



Rugby Free
Secondary School



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Supporting Student Well-being: 2025-2026 Academic Year





The Research Behind Our Approach

Our approach to staff well-being is based on 'The 5 Ways to Well-being', as published by Mind (<https://www.mind.org.uk/workplace/my-mental-health-at-work/five-ways-to-wellbeing/>).

Wellbeing is when you feel good about yourself and your life. People with higher levels of well-being live longer and healthier lives, recover more quickly from illness, perform well in the workplace, and are more resilient in hard times. As a consequence, the way we feel and function in our day-to-day lives is not just down to our genes, up-bringing, or our life circumstances, but is based on our environment and our connections.

The Five Ways to Well-being is a set of actions that are proven to enhance staff well-being. Taking one or more of these five invitations to action can really help to protect and improve our well-being.

Connect

There is strong evidence that good relationships with family, friends and the wider community are important for our well-being. Feeling close to people, and being valued by them, helps us to function well in the world. Research suggests that the health benefits of strong social relationships have a similar magnitude to eradicating a negative habit.

Building strong social connections in our lives can really increase our feelings of happiness, confidence and self-worth.

- **Lunch activities on a daily basis such as: Board Games in the Study Zone and a Film of the Day in the Main Hall.**
- **Team-building activities are built into key PSHE lessons, to allow all students to connect with one another.**
- **The creation of belonging Art Work to support and promote positive mental health.**
- **Time for Talk in lessons to encourage communication and connection between students.**

Be Active

Most of us know that keeping fit and active is good for physical health, but it's also really good for mental well-being, too. It can protect us against depression and can help to improve mood, enhance sleep patterns, and lessen feelings of anxiety. Being active can also help to increase our self-esteem, self-control and our ability to rise to a challenge. Being active doesn't need to be too intense for you to feel good – there's evidence that low impact physical activities can be effective in promoting psychological well-being.

- **Active Enrichment Clubs at lunch-time and after school that encourage physical activity for students.**
- **Sporting representation linked to numerous facets including: Sports, the Arts and Debating.**
- **Be active in House Competitions such as: Bake Off, Sports Day and the RFSS Talent Show.**
- **Active involvement in whole-school events such as: Culture Days, Mental Health Days and Raising Awareness days.**

Take Notice

Being in 'the moment' means noticing smells, sounds, sights and tastes, as well as the feelings and thoughts that occur from one instant to the next. This is also known as 'mindfulness'. Be aware of the world around you and what you are feeling.

Reflecting on your experiences will help you appreciate what matters to you.

- **Enabling students to shape ideas in the school through Student Leadership forums and mechanisms.**
- **Recognising those around us that help to support us achieve our best, through 'Thank You' days and events.**
- **Mechanisms for Student Voice that facilitates the capturing of key thoughts, feeling and ideas.**
- **Student Teaching and Learning leaders who support teachers and the wider staff body.**

Give

There is good evidence that committing acts of kindness, big or small, random or planned can give us a sense of purpose and make us feel happier and more satisfied about life. We encourage people to do something nice for a friend, or a colleague. Thank someone. Smile. Volunteer your time. Join in with an activity. Seeing yourself, and your happiness, linked to the wider community can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the people around you.

- **Support other staff and students in collecting for the Christmas Hampers for vulnerable students and families.**
- **Student Leaders and Cultural Ambassadors giving their insight and views to shape how the school functions.**
- **Regular Charity days that support different chosen charities, culminating in the House Charity Day.**
- **Partnerships with other local organisations such as: Care Homes and other Primary Schools.**

Keep Learning

Learning can boost our life satisfaction, self-confidence, self-esteem and optimism. It can also give us a sense of purpose, help us connect with others and keep our brains active and exercised. Learning new things will make you more confident as well as being more energised.

- **The Duke of Edinburgh Scheme is in place to encourage students to learn outside of the school environment.**
- **The PSHE programme is taught by Tutors, enabling a level of comfortability. Key sessions are taught as a year group.**
- **A wide range of enrichment opportunities at all Key Stages that culminates in 'Learning a Skill' week.**
- **A chosen 'Career of the Week' that encourages students to know more about their next steps.**

Celebrate

In addition to the five ways above, we also see celebration and recognition as key factors linked to well-being. It is important that people feel as if their work is celebrated, shared and passed on, in order to ensure that our community is 'flat' and not 'hierarchical'.

- **Termly Awards assemblies that recognise the positive contributions that students have made over time.**
- **Opening of the RFSS Rewards Shop to celebrate the ways in which students contribute to school life.**
- **Positive praise phone calls, RFSS Celebrates and Postcards home.**
- **A weekly Headteacher's Award for all year groups.**

