

RAVENSCLOTE JUNIOR SCHOOL

# MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY 2024 – 2026



Date of Approval		Date of Review	
July 2024		July 2026	
<b>Signed</b>	Amy Wells Headteacher	<b>Signed</b>	Emily Gibson Chair of Governors

Ravensclote Junior School



## RAVENSCLOTE JUNIOR SCHOOL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING POLICY

This policy has been derived from the Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools guidance (November 2018) and draws upon its language, definition and recommendations.

### OUR COMMITMENT TO WELLBEING

At Ravensclote Junior School, we are committed to promoting an awareness of mental health and wellbeing for all of our school community: our children, our staff and our families. We understand wellbeing as a state of being comfortable, healthy and happy, and in which a person is able to thrive – but we also recognise that uncomfortable emotions help us learn and grow. We strive to create an environment which has a whole school approach to providing excellent support for all individuals, as well as interventions where necessary, and to increase everyone's knowledge and understanding of their own, and others', mental health and wellbeing.

We pledge to:

- Engage the whole-school community in the importance of mental health awareness.
- Enrich the lives of the whole community by offering education, provision and intervention that match the needs of the community.
- Excel in promoting positive mental health as 'everyone's business', whilst placing wellbeing at the heart of our school's ethos.

*RJS Commitment to Wellbeing, written by the Wellbeing Committee, 2021*

### CREATING A WHOLE SCHOOL CULTURE

Ravensclote Junior School has an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of our children and staff. We know that everyone has mental health, and that mental health should be nurtured in the same way as physical health.

The culture, ethos and environment of the school can have a profound influence on both child and staff mental wellbeing. At Ravensclote, we endeavour to create a culture where calm, dignity and structure encompass every space and activity. To do this, we strive for a consistent whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. A whole school approach is one that goes beyond the teaching in the classroom to pervade all aspects of school life, including:

- Rooting our school in our 6 values (Respect, Responsibility, Honesty, Teamwork, Excellent and Happiness) as well as promoting British Values (Democracy, Rule of Law, Tolerance, Mutual Respect and Individual Liberty)
- Considering mental health and wellbeing within the school's policies; for example, in the Positive Behaviour Policy, the Inclusion Policy and the Anti-Bullying Policy
- Using the curriculum to develop children's knowledge about health and wellbeing; for example in PSHE, RSHE, PE and science
- Identifying vulnerable pupils within the school who have additional risk factors for mental health problems (for example those with SEND or those who identify as LGBTQI+) and ensuring there is additional provision to support and promote their positive mental health
- Working in partnership with families, the community and external agencies to actively promote health and wellbeing
- Creating and maintaining a culture where children are ready, respectful and safe
- Facilitating opportunities for staff's continuous professional development; for example training in behaviour management, counselling principles, emotion coaching and understanding



trauma

- Considering staff mental health and wellbeing when making any decisions that impact their roles and workload
- Providing children and staff with access to trained in-house mental health first aiders
- Providing families with a bank of support services, easily accessible in the wellbeing area of the school website
- Maintaining our commitment to the Wellbeing Award for Schools (Appendix 1) and continuing to live out the objectives.

## CHILDREN

At Ravenscote, we have a central role to play in promoting good mental health and wellbeing for all children. We have a universal offer which supports the social, emotional and mental health of every child, as well as additional/enhanced and personalised support that can be put in place for individuals as needed. This offer can be found in our Provision Map (Appendix 2).

### Mental health problems in children

It is a normal part of life to experience short-term stress and worry when faced with uncertainty or challenges. Short-term stress can present itself differently in different children, depending on other factors in their life. When a problem is particularly severe or persistent, or when a number of difficulties are faced at once, children may be described as experiencing mental health problems.

School staff may also 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 with a member of the DSL team.

### Possible warning signs include:

- Changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Becoming socially withdrawn
- Changes in activity and mood
- Talking or 'joking' about self-harm or suicide
- Expressing feelings of failure, uselessness or loss of hope
- Repeated physical pain or nausea with no evident cause
- An increase in lateness or absenteeism

Although it is only appropriate that trained professionals diagnose mental health problems, staff observe children day-to-day and can identify those whose behaviour suggests that they may be experiencing mental health problems or be at risk of developing one.

