



17 January 2019

Dear Parents & Carers,

### **The Wellbeing Award for Schools**

Thank you to those of you that completed the Wellbeing Survey last term. We have finished collating the responses from all stakeholders, yourselves, students, staff and governors, and have used this to inform our action plan for improving students' and staff mental health and wellbeing.

The award was developed in partnership with the National Children's Bureau (NCB), and is intended to review and improve emotional wellbeing and positive mental health across the whole School community. Our vision is an education system where good emotional wellbeing and mental health are at the heart of the culture and ethos of our School, so that students, with the support of their teachers, parents or carers, can build confidence and flourish. Evidence shows us that wellbeing is of central importance to learning and attainment, with high levels of wellbeing associated with improved academic outcomes. Conversely, students who have mental health problems are more likely to have academic difficulties at school and experience social disadvantage later in adult life.

Since the survey:

- I have met with the Student Council and gathered their thoughts as to what we can do to improve the provision for mental health and wellbeing.
- At Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Governors meetings Mental Health and Wellbeing is now a standing agenda item.
- Staff members have been asked for their ideas and these have been collated. SLT have agreed a budget for Mental Health and Wellbeing.
- Mrs Willis (Assistant Head in charge of the Sixth Form) has commissioned the Sixth Form Environment Team to prepare a notice board in the main corridor, which will signpost all professional available support.
- The School's website has been updated with relevant literature and signposts to mental health and wellbeing.
- I have arranged for Vanessa Brown, a well-regarded mental health counsellor and professional, to come to speak to parents and carers on Thursday 7 February 2019, and I will be working with her in the coming weeks to customise her presentation to best meet parents and carer needs. I will be writing to you shortly with further details.
- I have spoken to students in Years 7-13 about the award and the progress made to date.
- This half-term, in conjunction with the School Council, we will appoint Wellbeing Champions from our student body who will act as ambassadors for mental health and wellbeing throughout the School.
- We are currently organising a 'Time to Change' day designed to allow us to focus intensely on specific issues facing our student body through a variety of activities in the build up to the day, and on the day itself.

Our next step is to establish a 'Change Team', comprising of representatives from a cross-section of our School community. I would be very pleased to hear from you if you have a background in mental health and think you could contribute to our aims. The Change Team will be the driving force behind the achievement of the Wellbeing Award. The shared wisdom of this group will be a key source of insight into the best ways forward.

Yours faithfully,

Helen Birch  
Deputy Headteacher (Pastoral)