



Promoting emotional wellbeing and mental health across RHS



Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of RHS wellbeing!

In this winter edition, we will be discussing the importance of maintaining good mental wellbeing in these colder months and ways to overcome negative feelings by staying active and focused on personal goals.

Luca will discuss his own personal struggles with homesickness by being an international boarder.

Homesickness is something in which many of us will relate to whether you have been here for a week or 6 and ½ years. Here, he will be sharing his top tips for coping with homesickness which will hopefully be useful for you.

Daisy will tell us about the importance of sport to both our mental and physical wellbeing which can be a useful tool in helping us to balance school life alongside being active which will contribute to good wellbeing.

Eve goes around the houses, finding the many RHS pets. Pets are proven to be helpful when we've had a tough day to boost our mood and comfort us especially when we don't want to be around humans.

This time period is especially important as for those of us in Years 11 and 13 who will be going through exams soon, naturally this is a stressful period but luckily, Ayoola (head scholar) is here to help.

For those of you Year 7s there will also be some top tricks in order to organise your prep which will be applicable for all of your time here at RHS.

Izzy Scragg, Year 13



Update on the Wellbeing Award

We have also had our final visit from Jo Morton- Brown before half-term who will decide whether we shall be awarded the Wellbeing award. In this visit, she was toured around school by pupils, sat down with a wide variety of staff, governors, parents and pupils and had lunch with the wellbeing change team.

The feedback

Jo is a lovely lady who had lots of positive things to say about the school. Now we are waiting to hear back

regarding whether we have achieved the award or if there is more work to be done.


Whatever the outcome, wellbeing will continue to be a central focus for everyone at RHS, and our change team will do our best to continue to build a sense of belonging here at our brilliant school.





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Tips for coping with homesickness

Many of the RHS students are from overseas and only spend the holidays at home. Some students from the Far East have not even been home for two years because of the impact of COVID.

How best to cope with homesickness

This of course raises the question of how best to cope with homesickness: everyone has their own methods of course, but I find it good to talk to students who are in the same situation as me. Even though teachers would

like to help, they usually don't know what it's like to be so far away from home.



Contacting home

Although I encourage everyone to spend as much time as possible with students from RHS, sometimes you need to talk to friends from home on the phone. This can help in particularly difficult situations as you have usually known these people for a long time and they provide a sense of home.

How long will it last?

Homesickness usually only lasts for the first few days as you get used to the routines of school very quickly. If these tips still don't help, ask your Housemaster/Housemistress, your matron, or a teacher you trust. These people are trained to look after you and help you integrate.

Luca Baretton, Year 13



How Sport Can Help With Wellbeing

Most of us spend way too much time being forced into sport that we stop seeing the benefit and enjoyment that exercise allows. But, for me, sport was the reason that I made it through covid still smiling. It was the constant in my daily routine that allowed for a change of scene, a break from work and most importantly, a release of any stress or anxiety that had built up for one reason or another.

How much exercise?

Just a small amount of exercise, such as a walk, home workout or dance workout (my personal favourite) releases chemicals such as dopamine, leaving you with a boosted mood, higher concentration levels and, above all, a sense of accomplishment. And if you can't get on that run or go to the gym then there's still numerous forms of exercise you can get into; so, go try something new and wave goodbye to that low self-esteem!

Finding the right support

Now, I know that exercise isn't much fun when you are forced into sports you have no love or skill for. Many give up sport altogether due to lack of encouragement and a sense of uselessness. But even the most uncoordinated of us can find ourselves with the right coach and the right mindset.



A determined approach

When I began hockey, I was reserve in the lowest team and, due to determination and an amazing coach, I have become VC of the 1st team. So, I implore you to pick up any sport that somewhat appeals to you, if not for your enjoyment, for your mental wellbeing!

Daisy Clabburn, Year 12





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Keeping Well in Winter

During the colder months, it is harder to maintain our mental wellbeing and keep focus. The lack of daylight and the colder weather play into this. Scientifically, the lack of sunlight can cause impacts to our internal body clock by a drop in serotonin levels which is one of our 'happy hormones'. However, it is important we don't let the winter win and are able to hack our happy hormones during these biologically challenging times to our mental wellbeing.



a film or have a nice long hot shower. This will allow you to relax and de-stress from the day and could help you take your mind off stress and negative thoughts.