### Risk and protective factors

Staff are aware that certain individuals and groups are more at risk of developing mental health problems than others. These risks can relate to the child themselves, to their family, or to their community or life events. Research suggests that there is a complex interplay between the risk factors in children's lives, and the protective factors that can promote their resilience. Our staff recognise the importance of understanding the protective factors that enable children to be resilient when they encounter problems or challenges, and know that we play a role in providing a safe and affirming environment that ensures children are exposed to protective factors. A table of risk and protective factors that are believed to be associated with mental health outcomes can be found in Appendix 3.

### Mental health as an indicator of abuse

All staff are 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. Where children have suffered abuse



and neglect and other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, it can have a lasting impact throughout childhood, adolescence and into adulthood. It is key that staff are aware of how these children's experiences can impact on mental health, behaviour and education.

### **Mental health and its link to SEND**

Social, emotional and mental health is a recognised broad area of need in the 2014 SEND Code of Practice 'Children and young people may experience a wide range of social and emotional difficulties which manifest themselves in many ways. These may include becoming withdrawn or isolated, as well as displaying challenging, disruptive or disturbing behaviour. These behaviours may reflect underlying mental health difficulties such as anxiety or depression, self-harming, substance misuse, eating disorders or physical symptoms that are medically unexplained. Other children and young people may have disorders such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder or attachment disorder.' If children are placed on the Inclusion Register, for a Social, Emotional and Mental Health need, following concerns raised by staff the school follows the cycle of Assess, Plan, Do and Review, detailed further in the SEND Policy. All staff are aware of and regularly trained in the range of SEMH needs which may present at Ravenscote Junior School.

### **Early intervention**

Early intervention to identify issues and provide effective support is crucial. The school role in supporting and promoting mental health and wellbeing can be summarised as:

- Prevention: creating a safe and calm environment where mental health problems are less likely, improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school population, and equipping children to be resilient so that they can manage the normal stress of life effectively. This will include teaching children about mental wellbeing through the curriculum and reinforcing this teaching through school activities and ethos
- Identification: recognising emerging issues as early and accurately as possible
- Early support: helping children to access evidence-based early support and intervention
- Access to specialist support: working effectively with external agencies to provide swift access or referrals to specialist support and treatment

If staff members suspect that a child is having mental health difficulties, a graduated response will be put in place.

1. An assessment to establish a clear analysis of the child's needs. Tools such as the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire and the Boxall Profile may be used (see Sources of support and information) or assessments may take the form of observations and discussions.
2. A plan is put together to set out how the child will be supported. This will include support that can be offered within school (for example through an intervention or as part of a safety plan) and may involve referral to outside agencies if necessary.
3. Actions are taken to provide agreed support.
4. Regular reviews to assess the effectiveness of the provision will take place and this will lead to changes if necessary.

All assessments and support that is put in place for these children will be done in conjunction between the class teacher and Inclusion AHT, DSL or DDSL. Our family link worker may also be involved in this process, depending on the needs of the child and family. The Inclusion AHT, DSL or DDSL will be able to refer to external agencies and local support services (such as the school nurse) as appropriate. School staff will ensure that parents/carers are communicated with fully throughout this process.



## STAFF

It is recognised that promoting staff health and emotional wellbeing should be an integral part of the whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing. There is a wide range of strategies in place to ensure that staff's mental health and wellbeing is prioritised, and that all roles within the staff team have been considered. These strategies can be found in Appendix 4.

The governing body and senior leadership team are committed to ensuring that all staff achieve a work/life balance which includes consideration for working hours, sense of personal control, personal fulfilment, career development, organisational flexibility, emotional care and physical wellbeing and support.

Where members of staff need additional support with their mental health and wellbeing, early intervention measures will be tailored to suit the individual's needs, but may include stress assessments, occupational health referrals and regular support meetings with a senior member of staff or mental health first aider.

