

Mental Health and Well-being Policy

Everyone Matters

We expect our community to be kind, polite and respectful

Everyone Helps

We expect our community to make sensible choices

Everyone Succeeds

We expect our community to work hard

Policy Owner	Principal
Scope of the Policy	This policy applies to all of the school community
Last reviewed by trustees	June 2026
Next review due	June 2027
Summary of key changes	P1 – Dates Removed Contents Formatting changed

School Name and Address	Rainford High
Web Address	www.rainford.org.uk
Telephone Number	01744 885914
Age range of School	Mixed sex 11-18
Name and Contact details of SENCO	Joanne Burgess Gained NASENCo Award September 2014 j.burgess@rainford.org.uk 01744 885914 ex 161
Senior Leadership Link	Ian Young i.young@rainford.org.uk

Policy statement

At Rainford High, we are committed to promoting positive mental health and emotional wellbeing to all students, their families and members of staff and trustees. Our open culture allows students' voices to be heard, and through the use of effective policies and procedures we ensure a safe and supportive environment for all affected - both directly and indirectly - by mental health issues. Our school Ethos Everyone Matters, Everyone Helps, Everyone Succeeds this represents the way we do things at Rainford High.

Scope

This policy is a guide to all staff – including non-teaching and trustees – outlining Rainford High's approach to promoting mental health and emotional wellbeing.

It should be read in conjunction with other relevant school policies.

Policy Aims

- Promote positive mental health and emotional wellbeing in all staff and students.
- Increase understanding and awareness of common mental health issues.
- Enable staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental ill health in students.
- Enable staff to understand how and when to access support when working with young people with mental health issues.
- Provide the right support to students with mental health issues, and know where to signpost them and their parents/carers for specific support.
- Develop resilience amongst students and raise awareness of resilience building techniques.
- Raise awareness amongst staff and gain recognition from SLT that staff may have mental health issues, and that they are supported in relation to looking after their wellbeing; instilling a culture of staff and student welfare where everyone is aware of signs and symptoms with effective signposting underpinned by behaviour and welfare around school.

Key staff members

This policy aims to ensure all staff take responsibility to promote the mental health of students; however key members of staff have specific roles to play:

- Pastoral Staff
 - SENCO
- Designated Safeguarding Lead
 - Mental Health First Aid Champions
 - Equality and diversity leads

If a member of staff is concerned about the mental health or wellbeing of student, in the first instance they should speak to the safeguarding officers and log on cpoms.

If there is a concern that the student is high risk or in danger of immediate harm, the school's child protection procedures should be followed.

If the child presents a high-risk medical emergency, relevant procedures should be followed, including involving the emergency services if necessary.

Teaching about mental health

The skills, knowledge and understanding our students need to keep themselves - and others - physically and mentally healthy and safe are included as part of our curriculum.

We will follow the guidance issued by the PSHE Association to prepare us to teach about mental health and emotional health safely and sensitively.

Incorporating this into our curriculum at all stages is a good opportunity to promote students' wellbeing through the development of healthy coping strategies and an understanding of students' own emotions as well as those of other people.

Additionally, we will use such lessons as a vehicle for providing students who do develop difficulties with strategies to keep themselves healthy and safe, as well as supporting students to support any of their friends who are facing challenges.

Signposting

We will ensure that staff, students and parents/carers are aware of the support and services available to them, and how they can access these services.

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken, following their child protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead or a deputy.

Within the school noticeboards, form rooms and through our communication channels newsletters, websites, we will share and display relevant information about local and national support services and events.

