



**The John Roan School**

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Part of United Learning

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# Mental Health & Wellbeing Policy

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*Mental health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community. (World Health Organization)*

## 1. Aims

At The John Roan School, we aim to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and student body. We pursue this aim using both universal, whole school approaches and specialised, targeted approaches aimed at vulnerable students.

In addition to promoting positive mental health, we aim to recognise and respond to mental ill health. In an average classroom, three children will be suffering from a diagnosable mental health issue. By developing and implementing practical, relevant and effective mental health policies and procedures we can promote a safe and stable environment for students affected both directly and indirectly by mental ill health.

At The John Roan School, we are committed to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of pupils, parents, carers, staff and other stakeholders.

This policy focuses on pupils' mental health and wellbeing. It aims to:

- Set out our school's approach to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils across our school
- Provide guidance to staff on their role in supporting pupils' mental health and wellbeing, including how they can foster and maintain an inclusive culture in which pupils feel able to talk about and reflect on their experiences of mental health
- Support staff to identify and respond to early warning signs of mental health issues
- Inform pupils and their parents/carers about the support they can expect from our school in respect of pupils' mental health and wellbeing, and provide them with access to resources

This policy was written in consultation with staff, pupils, parents and professionals involved in mental health and wellbeing.

This policy should be read in conjunction with our health and safety, and safeguarding policies in cases where a student's mental health overlaps with or is linked to a medical issue, safeguarding concern, and the SEN policy where a student has an identified special educational need or is on the child protection register.

## 2. Legislation and guidance

This policy was written with regard to:

- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [The Data Protection Act 2018](#)
- Articles 3 and 23 of the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#)

## 3. Roles and responsibilities

All staff are responsible for promoting positive mental health and wellbeing across our school and for understanding risk factors. If any members of staff are concerned about a pupil's mental health or wellbeing, they should inform the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) by completing a referral to MyConcern. In an emergency situation staff should request the support of SLT via On-Call.

Certain members of staff have extra duties to lead on mental health and wellbeing in school. These members of staff include:

- Vice Principal & Senior Mental Health Lead – Nicholas Taylor-Mullings
- Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) – Harry Shaw
- Safeguarding Manager – Jules Mallindine
- Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) – Rosie Masson
- SEMH Learning Coach – Barron Appau & Jodie Faulkner
- Family and Student Support Lead – Sue Tebbutt
- All Designated Child Protection Officers

### **Mental Health Emergencies or Crisis'**

A Mental Health Emergency or Crisis is defined as:

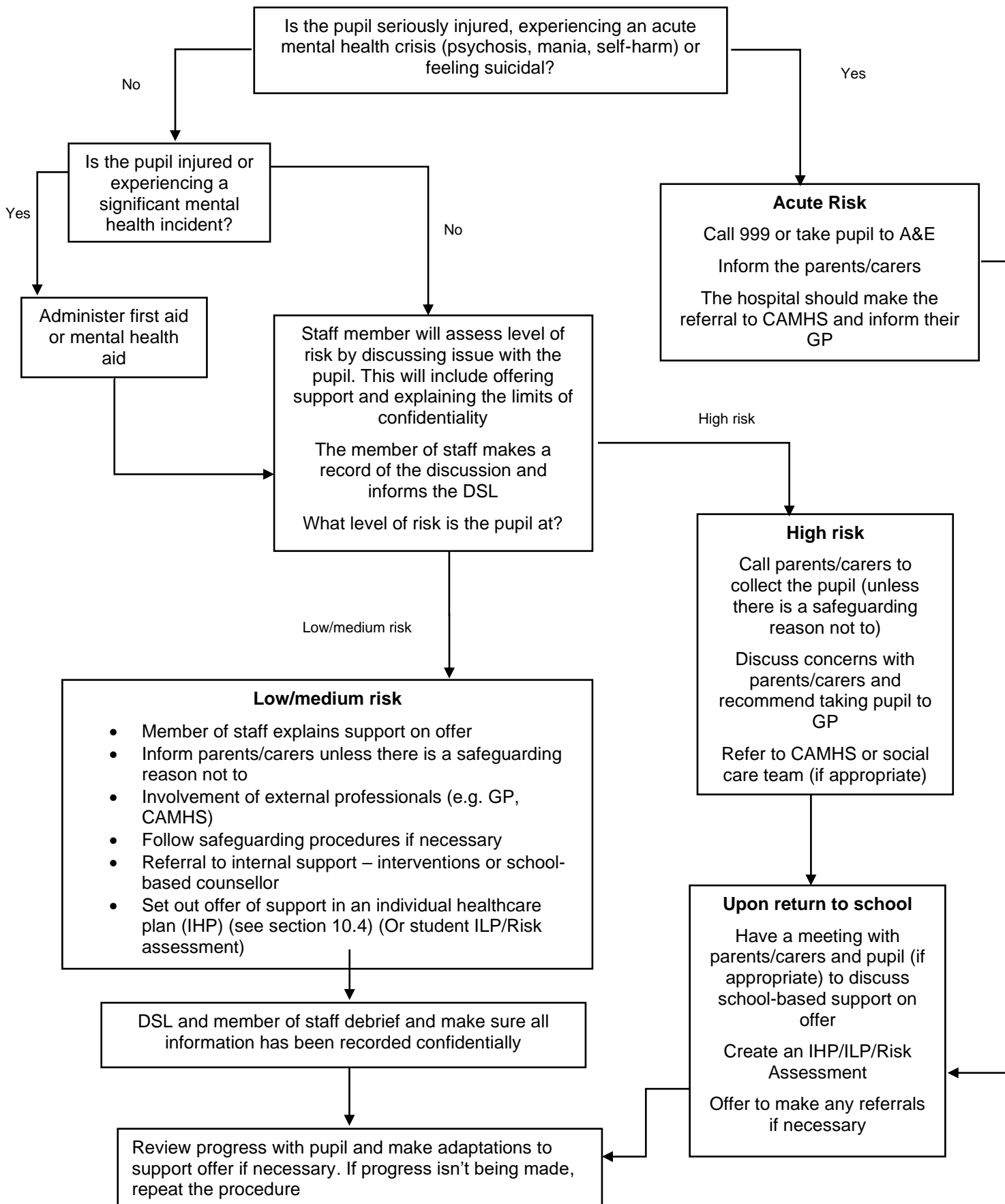
*'A mental health crisis often means that you no longer feel able to cope or be in control of your situation. You may feel great emotional distress or anxiety, cannot cope with day-to-day life or work, think about suicide or self-harm, or experience hallucinations and hearing voices.'* (NHS, 2019. 5.1)

There may be instances where a student's behaviour and mental state are concerning and may lead to immediate danger through harm to themselves or others. The following situations or symptoms classify as a mental health emergency:

- Self-harm
- Suicidal ideation
- Hearing voices
- Psychosis: Experiencing hallucinations and/or delusions.
- Extreme emotional distress

If a student presents with any of the above problems, relevant staff will go through the following school-wide Mental Health Emergency Protocol Flow-Chart (see below) to ensure the pupil, fellow students, and staff members are safe. If the student requires being sent home or is advised to go to A&E, this will be directed by the DSL/Safeguarding Manager/Mental Health Lead, or SENDCO.

## 4. Procedure to follow in a case of acute mental health crisis



Mental health crisis or emergencies are often not spontaneous and the student may have been experiencing symptoms for a length of time. Therefore, it is essential that student mental health concerns are communicated via Inclusion Meetings to ensure the school is focusing on preventative strategies, and is carefully monitoring and supporting vulnerable students.

## 5. Warning signs

Students who are showing signs of mental distress do not always express problems directly or ask for help, even where there are clear signs that they are having difficulties and could be due to a number of reasons.

Students may still feel stigma around mental health problems, or may be concerned about the consequences of telling someone. They may be unaware that they have a problem, or be aware but feel that they have to cope with it on their own.

Adolescence can be a difficult developmental time and this period of change can result in the gradual onset of mental illness. It is important that warning signs are recognised and an appropriate, supportive response is put in place as soon as possible. School 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 communicate their concerns via MyConcern to inform the safeguarding team.

### **Possible warning signs include:**

- The student has told you there is a problem, for example, they have been feeling
  - low or anxious recently
  - Significant changes in the student's appearance, for example: weight loss/gain, decline in personal hygiene, noticeable signs of self-harm
  - Changes in mood, for example: mood is very up and down, miserable, tired, withdrawn
  - Physical signs of harm that are repeated or appear non-accidental
  - Changes in eating patterns or sleeping habits
  - Concerns expressed from friends, family, other staff members
  - Changes in behaviour, academic achievement, extracurricular activity engagement, or among peers. For example, doing too much work, not socialising as much as usual, withdrawn, not attending school, being late or, failure to meet deadlines
  - Increased isolation from friends, family.
  - Talking or joking about self-harm or suicide
  - Abusing drugs or alcohol
  - Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
  - Changes in clothing – e.g. long sleeves in warm weather
  - Secretive behaviour
  - Skipping PE or getting changed secretly
  - Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause

## 6. Managing disclosures

If a pupil makes a disclosure about themselves or a peer to a member of staff, staff should remain calm, non-judgmental and reassuring.

