

Staff Emotional Wellbeing Survey – Rowhill School

with support from the Emotional Wellbeing Team

March 2021

The Emotional Wellbeing Team

The Emotional Wellbeing Teams (EWTs) across Kent & Medway work in Special Schools and Alternative Provision Services (APS), alongside and in addition to the existing support already in place, to provide prevention and early intervention support including ‘whole school approaches to emotional wellbeing and mental health’ (Public Health England, 2015). The EWT’s intention is to provide support to children, young people, their parents and carers, school staff and the wider school community. Based on the eight principles outlined in ‘Promoting Children and Young People’s Emotional Health & Wellbeing: a whole school & college approach’ (PHE, 2015) and utilising the Headstart Resilience Toolkit, Rowhill school will be supported by the EWT to review current practice and identify areas for development.

In December 2020 the senior leadership team (SLT), led by Head Teacher Geoff Bartrum, established Rowhill’s ‘Resilience Working Group’, with staff representation from across the school (including primary and secondary teachers, teaching assistants, safeguarding team and pastoral staff). The role of the resilience working group is to review the schools current practice and approach to emotional health and wellbeing, and identify areas for development.

In recognition of the importance of staff wellbeing in promoting the whole schools approach to mental health and wellbeing, it was agreed that support would be provided from the EWT to undertake a school-wide survey of staff emotional wellbeing. Furthermore, in light of the ongoing pandemic presenting a range of additional challenges for children, young people, families and staff in schools, this survey attempted to ascertain whether additional, targeted support for school staff in particular, would be appropriate at the present time (spring term 2021).

This document outlines the results of the school wide online survey undertaken in February/March 2021. The document provides an overview of staff wellbeing at the point of administration only.

This survey comprised:

- 19 statements with response options from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*
- Two open-ended questions inviting further information in relation to how staff manage their emotional wellbeing now, and what more they feel could be offered to improve this moving forwards
- Demographic information including age, gender, ethnicity, and role was also gathered.

The information sheet, survey items and summary page can be found in Appendix 1.

Demographics

The survey was distributed to 80 members of staff at Rowhill and they were given one week to complete. A total of 73 members of staff (91%) completed the wellbeing questionnaire; with up to 13 (18%) of these declining to provide some or all demographic information.

The tables below summarise the demographic information obtained, with total number of responses shown in parenthesis:

Which area of the school do you work?	Primary	27% (17)
	Secondary	49% (31)
	Other	24% (15)
What is your role in the school?	Teacher (including SLT)	48% (30)
	Teaching Assistant	38% (24)
	Office / Admin / IT	10% (6)
	Other agency (SaLT / OT)	2% (1)
	Other	3% (2)

Gender	Male	32% (20)
	Female	65% (41)
	Other	3% (2)
Age	Under 18	2% (1)
	18-24 years	8% (5)
	25-34 years	14% (9)
	35-44 years	14% (9)
	45-54 years	33% (21)
	55-64 years	25% (16)
	65 and older	3% (2)
Ethnic Group	White	85% (51)
	Black / African / Caribbean / British	5% (3)
	Asian / Asian British	3% (2)
	Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Groups	5% (3)
	Other	2% (1)

Survey results

The results of the survey can be thought about in two areas: general staff wellbeing; and relationships with others and support. For a summary of the items grouped into each theme, please see Appendix 2; to view frequency of responses, please see Appendix 3.

Staff Wellbeing

Generally, staff at Rowhill have described feeling positive (70%) when at work, and feel they have the skills and knowledge required to develop young people’s social and emotional wellbeing (84%).

I feel positive when I am at work

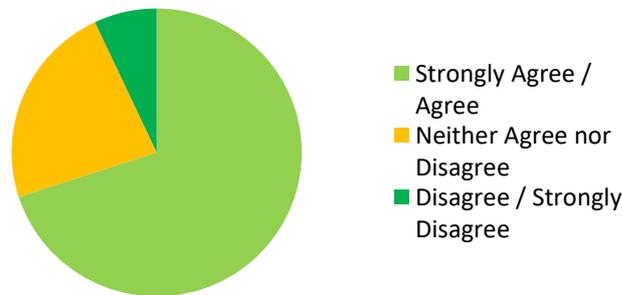


Figure 1. Staff responses to statement *I feel positive when I am work*

More than half of the staff who responded to the survey acknowledged that it is not unusual for them to feel tired at this point in the academic year (60%), and just under half reported it is not unusual for them to feel stressed at this point in the academic year (49%).

While 56% of staff reported feeling generally cheerful and in good spirits, a quarter of staff denied feeling calm and relaxed (25%) and denied feeling active and having energy (27%).

While just over half of staff reported their daily life to be filled with things that interest them (55%), just under half of staff reported often leaving work feeling overwhelmed (42%), and a third of staff denied being able to switch off after leaving work (34%).