The aim of this is to ensure students understand:

- What help is available
- Who it is aimed at
- How to access it
- Why should they access it
- What is likely to happen next

Sources or support at school and in the local community

- Wellbeing board/display (signposts students to local and national services)
- Internal referrals system now in place for staff to refer pupils to so that the pupil can get some tailored support (interventions included are 1:1 sessions working on self-esteem, anxiety, exam stress, de-escalation, bereavement strategies, dog therapy, therapist, MHST, Banardos)
- Mental health week includes events such as – assemblies, form activities, therapy dog, stress ball making, Art therapy, baking therapy, staff bake off, staff CPD, Mindfulness, hand massage, dance, wrist bands for all pupils and conversation corners.
- Tackling the blues - weekly intervention combining sport and mental health support with a cohort of students
- Monitoring list created to monitor students where concerns are initially raised
- Tailored support for each student, passes, interventions offered – place to go when needed

- 1:1 sessions working around a child who has been diagnosed with a condition, to help them learn more about it and find useful strategies
- Reflective supervision for staff, to reflect and work as a team around the child
- Suicide ASSIST trained member of staff
- Mental health first aider on site 15 of them
- Team round the child approach (student support plans created)
- Exam stress busting workshops
- Therapist on site once per week
- Resilience service (BANARDOS) on site 3 times per week
- Therapy dog on site 2 hours per week

Local Support

In St Helens, there are a range of organisations and groups offering support, including the **CAMHS partnership**, a group of providers specialising in children and young people's mental health wellbeing. These partners deliver accessible support to children, young people and their families, whilst working with professionals to reduce the range of mental health issues through prevention, intervention, training and participation.

Warning Signs

Staff may become aware of warning signs which indicate a student is experiencing mental health or emotional wellbeing issues. These warning signs should always be taken seriously and staff observing any of these warning signs should alert a Safe Guarding officer.

Possible warning signs, which all staff should be aware of include:

- | | |
|---|---|
| ▪ Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental | ▪ Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope |
| ▪ Changes in eating / sleeping habits | ▪ Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather |
| ▪ Increased isolation from friends or family, becoming socially withdrawn | ▪ Secretive behaviour |
| ▪ Changes in activity and mood | ▪ Skipping PE or getting changed secretly |
| ▪ Lowering of academic achievement | ▪ Lateness to, or absence from school |
| ▪ Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide | ▪ Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause |
| ▪ Abusing drugs or alcohol | ▪ An increase in lateness or absenteeism |

Targeted support

We recognise some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example, those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence.

We work closely with school nurses and their teams in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children and are equipped to work at community, family and

individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.

We ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services by:

- Providing specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional, and behavioural problems;
- Working closely with local Children's Services, CAMHS and other agencies services to follow various protocols including assessment and referral;
- Identifying and assessing in line with the Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT), children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress, or behavioural problems;
- Discussing options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers. Agree a Wellbeing Plan as the first stage of a 'stepped care' approach;
- Providing a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, According to the child's needs;
- Ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including CAMHS, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur;
- Provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality;
- Provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it; and
- The identification, assessment, and support of young carers under the statutory duties outlined in the Children & Families Act 2014.

Managing disclosures

If a student chooses to disclose concerns about themselves, or a friend, to any member of staff, the response will be calm, supportive and non-judgemental from a SG officer.

All disclosures should be recorded confidentially on the student's personal file through CPOMs, including:

- | | |
|---|--|
| ▪ Date | ▪ Nature of the disclosure & main points from the conversation |
| ▪ Name of member of staff to whom the disclosure was made | ▪ Agreed next steps |

This information will be shared with relevant staff.

Confidentiality

If a member of staff feels it is necessary to pass on concerns about a student to either someone within or outside of the school, then this will be first discussed with the student. We will tell them:

- Who we are going to tell
- What we are going to tell them
- Why we need to tell them
- When we're going to tell them



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Ideally, consent should be gained from the student first, however, there may be instances when information must be shared, such as students up to the age of 16 who are in danger of harm.

It is important to also safeguard staff emotional wellbeing. By sharing disclosures with a colleague this ensures one single member of staff isn't solely responsible for the student. This also ensures continuity of care should staff absence occur and provides opportunities for ideas and support.

Parents must always be informed, but students may choose to tell their parents themselves. If this is the case, a timescale of 24 hours is recommended to share this information before the school makes contact with the parents/carers.