Staff will focus on the pupil's emotional and physical safety, rather than trying to find out why they are feeling that way or offering advice.

It is vital that where a student makes a disclosure regarding poor mental health where there is a risk of harm that they are not left alone or allowed to leave the school site.

Staff will always follow our school's safeguarding policy and pass on all concerns to the DSL via MyConcern. All disclosures are recorded and stored in the pupil's confidential child protection file.

When making a record of a disclosure, staff will include:

- The full name of the member of staff who is making the record
- The full name of the pupil(s) involved
- The date, time and location of the disclosure
- The context in which the disclosure was made
- Any questions asked or support offered by the member of staff

## 7. Confidentiality

Staff will not promise a pupil that they will keep a disclosure secret – instead they will be upfront about the limits of confidentiality.

A disclosure cannot be kept secret because:

- Being the sole person responsible for a pupil's mental health could have a negative impact on the member of staff's own mental health and wellbeing
- The support put in place for the pupil will be dependent on the member of staff being at school
- Other staff members can share ideas on how to best support the pupil in question

Staff should always share disclosures with the Safeguarding leads via MyConcern. If information needs to be shared with other members of staff or external professionals, it will be done on a need-to-know basis.

Before sharing information disclosed by a pupil with a third party, the member of staff will discuss it with the pupil and explain:

- Who they will share the information with
- What information they will share
- Why they need to share that information

Staff will attempt to receive consent from the pupil to share their information, but the safety of the pupil comes first.

Parents/carers will be informed unless there is a child protection concern. In this case the school safeguarding policy will be followed.

### 7.1 Process for managing confidentiality around disclosures

1. Pupil makes a disclosure
2. Member of staff offers support

3. Member of staff explains the issues around confidentiality and rationale for sharing a disclosure with the DSL.
4. Member of staff will attempt to get the pupil's consent to share – if no consent is given, explain to the pupil who the information will be shared with and why
5. Member of staff will record the disclosure and share the information with the DSL.
6. The DSL/Member of the safeguarding team will inform the parent/carer (if appropriate)
7. Any other relevant members of staff or external professionals will be informed on a need-to-know basis

## 8. Supporting pupils

### 8.1 Baseline support for all pupils

As part of our school's commitment to promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all pupils, our school offers support to all pupils by:

- Raising awareness of mental health during assemblies, tutor time, PSHE and mental health awareness week
- Signposting all pupils to sources of online support on our school website
- Having open discussions about mental health during lessons
- Providing pupils with avenues to provide feedback on any elements of our school that is negatively impacting their mental health – Via the school council/Student focus groups.
- Monitoring all pupils' mental health through assessments, e.g. Termly well-being questionnaire
- Appointing a senior mental health lead with a strategic oversight of our whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- Appointment of SEMH Learning Coaches to offer bespoke Mental Health support.
- Offering pastoral support, e.g. through heads of year/Pastoral officers
- Making classrooms a safe space to discuss mental health and wellbeing through interventions such as PRIDE interventions led by external speakers.

### 8.2 Assessing what further support is needed

If a pupil is identified as having a mental health need, the HOY/Safeguarding manager/SENDSCO will refer to the school Inclusion Meeting where the school will consider the graduated and case-by-case approach to assessing the support our school can provide, further to the baseline support detailed above in section 8.1.

Our school will offer support in cycles of:

- Assessing what the pupil's mental health needs are
- Creating a plan to provide support
- Taking the actions set out in the plan
- Reviewing the effectiveness of the support offered

### 8.3 Internal mental health interventions

Where appropriate, a pupil will be offered support that is tailored to their needs as part of the graduated approach detailed above. Further assessment of Mental Health need would be completed via a range of assessment tools (SDQ/RCADS Questionnaire), information from these tools will indicate the most appropriate intervention. The support offered at our school includes:

- Daily/regular check-in's by a pastoral officer
- Mentoring
- ELSA Mentoring/Bereavement support
- Group intervention:
  - Anxiety group
  - Resilience group
  - Group mentoring
- 1:1 Intervention with SEMH Learning Coach
- Time Out Cards
- Reasonable adjustments to school policy/processes
- Discrete sensory support objects
- Use of well-being space (Student Support Centre)
- Counselling (Limited number, referral only)
- Bespoke timetables
- Champions 4 Change Boxing

#### **8.4 Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)/Individual Learning Profiles/Student Support Plans**

A pupil will be offered an individual healthcare plan (IHP) Individual Learning Profiles/Student Support Plans depending on the extent of the mental health need and level of support required within school.