Find gratitude

When you find things to be grateful for, the feelings of the blues will float away and allow you to start or end the day on a positive note. For example, a useful practice would be to write down 5 things each day you are grateful for and try to expand on your gratitude list throughout the day.



Getting some sun!

For the few hours a day of sun we do get, it is important to make full use of sunlight. Instead of wasting electricity, open your blinds and let your room fill with light. This will allow you to be more productive and maintain focus throughout the day due to the brain secreting SEROTONIN!!! We are lucky to live in a beautiful part of countryside so taking a walk around the field will allow you to feel more benefits such as mental alertness, energy and an

overall boost in mood.

Having more ME time

Try to find a switch off time from schoolwork to focus on doing something for yourself. Maybe read a book, watch

Change in scenery

When studying in the same space, you can often lose motivation and lose sight of goals. By changing setting, you can reset and refresh your mind which could motivate you to complete that challenging task. Maybe



pay a visit to the café, a spare classroom or the library.

Izzy Scragg, Year 13





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What is spiritual wellbeing?

We often talk about the different aspects of wellbeing: physical, emotional, intellectual, occupational and social. Whilst I am here to help with all aspects of wellbeing, my role as Chaplain means I have a particular focus on supporting everyone's spiritual wellbeing. But what is spiritual wellbeing? Firstly, it is important to remember that spiritual wellbeing is not synonymous with 'religion' or 'religious practices', caring for our spiritual wellbeing is important for everyone as we all have a spiritual quality to our lives.

Understanding spiritual health

Spiritual wellbeing is concerned with the meaning and purpose that we find in our lives, which may be through belief in a God. When we consider our spiritual wellbeing we often think about the connections we have with culture, and community, and includes the beliefs, values and ethics that we hold. Taking care of our



spiritual wellbeing can help us to feel happier, more in control, and better connected to the world and people around us, and it can help us to deal with stress more effectively. People who have a good understanding of their spiritual wellbeing are often more optimistic, more confident and have a stronger sense of who they are as a person.

A journey over time

Our spiritual wellbeing is not static and will develop over time, we may find that big life events have a particular impact on how we understand the purpose of life. Therefore, it is important that we continue to develop our sense of spiritual wellbeing with the same emphasis that we would our physical wellbeing. We need to continually ask ourselves what is important to us and how does this influence how we live our lives.

For more advice about developing your spiritual wellbeing keep an eye out for the Chaplain's weekly spiritual wellbeing tip!

Reverend Mumford



How to cope with Year 7 Prep Projects

In Year 7 we are set prep projects throughout the year by different subjects. So far we have had projects from art, DT, drama, geography, science, classics and a history project.

Top tips from Rose

1. Not to waste preps, plan when you are going to do work on it and allow enough time in case things go wrong or you need to do more on it.
2. Certain projects may need different work on them at different times, for example I could only do my art project in the art block or when I was at home and had access to supplies, whereas when I did my

History project where I just needed to put my mind to it and work hard. Carefully planning where and when you will complete your project will help keep everything organised.

3. Find support from your teachers and house staff. They are here to offer guidance and support when things get tough!

Rose Parkinson, Year 7





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Staff training on mental health

I recently completed Place2Be's Mental Health Champions Course, which I found was a valuable learning experience. The course consisted of weekly sessions that were well-structured and conveniently scheduled. As the course focused on wellbeing, Place2Be made sure that the learning was manageable and accessible to best fit around your work and personal



Improving children's mental health

life. The course materials were diverse, including reading materials, videos, surveys, case studies, and quizzes to assess understanding. Throughout each 'pathway', there were opportunities to say how confident you felt on a particular topic, and then once you'd completed the 'pathway' you could fill in the survey again, it was great to see the progress I had made.

Discussion led

The course was collaborative, offering opportunities for feedback and discussion with other participants. I appreciated reading the comments and insights of my peers, which enriched the course even further. There was plenty of opportunity for discussion and I felt encouraged to share my ideas on what we had learnt.

Self reflection

The course also encouraged self-reflection and the importance of taking care of one's own mental well-being, as well as the well-being of others. I look forward to putting everything I have learnt into practice to support my pupils.