If a student gives us reason to believe that they are at risk, or there are child protection issues, parents should not be informed, but the child protection procedures should be followed.

Working with parents/carers

If it is deemed appropriate to inform parents there are questions to consider first:

- Can we meet with the parents/carers face-to-face?
- Where should the meeting take place – some parents are uncomfortable in school premises so consider a neutral venue if appropriate.
- Who should be present?
- What are the aims of the meeting and expected outcomes?

We are mindful that for a parent, hearing about their child's issues can be upsetting and distressing. They may therefore respond in various ways which we should be prepared for and allow time for the parent to reflect and come to terms with the situation.

Signposting parents to other sources of information and support can be helpful in these instances. At the end of the meeting, lines of communication should be kept open should the parents have further questions or concerns. Booking a follow-up meeting or phone call might be beneficial at this stage.

Ensure a record of the meeting and points discussed/agree are added to the student's record.



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Supporting parents

We recognise the family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing; we will work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing by:

- Ensuring all parents are aware of and have access to promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems;
- Highlighting sources of information and support about common mental health issues through our communication channels (website, newsletters etc.);
- Offering support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners; and
- Ensuring parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing. This will include support to participate in any parenting sessions, by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. We recognise this might involve liaison with family support agencies.

Training

As a minimum, all staff will receive regular training about recognising and responding to mental health issues as part of their regular child protection training to enable them to keep students safe. Nominated members of staff will receive professional Mental Health First Aid training or equivalent.

Training opportunities for staff who require more in depth knowledge will be considered as part of our performance management process and additional CPD will be supported throughout the year where it becomes appropriate due developing situations with one or more students.

Where the need to do so becomes evident, we will host twilight training sessions for all staff to promote learning or understanding about specific issues related to mental health.

Suggestions for individual, group or whole school CPD should be discussed with Jo Burgess who can also highlight sources of relevant training and support for individuals as needed.

Staff Wellbeing

Rainford High wants to ensure that staff are supported and encouraged to develop personally and professionally. We recognise that staff wellbeing is important to student achievement and the school's performance. We committed to making sure that this Policy



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is implemented so that each individual is able to cope successfully with the demands in their lives, whatever the cause of stress. The purpose of this policy is to maintain a school ethos which supports staff health and wellbeing by making sure that all employees are treated fairly and consistently. There is a section on the school intranet about staff well being support and the employee assistance line is available and its promoted for anyone who is may need it.

Aims for Staff wellbeing

- To develop a healthy, motivated workforce who are able to deliver a high standard of education to students.
- To help ensure that our school promotes the health and wellbeing of all staff members, recognising the impact work can have on employees' stress levels, mental and physical health.
- To recognise that excessive hours of work can be detrimental to staff health and effectiveness and to agree on flexible working practices where possible without damaging opportunities for students to succeed.
- To communicate the importance of a work-life balance to all staff, and to ensure that all policy updates are communicated regularly.
- To respond sensitively to external pressures which affect the lives of staff members.
- To provide staff with training to deal positively with stressful incidents and provide them with a sense of confidence to deal with emergencies via training.
- To improve staff development, co-operation, and teamwork by creating effective leaders.
- To make staff members aware of the channels which can be used to manage and deal with stress or work-related health and wellbeing issues.

Roles

The Trustees:

- Will take overall responsibility for implementing this policy and ensuring that staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance.
- Will adopt the appropriate policies in respect of 'family friendly' employment, including consideration of part-time working, flexible working patterns etc., where this can be implemented without detriment to the operational requirements of the school.



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- Will ensure that clear procedures are in place that will minimise the levels of stress caused to staff when following formal procedures such as the Capability or Disciplinary Policy.
- Will provide a range of strategies for involving staff in the school decision making processes.
- Will review the demands on staff and seek practical solutions wherever possible.
- Will provide personal and professional development such as stress management, team building, etc.