**Individual healthcare plans (IHPs)** will be provided to a student in conjunction with the school nurse. These are often where mediation is required in school and specific emergency procedures are required from school staff or emergency services. IHP's are often used where a student has complex needs. In some circumstances the student will be listed in the medi-alert booklet.

**Student Support Plans/Risk Assessment** are required where a student is perceived to have a higher level of risk in school. These plans are often associated with students who may self-harm or have suicidal ideation. The plan sets out specific triggers/hazards for individual students with clear actions for staff to support the safety of the student.

All of the above are written in collaboration with the pupil (if appropriate), their parent/carers, and any other relevant professionals.

They will contain the following details:

- The mental health issue (and its triggers, signs, symptoms and treatments)
- The pupil's needs resulting from the condition
- Specific support for the pupil's educational, social and emotional needs
- The level of support needed
- Who will provide the support
- Who in our school needs to be aware of the child's condition
- What to do in an emergency

**Individual Learning Profiles (ILP's)** are designed to support students with a diagnosed mental health need which therefore constitutes a SEND need. The ILP will be provide need-to-know information regarding the SEMH need but will also provide strategies for teaching staff to effectively adapt their teaching to support the mental health needs of students within their classroom. The ILP will be written by the SEMH learning Coach in collaboration with the student/parents and any other external professionals.



## 8.5 Making external referrals

If a pupil's needs cannot be met by the internal offer our school provides, our school will make, or encourage parents/carers to make, a referral for external support.

A pupil could be referred to:

- Their GP or a paediatrician
- MHST (Mental Health in Schools Team)
- CAMHS
- Local counselling services. Greenwich Time to Talk (Over 16year olds) <https://oxleas.nhs.uk/greenwich-time-to-talk/>
- Educational Psychologist
- Family & Adolescent Support Service (FaASS)
- Social Care

The following resources can be helpful to review and are often signposted to students in school for support.

- Kooth – Online, free counselling for young people.
- Childline – Free counselling for young people via phone or online **0800 1111**
- Calm Harm – Free app for self-harm
- Clear Fear – Free app for anxiety
- Mind – General mental health support and knowledge **0300 102 1234**
- Young Minds – General mental health support and knowledge **Shout text 85258**
- Samaritans – Suicide phone-line **116 123**

## 9. Supporting and collaborating with parents/carers

We will work with parents/carers to support pupils' mental health by:

- Asking parents/carers to inform us of any mental health needs their child is experiencing, so we can offer the right support
- Informing parents/carers of mental health concerns that we have about their child
- Engaging with parents/carers to understand their mental health and wellbeing issues, as well as that of their child, and support them accordingly to make sure there is holistic support for them and their child
- Highlighting sources of information and support about mental health and wellbeing on our school website, including the mental health and wellbeing policy
- Liaising with parents/carers to discuss strategies that can help promote positive mental health in their child
- Providing guidance to parents/carers on navigating and accessing relevant local mental health services or other sources of support (e.g. parent/carer forums)
- Keeping parents/carers informed about the mental health topics their child is learning about in PSHE, and share ideas for extending and exploring this learning at home

When informing parents/carers about any mental health concerns we have about their child, we will endeavour to do this face-to-face.

These meetings can be difficult, so our school will ensure that parents/carers are given time to reflect on what has been discussed, and that lines of communication are kept open at the end of the meeting.

A record of what was discussed, and action plans agreed upon in the meeting will be recorded and added to the pupil's confidential record.

## 10. Supporting peers

Watching a friend experience poor mental health can be very challenging for pupils. Pupils may also be at risk of learning and developing unhealthy coping mechanisms from each other.

We will offer support to all pupils impacted by mental health directly and indirectly. We will review the support offered on a case-by-case basis. Support might include:

- Strategies they can use to support their friends
- Things they should avoid doing/saying
- Warning signs to look out for
- Signposting to sources of external support

## 11. Signposting

Sources of support are displayed around our school and linked to on our school website, so pupils and parents/carers are aware of how they can get help.