Miss Taylor Payne



Covering the topics that matter

The course covered several key areas, each with a specific focus, and I was amazed by the amount of knowledge I gained. The first 'pathway' introduced the concepts of mental health and emotional wellbeing and explored the strategies that create positive mental health. I found this introduction interesting and the true or false quiz at the end made me feel confident in the knowledge I had acquired. The second 'pathway' focused on 'Nature and Nurture.' This was my favourite of the pathways as I found the sections on emotional development and the development of the adolescent brain helpful.



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.



SWGR
Whisper®

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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The Long Read: Coping with Exam Stress

Sometimes for many, exams and work can cause a lot of stress and there is so much expected from you. You set yourself high expectations, high standards and goals, and the biggest source of pressure can often be from ourselves. I think my first piece of advice, in terms of the stress that comes from preparation for exams, is to set yourself ambitious but realistic goals which are specific to you and your life.

Long-term and short-term

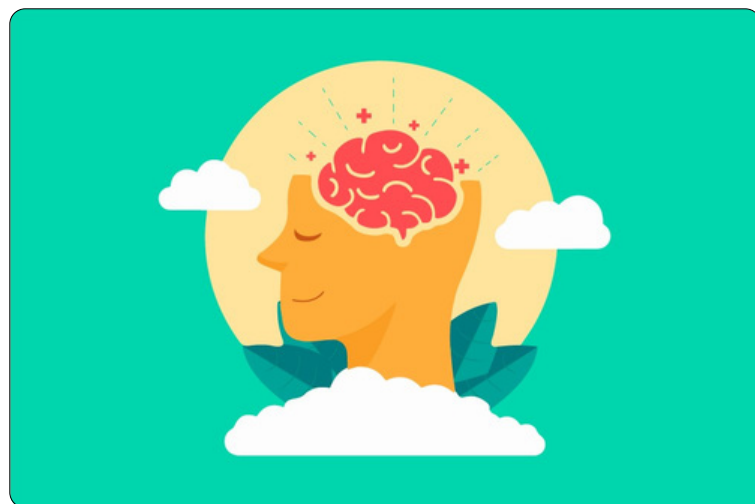
These goals should also be long-term, they can't necessarily be achieved over night but they are something to work towards. For example, by the end of this academic year, I want to get x grade. You can look at where you are now and critically analyse what you need to do in order to get there. Maybe it is attending more clinics, addressing a particular area of exam technique or you may need to prioritise certain topics over others. Whatever these things are, it will be different for each of you, but the importance is that we learn across this journey. I think it is also important to realise that you are not alone on your academic journey.

Seeking support

At school, we are lucky to have a great support network. Firstly your teachers are a great source of academic support, and if you are struggling with a piece of work or for example don't quite understand a mathematical concept or how to structure a certain question, speaking to your teachers and getting direct feedback on how to improve can help you to feel more confident.

Goal setting

Goals can definitely help to give you a clearer direction of what you want to achieve in the future and what you are working towards. Writing your goals down on a piece of paper or having a visual understanding of what you want to achieve can help you, when you need a source of motivation or to pick yourself up when you may stumble while trying to jump over a hurdle. You need to trust in your goals and trust in yourself that you can do it with drive and hard work.



Mentally prepare

Equally, attending support sessions cannot only help to prepare you for your exams but also to help you to feel mentally prepared, as you are going out of your way to do all you can to give yourself the best chance. This can really build your confidence within yourself and in what you are capable of achieving. Also, house staff are always there to help and support you through this time.

Top tips from Ayoola

We are all different and therefore all have our own different ways of dealing with exam stress, however here are six coping mechanisms which may be useful to know.



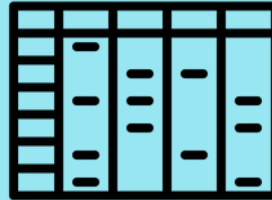


Kindness

Being kind to yourself: Look after yourself and don't be so hard on yourself.



Revision timetables



Making a revision timetable: This can help you to manage your time in the most effective way in the lead up to the exams. Organising your life can help to clear your mind and make you feel more calm.