I often leave work feeling overwhelmed

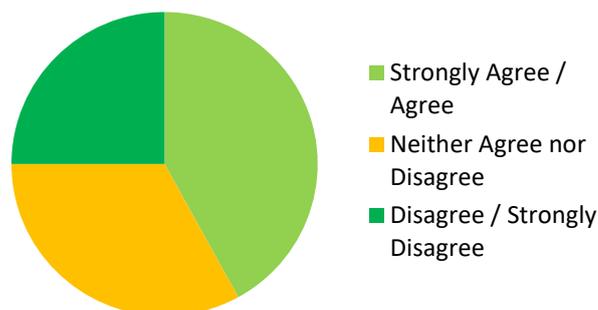


Figure 2. Staff responses to statement *I often leave work feeling overwhelmed*

When asked about things they do at the moment to manage their own emotional wellbeing, staff identified engaging with various hobbies including; yoga, mindfulness, exercise including walking, music and playing instruments, games and puzzles, connecting with friends and family, and seeking support. Despite the majority of staff identifying various activities they find helpful at the moment, six staff members explicitly identified the pandemic as having directly impacted their ability to engage in activities they enjoy and would find useful.

Relationships with others and Support

A high proportion of staff that completed the survey reported good working relationships in the school (75%), feel encouraged by their colleagues (74%), get the help and support they need from colleagues (72%), have someone they can speak to when they need (72%), and feel able to ask for help when they need it (80%).

While over half of staff reported feeling supported though emotionally demanding work and situations (60%) and feel supported to reflect on and take action to support their own wellbeing (59%), just over two thirds of staff reported they would find additional space to think and reflect on the demands of the job as useful (69%).

Additional space to think and reflect would feel useful

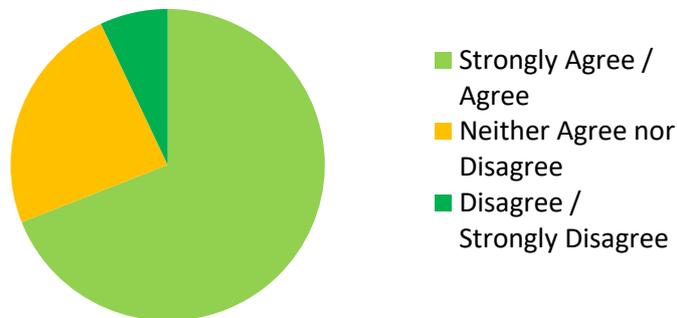


Figure 3. Staff responses to statement *I would find additional space to think and reflect on the demands of my job, useful*

A minority of staff reported feeling too overwhelmed to provide emotional support to their colleagues (8%).

Finally, when asked if there are things that would improve their emotional wellbeing at work, the majority of staff reported that it would feel beneficial to have time to reflect and talk with others, particularly about the challenges of this work;

“Having someone to talk to that I trust (other than my TA) when I have an issue over something at work”

“Time to reflect after difficult situations with pupils”

“Someone out of my personal life to speak to”

“More support i.e. counselling”

“If we had enough time it would be great to have individual or group supervision to share and offload”

Staff also reported activities undertaken as a team would likely improve their emotional wellbeing at work;

“Yoga, fitness, sports”

“Practical activities”

“More social events (when COVID permits)”

And some staff reported changes to their general workload and feeling valued for their contributions as likely beneficial;

“Less paperwork”

“Fair distribution of work”

“Rewards and incentives”

“A mechanism for public praise to all staff from all staff”

“Personal efforts and input recognised and voiced a little more”

“Foster a culture within the school where staff feel valued and are recognised for their input”

Outcome

Through undertaking this survey the EWT, together with Rowhill SLT, hope to establish an understanding of the emotional wellbeing needs of the staff team. In doing so it is hoped that any support provided by the EWT can be tailored, in line with the findings, to help meet the emotional wellbeing needs of the staff group. Support from the EWT would be in addition to and alongside existing support structures already in place, and those developed by the school.

1. EWT providing support for the school staff team

A large part of the role of the EWT is to help embed a culture of thinking about the emotional wellbeing of the staff team (looking after ourselves enables us to help look after others). Where indicated and as agreed with the school, the EWT may offer staff reflective practice spaces (1:1 and/or group supervision) for school staff. This support may include support around the emotional impact of their work with children and young people, their families, and the wider systems involved with the child or young person (YOT, Social Services, CYPMHS).

2. Ongoing monitoring of staff emotional wellbeing and systems in place

Rowhill SLT may wish to consider reviewing staff wellbeing at regular intervals (i.e. annually) to ensure that the systems in place meet the needs of their staff.

3. Mental Health awareness training

Further staff training that intends to raise staff awareness of issues in relation to mental health may be beneficial; examples may include mental health awareness; staff wellbeing; trauma-informed working. Requests for specific training and workshops can be discussed with the EWT.

4. Resilience Working Group

It would likely be beneficial for Rowhill's 'resilience working group' to continue to meet, discuss and review the schools approach to emotional health and wellbeing, including the ongoing identification of strategies to promote and foster the culture they continue to embed.

5. Mental Health Forum

The EWT are available to support a forum for regular case discussion and offer clinical consultation regarding care plans for complex children and families. This would intend to provide a collaborative space to support staff with clinical decision making and to think about the emotional wellbeing and mental health needs of the children and families they support.