The SEMH Learning Coach will be available to provide further information to pupils and parents/carers if they want to learn more about what support is available.

## 12. Whole school approach to promoting mental health awareness

### 12.1 Mental health is taught in PSHE

At The John Roan School the development of a student's character is essential in the whole development and academic success of all students. Students follow a strategically mapped programme for Character development, which embeds the Gatsby Benchmark criteria, the Relationships Education, Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) and Health Education policy and is supported by the [PSHE Association Guidance teaching mental health and emotional wellbeing](#).

Pupils are taught to:

- Develop healthy coping strategies
- Challenge misconceptions around mental health
- Understand their own emotional state
- Keep themselves safe

For more information, see our PSHE curriculum [\[LINK\]](#).

### 12.2 Creating a positive atmosphere around mental health

Staff will create an open culture around mental health by:

- Discussing mental health with pupils in order to break down stigma
- Encouraging pupils to disclose when their mental health is deteriorating

## 13. Training

All staff will be offered training so they:

- Have a good understanding of what pupils' mental health needs are
- Know how to recognise warning signs of mental ill health
- Know a clear process to follow if they identify a pupil in need of help

School staff are encouraged to develop their knowledge of mental health through a range of opportunities:

- Staff have the option to be mental health first aiders
- staff have access to a range of Educare courses to support individual training needs on mental health.
- In person, whole school training also takes place each term to support the wider school understanding on mental health needs.

In addition to training sessions, improved awareness of mental health issues may be achieved through awareness raising campaigns or events. These are particularly effective if tied in with other events such as World Mental Health Day, which provide opportunities for staff and students to work together. Campaigns that include practical activities such as workshops to promote mental well-being may be particularly effective in promoting the awareness of good mental health.

## 14. Support for staff

We recognise that supporting a pupil experiencing poor mental health can affect that staff member's own mental health and wellbeing. To help with this we will:

- Treat mental health concerns seriously
- Offer staff supervision sessions
- Support staff experiencing poor mental health themselves
- Create a pleasant and supportive work environment
- Offer an employee assistance programme

As a school we are fully committed to supporting the mental health and well-being of all staff members. It is important to acknowledge that mental health can be a factor for all and while this policy reflects specifically on the support in place for students and the process required, it is important to address the support in place for staff to promote positive mental health & well-being.

The teaching profession is a known stressful career with high pressure on workload which can ultimately affect staff wellbeing if not managed effectively. The John Roan creates a culture of health wellbeing by:

- Teacher Workload – The John Roan School consider the workload of all staff and incorporate policy and procedures to ensure that staff workloads are manageable. This includes:
  - Shared curriculums and resources to reduce planning time
  - Whole school feedback policies to reduce marking load
  - Centralised detention and behaviour systems
  - Networking with other schools to share ideas/systems
- Plan for Peak time – The school effectively manages the school calendar to ensure high pressures points are shared throughout the school year. Staff are given additional planning time at the end of the school year to support new projects or to reduce high workload at the start of a new year. The John Roan School also supports staff through 4 additional planning days per year.
- Line Management – The school ensures that well-being is the key aspect of all line-management meetings. A safe space is provided for staff to discuss their well-being and any sources of stress at the start of any line-management meetings. This is recorded as part of the meeting minutes.

- Work/life balance – The school supports staff in managing their work/life balance by offering time to work from home on set mornings or afternoons each half term.
- Wellbeing committee – The school supports the running of a well-being committee who meet regularly to discuss any well-being concerns that may be a factor that can therefore be addressed with SLT. The committee also plan activities and initiatives within the school to support a culture of being a fun place to work.
- Well-being initiatives – Rewards for staff contribute to a culture of praise within the school. Additional initiatives include secret buddies and staff nominations that acknowledge excellent achievements and hard work.
- Employee Assistance Programme - The Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) is provided by CiC to all employees and family members free of charge, they provide confidential care any time day or night, 365 days a year. They can be contacted via a free phone number 0800 085 1376, email at [assist@wellbeing.com](mailto:assist@wellbeing.com) or access online support at [www.well-online.co.uk](http://www.well-online.co.uk).

The school's commitment to staff wellbeing is detailed further in our [Caring for our staff.docx](#)

## 15. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed by Dr Taylor-Mullings (Vice Principal) annually. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing board and the headteacher.