### Wellbeing days

All staff employed before 31st October that academic year are entitled to take 1 paid wellbeing day each school year (outside of holiday time) in recognition of their dedication to the school. This must be taken as one whole day and cannot be split into part days. Staff employed after 31st October in an academic year will become eligible the following academic year. Applications for wellbeing days must be made before the autumn half term break.

Wellbeing days taken by teachers should be covered internally by an HLTA so that cover is at no additional cost to the school. On occasion where the teacher cannot be covered by an HLTA, supply may be used. Wellbeing days taken by HLTAs or LSAs will not be covered in their entirety by another member of support staff – however the staff member taking the wellbeing day is responsible for ensuring that any times they are allocated to support a specific child will be covered. Wellbeing days taken by admin staff will be covered by the School Business Manager or office staff. The staff member taking their wellbeing day is responsible for organising cover for any duties (such as break, lunch or gate) prior to their leave of absence. Ideally, teachers will not take their wellbeing day on a day they are due to run an after-school club; if it is unavoidable, the teacher will need to organise for someone else to run their club (and then repay this by running their club).

Requests for wellbeing days must be booked in before the end of the first half term using the request form (Appendix 5); they are made to the PA to Headteacher and must be approved by the staff member's line manager and the Headteacher. A confirmation email will be sent by the PA to confirm this has been authorised. Leave must not be taken without prior approval (4 weeks' notice). Staff are responsible for the booking and taking of their own wellbeing days; if days are not taken, there will not be any payment in lieu or carry forward of days.

Although there is not a set number of staff who can be on their wellbeing day at once, consideration will need to be made for what is manageable (for example, it would not be appropriate for two members of the same team to have their wellbeing day on the same day). For this reason, the request form requires staff to put forward 2 options for their wellbeing day, in order of preference.

Wellbeing days may be withheld at short notice if the needs of the school require the staff to be present. This would also include a school inspection (e.g. OFSTED) or a staffing crisis due to significant staff absence. If the school cancels a wellbeing day, the staff member can rebook for an agreed date within the same academic year. It is therefore important to consider any personal costs



when planning a wellbeing day as these would be the responsibility of the staff member if it became necessary for them to attend school on their planned wellbeing day.

Wellbeing days cannot be taken on INSET days, during residentials, SATs week or whole school events e.g. sports days. If a member of staff is ill on their booked wellbeing day, the day cannot be rebooked.



Appendix 1

### **Wellbeing Award for Schools**

In July 2022, Ravenscote achieved the Wellbeing Award for Schools, in recognition of our commitment to mental health and wellbeing. We are committed to continuing to live out the objectives of this award, as a framework against which to hold ourselves accountable for promoting positive emotional wellbeing and mental health.

The objectives are as follows:

- The school is committed to promoting and protecting positive emotional wellbeing and mental health by achieving the Wellbeing Award for Schools.
- The school has a clear vision and strategy for promoting and protecting emotional wellbeing and mental health, which is communicated to all involved with the school.
- The school has a positive culture which regards emotional wellbeing and mental health as the responsibility of all.
- The school actively promotes staff emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- The school prioritises professional learning and staff development on emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- The school understands the different types of emotional and mental health needs across the school and has systems in place to respond appropriately.
- The school actively seeks the ongoing participation of the whole-school community in its approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- The school works in partnerships with other schools, agencies and available specialist services to support emotional wellbeing and mental health.



Appendix 2: Ravenscote Junior School provision map for social, emotional and mental health

**ALL children**

(Universal provision)

- School values identified, celebrated and discussed.
- PSHE curriculum including focus on key values
- Class Dojo points related to school values
- Whole school rules – ready, respectful and safe
- Structured routines.
- Restorative conversations
- Individual Dojo rewards.
- Celebration assemblies with teacher achievement awards, Head Teacher awards and termly governor awards.
- Governor hot chocolate once a week
- Classroom responsibilities.
- Buddy system.
- All staff trained in ‘Positive Touch’.
- Worry box provided.
- Poor/ late attendance – phone call home and monitored over time.
- Safeguarding concerns monitored.
- Wellbeing adult for each pupil identified.
- All staff trained in attachment.
- Zones of regulation programme
- Daily mile
- Mental Health first aiders
- Positive behavior policy
- Responsibilities – well being ambassadors, school council, eco ambassadors
- All staff TAMHs trained
- Transition planning