Stay focused

Don't let others' stress make you more stressed: Sometimes, in the lead up to an exam, people around you may naturally get panicked and sometimes will ask you questions about a particular topic in your subject. This can really make you more stressed out so sometimes taking some time out for yourself, if you need to, right before an exam is a justified feeling.



Believe in yourself

Believe in yourself: sometimes when we get stressed, it can be caused or can lead to a lack of self-belief. Thinking about how far you have come and validating your ability and what you have been able to do, will help to put you into a healthy mindset.



Seek support from others

There are many people here at RHS who can help you with your exams. From teachers, house staff, Mrs Eales and your tutor, there are plenty of people to turn to for guidance when things get tough. Remember not to be afraid to ask these people for support.



Revise with breaks

Revision with breaks: Studies have proven that the best way to revise is in short chunks with breaks in between study sessions. While some people like to work for longer and others for shorter, nonetheless it is important to take breaks, to give our brains the chance to process all information it has accumulated as well as rest it so we don't get worn out, otherwise the revision will be counter-productive in the long run.





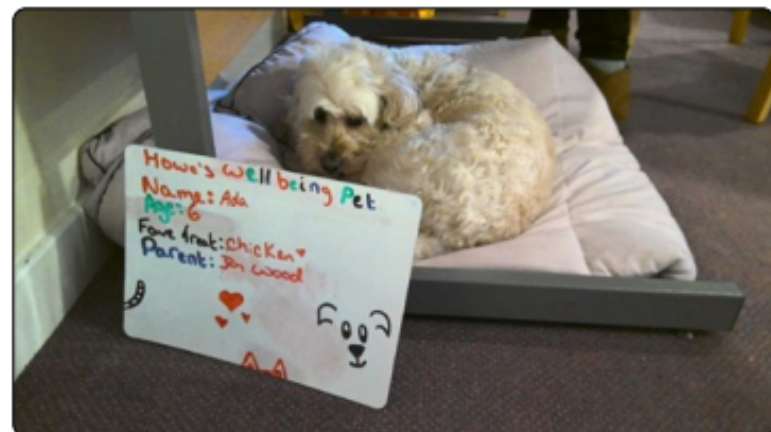
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Wellbeing Pets Across the Houses

We are lucky enough to have a variety of wellbeing pets across the houses. Several studies and research have shown that pets offer support, social interaction and can counteract depression and anxiety in people. Today, we find out more about the animals that make RHS home to us all.

Howe's pets

I have had the pleasure of giving Ada cuddles and kisses the past 4 years. She loves chicken, cuddles and looking for snacks under the sofa. I am yet to meet someone who doesn't want to snuggle with Ada. She also loves



meeting up with other dogs at RHS for early morning walks with matron. She is easily the most loved dog in the country, possibly even the world. We love you Ada! Our newest member of the house is Plok. Plok means



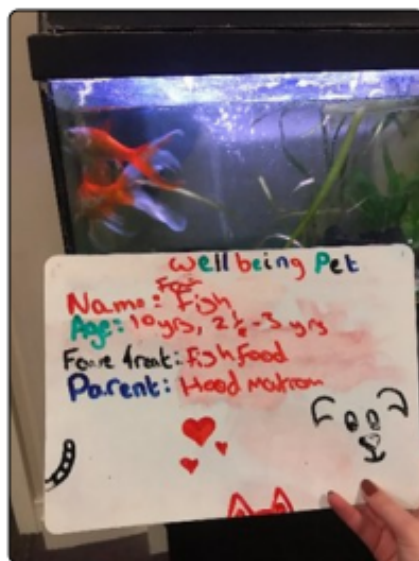
plop in Spanish. He loves Miss Shopova and lettuce (gets it from his vegetarian mum). He is almost the same age as Ada but falls short by just a few months. We love Plok!

Hood's pets

Otto Moo is Miss Taylor-Payne's new addition. He is new to both RHS and the world being only 1 year and 1/4 old.

He is a lover of secret roast potatoes snuck to him and is an energetic boy excited to see the world. He loves people and can't wait to give them cuddles, sometimes he forgets how big he is and jumps around to give welcome hugs.

