| Achievements and successes of students are recognised and celebrated | 4 |



| Working with Parents and Carers | |
|---|---|
| The school ensures a non-judgemental, warm, and welcoming environment exists for parents/carers | 4 |
| Parents have access to school mental health and wellbeing policies | 3 |
| Effective relationships with parents/carers are fostered and maintained | 4 |
| The school is committed to continuously improving parental communication | 4 |
| Parents have access to staff or mental health professional/s if they have concerns about their child's mental health | 4 |
| Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the life of the school | 4 |
| Parents are involved in interventions that supports their children's mental health and wellbeing | 5 |
| Any stigma shown by parents about mental health is handled sensitively yet firmly | 3 |
| The school provides learning, guidance, and support for parents to help them: | 4 |
| The school has effective strategies in working with all parents/carers | 4 |
| Systems are in place that ensures parents/carers are regularly updated on their child's progress as well as any concerns that may exist | 3 |
| Parents share their views on how to develop the wellbeing of the school | 4 |
| Support, signposting, and referrals are made for parents who require support with their own mental health or support in their relationships with their children | 3 |

| Working with External Stakeholders | |
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| Staff understand the clear referral procedures to access timely external services appropriate to the needs of pupils with escalating or long-term mental health difficulties | 5 |
| The school has developed strong links with CAMHS and other agencies ensuring regular two-way communication, support, and guidance | 5 |
| School leaders are shaping local children's mental health policy and services | 4 |
| The school is up to date with new legislation and DfE guidance | 5 |
| The school is aware of local agencies and organisations which offer mental health support services | 5 |
| Specialist organisations work with the school to develop the mental health and wellbeing of staff, children, and parents | 5 |
| The school is aware of and builds relationships with local community projects, voluntary organisations, and networks | 5 |
| Due diligence is carried out prior to engaging any external agency / professional providing mental health services to pupils. This involves understanding the evidence base for their proposed work, their qualifications, recent training/CPD, obtaining references, knowledge of their professional body, their supervision structure (including the name and qualifications of their supervisor), who you should complain to regarding any concerns. In addition, the school will carry out their usual safeguarding checks | 5 |
| Comprehensive Service Level Agreements are in place which clarify roles and responsibilities and reduce risks. Amongst other things, this will make clear the services being provided, the tools and methods used, issues around confidentiality, how outcome data will be recorded and evaluated and how feedback will take place | 5 |
| The school ensures robust quality assurance for all external mental health and wellbeing provision taking place, which is reported and evaluated at senior and governor level | 5 |