The Principle:

- Will ensure that all staff enjoy a reasonable work-life balance and lead by example in this regard.
- Will support the trustees in ensuring that strategies are implemented to effectively manage and, where necessary, reduce employee stress. This includes preventing unnecessary stress and ensuring that any work-based stress employees experience is at a productive, healthy level.
- Will adopt school policies and provide clear guidance regarding time-off.
- Will ensure that there is clear communication between staff and management with regards to all areas of school life.
- Will create reasonable opportunities for employees to discuss concerns and will enable staff to do so in an environment where stress is not considered a weakness.
- Will ensure that all staff are aware of and trained in-line with the school's priorities and offered opportunities for development.
- Will monitor and review any measures that are planned and assess their effectiveness.
- Will conduct risk assessment for work-related stress in consultation with senior staff.
- Will appoint a wellbeing co-ordinator who is responsible for ensuring that the good health and wellbeing of all staff members is supported, promoted, and valued by the school. The co-ordinator will also ensure that school policies and procedures reflect this aim.
- Will make individual interventions such as short-term rehabilitation and return to work plans, and longer-term reasonable adjustments to work.



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Staff members:

- Will make themselves aware of the school's policies on Capability, Bullying and Harassment, Staff Attendance etc.
- Will assist in the development of good practice and ensure that they do not, through their actions or omissions, create unnecessary work for themselves or their colleagues.
- Will ask their Line Manager for help or support if required. This includes understanding that a good relationship requires communication from both parties and so it's important that issues are raised at the earliest possible moment so that effective strategies can be put in place to manage workloads.
- Will identify opportunities for development and take advantage of those offered by the school.
- Will apply for any requests for leave of absence in advance and be honest about sickness absence leaves.

Actions to support new staff

Practical actions to support new staff

- All staff will be given a school induction.
- All new staff will receive the staff induction pack/staff handbook. This will continue to include all important policies, or their location, and will include this policy on health and wellbeing.
- All staff will be made to feel welcome and given as much support as required.
- All staff are to be issued with a name badge on arrival on their first day.

Practical actions to support new roles

- Decide who will be the supporting person for the new role.
- Hold an initial discussion of roles.
- Hold visits to school/class or environment of new role.

Procedures for handling issues of wellbeing with staff

- The Senior Leadership Team (Principle, Deputy Head, and other managers) must encourage the creation and maintenance of an atmosphere where all staff members feel comfortable asking for help or raising concerns. The Senior Leadership Team should be sensitive to any problems which may cause the employee stress-related



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issues and should act in a professional, fair, consistent, and timely manner when a concern arises.

- Where additional, professional advice is required, the school has contacts with Occupational Health Professionals and Human Resource experts and these avenues should be utilised.
- The school will provide support to any employees facing high levels of stress in the workplace, as well as other work-related issues which are having/have the potential to have negative impacts on the staff member's health and wellbeing. The various options for dealing with such issues should be discussed with staff members where appropriate. In some cases, this may include external support such as the teacher helpline or support from the Local Authority e.g. counselling.
- During this time, the school will always ensure that the staff member's privacy and dignity is respected. This means maintaining confidentiality, upholding the employee's rights and dealing with the employee with tact and sensitivity

Procedures to promote staff wellbeing

- Continuing professionals develop for all staff.
- Inquiry question
- All staff encouraged to contribute to the School Development Plan.
- 7 inset days throughout the year.
- Recognition on staff special achievement
- Staff rooms for each faculty to relax, work and support colleagues.
- Administrative staff are to support the wider workforce.
- Consultative staff meetings held once a term to give staff the opportunity to voice concerns and to have their views sought. The principle responds to these through the morning briefings.
- Identifying staff strengths
- Staff help line
- Wellbeing meetings termly
- Staff questionnaire to be issued to once per year

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every two years as a minimum. The next review date is July 2026.



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In between updates, the policy will be updated when necessary to reflect local and national changes. This is the responsibility of Jo Burgess SENCo.

Any personnel changes will be implemented immediately.



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