Hood is also lucky enough to have their matron's fish. The bigger of the two has been in Hood for

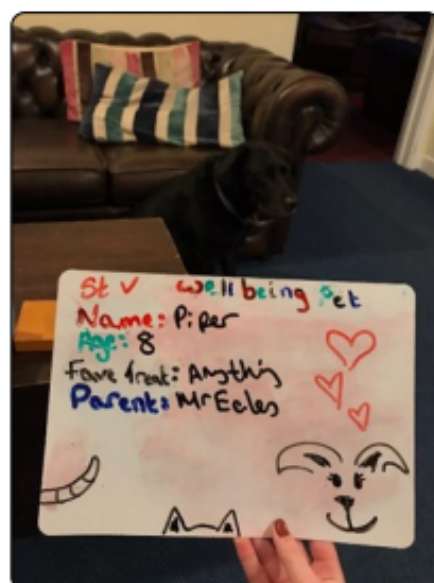


10 years! The other was donated to the house from a fairground and is living a much better life with the people in Hood. They love fish food and swimming about in their lovely tank decked out by matron herself.

St V pet:

St V is lucky enough to have the fabulous black lab, piper in their house.

Piper has been about for nearly as long as the fish in Hood at 8 years old. She will eat anything according to Mr Eales. Piper is definitely a good dog and I enjoyed meeting her but she but cannot take a picture for her life! According to the St. V staff, she is much better at keeping the boys company and waiting patiently for the chance to eat a yogurt





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Wellbeing Pets Across the Houses

Collingwood pets

Toby and Tom are whippets in Collingwood. Toby is 11 years old, our eldest pet in the school! I am told he loves raw bacon. The younger of the two, Tom, is only 6 months old and seems to be a bit of a trickster as his favourite treat came from when he stole an entire uncooked pizza while Mr Terry wasn't looking! Tom is the youngest in the school so clearly has a lot to learn. Here they are sitting proudly with their owner, Mr Terry.



Blake pets

Unfortunately, I could not get a picture of Davey the cat as he was having a nap elsewhere, he is definitely the more sociable cat. His sister Dusty, however, is more of a 'scaredy cat'. She is 9 years old and loves tuna just like her brother.

A love for caviar

I had the privilege of living with Molly when I was in Year 7 in Blake 5 years ago. She loves many things but is very fancy in her love for caviar. She is 8 years old belongs to the one and only Blake matron, who many of us know.

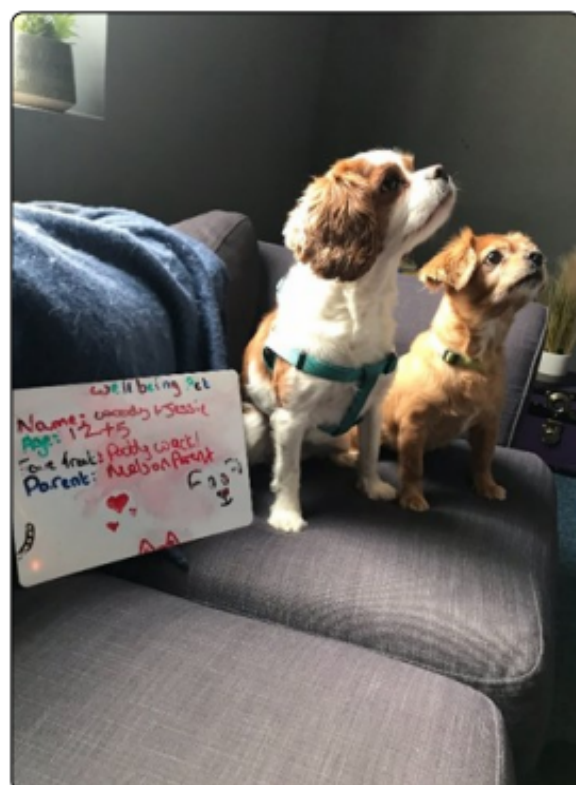


Nelson pets

While I was unable to get a photo with the cats at this point, I have Woody and Jessie. They are 12 and 5 and belong to the Nelson's matron. They love paddy Wack, a famous dog treat. I was able to take this photo in Nelson's one and only wellbeing room which is very on brand!



I hope you enjoyed learning more about some of the pets we have here at RHS to keep you company, if you are able, I highly recommend going to meet some of them and giving them some much deserved cuddles.



Eve Hughes, Year 12