**SOME children**

(Additional →Enhanced support)

- Social skills course (Anger/friendships/self- esteem).
- Optional Lunchtime Club support.
- 6 week ELSA programme
- Small ELSA group
- Wellbeing adult chat time.
- Involvement of Inclusion officer for attendance.
- Lego Therapy group.
- Directed LSA support including settling activities.
- Resilience building group.
- Directed use of calming strategies
- Focused zones of regulation group
- Positivity book to share with home
- Use of social stories.
- Use of comic strips
- Use of the garden to look after plants



**A FEW children**

- (Personalised support)
- Assessment by STIPs
- Individual Behaviour Plan.
- Circle of friends work.
- Nurture group
- Individual reward system with home involvement.
- Home/school record.
- Support for transition into year 3 and transfer to secondary school.
- Individual lunchtime programme.
- Referral to CAMHs.
- Freemantles outreach support
- 1:1 emotional support with reading and hot chocolate for PLAC/LAC children
- Work with CWP
- Work with FLW
- Person centered meetings



Appendix 3

**Table 1: Risk and protective factors that are believed to be associated with mental health outcomes**

	Risk factors	Protective factors
<b>In the child</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Genetic influences</li> <li>• Low IQ and learning disabilities</li> <li>• Specific development delay or neuro-diversity</li> <li>• Communication difficulties</li> <li>• Difficult temperament</li> <li>• Physical illness</li> <li>• Academic failure</li> <li>• Low self-esteem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secure attachment experience</li> <li>• Outgoing temperament as an infant</li> <li>• Good communication skills, sociability</li> <li>• Being a planner and having a belief in control</li> <li>• Humour</li> <li>• A positive attitude</li> <li>• Experiences of success and achievement</li> <li>• Faith or spirituality</li> <li>• Capacity to reflect</li> </ul>
<b>In the family</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overt parental conflict including domestic violence</li> <li>• Family breakdown (including where children are taken into care or adopted)</li> <li>• Inconsistent or unclear discipline</li> <li>• Hostile and rejecting relationships</li> <li>• Failure to adapt to a child's changing needs</li> <li>• Physical, sexual, emotional abuse, or neglect</li> <li>• Parental psychiatric illness</li> <li>• Parental criminality, alcoholism or personality disorder</li> <li>• Death and loss – including loss of friendship</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At least one good parent-child relationship (or one supportive adult)</li> <li>• Affection</li> <li>• Clear, consistent discipline</li> <li>• Support for education</li> <li>• Supportive long term relationship or the absence of severe discord</li> </ul>



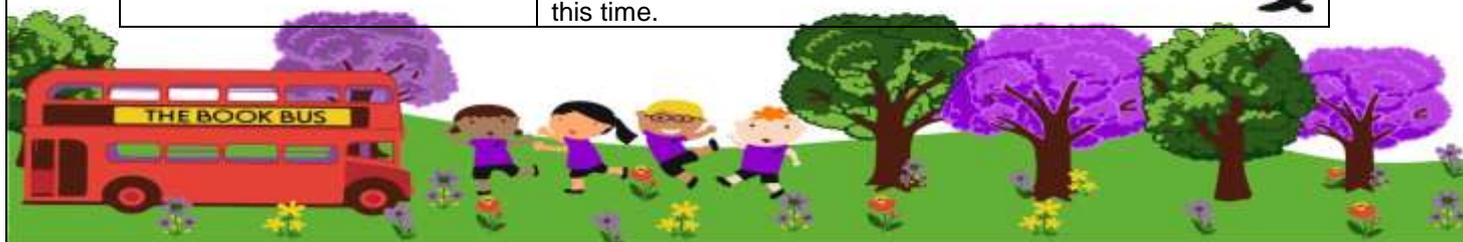
Appendix 4

The following strategies are used to ensure staff's wellbeing and mental health is prioritised:

