



Mr A J Murphy
Director of Rugby
Email: alex.murphy@ellesmere.com

16th November 2020

Dear Parent,

The mental wellbeing of our students here at Ellesmere College is a priority - especially during this uncertain time – and recent research has highlighted that the Corona Virus pandemic has had a significant impact on the mental health of many young people; some have been adversely affected by traumatic experiences including bereavement, social isolation, a loss of routine, uncertainty about their futures, or a breakdown in formal and informal support structures.

For the last two years I have been retraining as a Psychotherapist as I feel strongly about our pupils' mental health and it has enabled me to provide help and support to those suffering with issues such as anxiety, depression and trauma. In addition to this, Ellesmere College has assisted several staff and Sixth Form pupils in achieving the status of "Mental Health First Aider". This is to create a multi-layered, whole school approach to mental wellbeing support. It is my hope that we can work towards providing our pupils with the highest standard of emotional support. These modifications are needed to meet the rise of mental health cases amongst young people today.

Ellesmere College would like to carry out an audit of the current state of pupil wellbeing three times throughout the academic year on a termly basis. This is a useful exercise for monitoring pupils' current state of mental health, tracking progress and allowing early identification of potential issues. The easiest method of completing this is the **EPOCH** survey which is a recognised survey for young peoples' mental wellbeing.

The EPOCH model consists of five different positive characteristics that together support higher levels of wellbeing: **Engagement, Perseverance, Optimism, Connectedness, and Happiness.**

- **E = Engagement** - refers to being absorbed, interested, and involved in an activity or the world itself. Very high levels of engagement are known as a state called "flow", in which you are so completely absorbed in an activity that you lose all sense of time.
- **P = Perseverance** - refers to having the tenacity to stick with things and pursue a goal, despite any challenges that occur. You finish things that you start, even if it takes a while. When the going gets tough, the tough get going.
- **O = Optimism** - refers to having a sense of hope and confidence about the future. It involves generally taking a favourable view of things. Negative events are seen as temporary and specific to the situation – believing that things will work out in a good way.



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- **C = Connectedness** - refers to feeling loved, supported, and valued by others. It is more than simply having people in your life, but also feeling close to others.
- **H = Happiness** - is a general feeling of happiness, cheer, and contentment with life. You might not feel happy all the time, but you tend to feel generally content with life.

Please note that this survey is not compulsory, but by participating your child will be helping us develop a clear picture of the general level of wellbeing at Ellesmere College. Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,

Ellesmere College, Ellesmere, Shropshire SY12 9AB

Tel: 01691 622321 Fax: 01691 623286

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