Wellbeing strategy	Description
School Culture	Whole school culture of promoting positive mental health, this begins with the headteacher, who has an open-door policy and will make herself available to anyone who needs to talk.
Senior Leadership Team support	All of SLT make it a priority to support and be available to their teams and colleagues.
Wellbeing day	All staff are entitled to take one paid day off a year as their wellbeing day.
End of term celebration	Governors approve the school contribution towards the cost of the Christmas and Summer celebrations.
Staff room refurbishment	This is now a much nicer environment to eat in, the introduction of the table has allowed staff to eat together and chat during their break times. Laptops have also been placed in the staffroom to ensure that all staff have access to a laptop when required.
Free tea and coffee	All staff are provided with free tea, coffee, hot chocolate and milk. The brand of coffee was changed after it was highlighted in a staff survey that the brand being used wasn't particularly nice.
Dress down Fridays	On a Friday we operate a more relaxed dress code when staff can "dress down". This enables staff to wear jeans etc to school.
Book swap	In the staff room, there is a staff room where staff can bring in books they have read and swap them for another one.
Flu jabs	Staff have the option to invoice school for their flu jabs, demonstrating a commitment to supporting the physical health of the staff.
Treat days	At the end of each term, and at various times through the year, all staff receive a treat. This has previously been in the form of treat boxes, breakfast baguettes, cookies, hand massages and more.
Employee Assistance Programme	Our subscription provides: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 365 day helpline for staff and families</li> <li>• Counselling and therapy</li> <li>• Management coaching</li> <li>• Debt Management Support</li> <li>• Legal telephone support</li> <li>• Access to the Assistance website with an information library</li> </ul>
Occupational Health Referrals	When necessary we will make referrals to our occupational health provider. When used, these have provided excellent advice and strategies and allowed for successful support for these colleagues.
Mental Health First-aiders	We have 5 trained mental health first-aiders who provide at-work support to any colleagues who, at any time, identify challenges with their mental wellbeing. The trained members of staff were chosen to provide options for colleagues as they may each feel more comfortable speaking to someone in a certain job role in the school.
Margot the school dog	Margot attends staff meetings to support wellbeing, staff take her for walks to support their physical wellbeing and she is also used to support pupil's wellbeing.



INSET days	INSET days are planned in for the end of the summer term so that if we are able to provide the CPD in staff meetings through the year, we can give this time as additional wellbeing time for all staff.
CPD opportunities	To ensure staff feel able to deal with challenging situations or behaviours, we have provided and continue to provide comprehensive training opportunities, these have included Beacon House training, ELSA supervision, DSL supervision, CPI training (previously positive touch), zones of regulation, bereavement training etc. There are also additional CPD opportunities for staff who wish to further their career – HLTA training programme, NPQML, NPQSL, NPQH etc.
Individualised stress risk assessments	These are carried out for staff who are experiencing stress either in the work place or outside. This ensures that, as a school, we are providing the appropriate support for them and not placing any further demands on them.
Annual Staff Survey	This allows the staff the opportunity to share their opinions in a confidential way whilst ensuring they are being heard and can impact change.
Wellbeing notice board in the staffroom –	This highlights opportunities for staff to develop their wellbeing either through training, events or social events.
Half termly Wellbeing Newsletter	This is produced by the DSL and shared with all staff – this includes strategies to help staff focus on their own mental health as well as supporting pupils.
Celebrating birthdays	The noticeboard in the staffroom celebrates staff member's birthdays, often birthday posters will also be put up on the office door to remind people whose birthday it is.
Reducing workload during Parents Evening week	We ensure that during Parents Evening weeks, there are no extra-curricular clubs or staff meetings – this reduces the demands on staff.
Parents Evening treats	At all parents evening, staff are provided with sweet treats to keep them going throughout the evening, as well as having the chance to “order” a hot drink which will be delivered to them by a colleague.
Staff e-mail addresses are not available to the public via the website.	Any parents who wish to email, do so through the info@ account which goes to the office who forward on to staff. Staff then respond by call or by email via Scholar Pack within 5 working days.
Closure of e-mail system over the weekends.	This means that any external emails sent after 6pm on a Friday morning will not send and the sender will receive an alert to clarify this. Although we do not promote (or expect) working at weekends, this limits impact from external factors if anyone does do other work.
School e-mails are not sent after 6pm.	We have a general school expectation, that staff do not send emails after 6pm. This is modelled by SLT. Should staff wish to, they are able to schedule send them if that is their chosen way of working.
Live Marking policy	This aims to reduce workload outside of lesson time while still having an impact on pupil's learning.
Subject leader time	Teachers who have additional responsibility for leading subjects are given three mornings a year to support them with leading their subject. This is in addition to the 3 hours of PPA they have each week and can be taken from home to ensure the time is protected from school-based responsibilities which might impact this time.



Report Writing INSET day	Teachers are provided with a dedicated day to spend writing their end of year reports. The report format itself, has also been reduced considerably over the last couple of years to ensure that it is possible to complete this task within the day, whilst also ensuring appropriate feedback to parents.
Family Link Worker	The introduction of a family link worker has helped enormously with regards to wellbeing of staff. She is able to work to build relationships with some of our more vulnerable families and make regular contact with them. She is also able to provide to class teachers when signposting parents to additional resources.
Staff appraisal system	The staff appraisal system, alongside ongoing supervision, ensures emotional wellbeing and mental health is recognised and monitored. All staff have access to support when required in the following ways – (see table below)

All staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formal appraisal process includes wellbeing discussion each meeting</li> <li>• Informal check ins from line manager</li> <li>• HT, DHT &amp; Inclusion AHT open door</li> <li>• Access to external education support programme</li> <li>• Referrals to occupational health where necessary</li> <li>• Access to Mental Health First Aiders</li> <li>• Termly formal meetings (and ongoing discussions as and when necessary) between line managers and HT &amp; DHT discussing the wellbeing of all of their team members, and actions being taken to support this if necessary</li> <li>• Regular reminders of the importance of their mental health – this is first introduced during induction</li> </ul>
ELSAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Half termly Surrey-led supervision</li> </ul>
Mental Health First Aiders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Buddy” who is also a MHFA – part of the training included how to support your buddy</li> <li>• Half termly team meetings to discuss any emotional impact on MFHAs (care is taken to respect confidentiality of any staff they are supporting)</li> </ul>
DDSLs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly meetings as a team to discuss cases and any emotional impact on the DDSLs</li> </ul>
DSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weekly meeting with Headteacher to discuss cases and any emotional impact on the DSL</li> </ul>
ECTs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In addition to ongoing emotional support provided by mentor, half termly meetings with ECT SLT lead focusing purely on their wellbeing</li> </ul>
Headteacher	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular check in with Chair of Governors</li> <li>• Monthly Excellence Board with the CEO and heads of the trust schools</li> </ul>



Appendix 5 **Wellbeing Day Request Form**

Please be aware that wellbeing days may be withheld at short notice if the needs of the school require you to be present. This would also include a school inspection (e.g. OFSTED) or a staffing crisis due to significant staff absence. If the school cancels your wellbeing day, you can rebook for an agreed date within the same academic year. It is therefore important to consider any personal costs when planning a wellbeing day as these would be your responsibility if it became necessary for you to attend school on your planned wellbeing day. Wellbeing days cannot be taken on INSET days, during residentials, SATs week or whole school events e.g. sports days.

Name:	
Role (including year group if applicable)	
Date Requested	Option 1:
<i>Please state if there is a particular reason for your first preference e.g. you have a wedding to attend</i>	Option 2:

	<b>Please tick</b>
I confirm I have read and understood the Wellbeing Day section of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy	
I confirm I will arrange any necessary cover e.g. break duty, lunch duty, after-school club, work with individual children	
<b>For teachers</b> I confirm I will submit a supply form I can confirm this does not fall on the day of my after-school club	

Signed:	
Date:	

*For office use only:*

Confirmed date of wellbeing day:

	Signature	Date
Line manager authorisation		
Headteacher authorisation		
Confirmation email sent by PA to the Headteacher		
SMB added to wellbeing day spreadsheet		

