

Help to introduce or develop a whole school or college approach to promoting good mental health and wellbeing

using the 8 key principles identified by Public Health England in the document:

[Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612212/Promoting_children_and_young_people_s_emotional_health_and_wellbeing.pdf)
(publishing.service.gov.uk)



1. Leadership and management...

that supports and champions efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing



Key question: How is the school or college providing visible senior leadership for emotional health and wellbeing?

Support from the senior leadership team is essential to ensure that efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing are accepted and embedded. Having a governor with knowledge and understanding of emotional health and wellbeing issues is highly desirable in championing organisation-wide practices. Developing or introducing a whole school or college approach to mental health involves strategic change, ideally overseen by a setting's senior mental health lead.

To help senior leads:

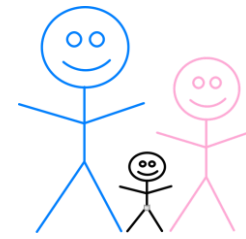
- the Department for Education (DfE) is offering grants for training to develop a senior mental health lead in every state school or college from autumn 2021. Click here to find out more: [Senior mental health lead training - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/senior-mental-health-lead-training)
- where established, [Mental Health Support Teams](#) (MHSTs) should also support senior leads to develop their approach

Follow this link [Leading Change \(annafreud.org\)](https://annafreud.org/leading-change) for guidance on:

- preparing for a whole-school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing;
- writing a policy document for your setting pertaining to mental health and wellbeing;
- including clear reference to mental health and wellbeing priorities within setting development or improvement plans;
- signposting for all groups within the setting to appropriate sources of support.

Follow this link [Supporting your staff group or team - YouTube](#) for a 52 minute webinar produced by the Psychology in Schools Team, that addresses challenges that school leaders face, helping them to: understand the needs of vulnerable staff, develop knowledge about core beliefs/behaviours that build resilient organisations, support leaders to consider how they can support the wellbeing of their team, and individuals and the importance of looking after your own wellbeing.

2. Ethos and Environment... that promotes respect and values diversity.



Key question: How does the school or college's culture promote respect and value diversity?

The physical, social and emotional environment in which staff and students spend a high proportion of every week-day has been shown to affect their physical, emotional and mental health and wellbeing as well as impacting on attainment. Relationships between staff and students, and between students, are critical in promoting student wellbeing and in helping to engender a sense of belonging to and liking of school or college. "It is important that children and young people understand equality, and understand both how they should be treated, and how they should treat others. Teaching these topics can create a safe place for pupils to explore, discuss, challenge and form their own opinions and values. The knowledge and respect of rights that pupils can gain from this, combined with understanding, respect and tolerance for difference, can empower them to tackle prejudice, improve relationships and promote their emotional wellbeing". [Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/625212/mental_health_and_wellbeing_provision_in_schools.pdf)

To encourage a good learning environment through policies, values and attitudes, you can:

- read the guidance on [preventing bullying](#)
- sign up for [behaviour hubs](#), a programme which encourages schools to work with each other to develop good behaviour cultures
- use the [respectful school communities tool](#) - a tool to support schools as they develop a whole school approach that promotes respect and discipline.
- Consider writing a mental health and well-being policy for your setting and / or re-drafting your behaviour policy to make it more driven by relationships (click here for guidance on putting these policies together: [Ensure there is a robust mental health and wellbeing policy \(annafreud.org\)](#) This page also includes links to two examples of primary school Mental Health policies; click here to download an editable version of a Schools Mental Health Policy that is adaptable for your own use: <https://www.liverpoolcamhs.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Schools-Mental-Health-Policy-Aug-2017.docx>)

Follow this link: [Promoting Wellbeing \(annafreud.org\)](#) for guidance on how to integrate mental health and wellbeing across the school curriculum and culture, as well as for advice on establishing a peer support programme within your setting.

3. Staff development...

that supports their own wellbeing and that of their students



Key question: How are staff supported in relation to their own health and wellbeing so as to be able to support student wellbeing?

Education Support's annual Teacher Wellbeing Index [Teacher Wellbeing Index 2020 \(educationsupport.org.uk\)](https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/teacher-wellbeing-index-2020) provides annual insight into the mental health and wellbeing of teachers and education staff working in the UK.

It is important for staff to access training to increase their knowledge of emotional wellbeing and to equip them to be able to identify mental health difficulties in their students. School staff may not feel confident to promote and support good mental health and may also need to know how to look after their own wellbeing to be able to support children and young people.

Using these links you can:

- Use the [Education staff wellbeing charter](#) to: show staff that you take their wellbeing seriously, open a conversation with staff about their wellbeing and mental health, create a staff wellbeing strategy and create a wellbeing-focused culture
- use the [Workload reduction toolkit](#) to: identify workload issues in your school, address workload issues in your school (such as feedback and marking) and evaluate the impact of workload reduction measures
- find out more about the [National Professional Qualifications \(NPQs\)](#), where one of these is for teachers who have, or are aspiring to have, responsibilities for leading behaviour and/or supporting pupil wellbeing in their school

Teachers and teaching staff should also prioritise looking after your own wellbeing and mental health. Every Mind Matters campaign self-care tool offers a free online action plan, approved by the NHS, that offers simple steps you can take to care for your own mental health. The tool can help to deal with stress and anxiety, boost mood, improve sleep quality and take control of your wellbeing [Every Mind Matters self-care tool | PHE School Zone](#)

- **Useful resources**
- [Wellbeing for Teachers Newsletter](#) - This newsletter by the Wellbeing Service has advice to help staff look after their wellbeing.
- [10 steps for school staff wellbeing | School staff wellbeing ideas | Supporting staff childrens mental health | Anna Freud Centre](#)
- [Supporting Staff \(annafreud.org\)](#) click on this link for guidance on conducting confidential staff wellbeing surveys and promoting staff mental health and wellbeing

4. Identifying need... and monitoring the impact of interventions



Key question: How does the school or college assess the needs of students and the impact of interventions to improve wellbeing?

There are a variety of tools that education settings can use as the basis for understanding and planning a response to pupils' emotional health and wellbeing needs. The tools range from simple feedback forms to validated measures which can focus on both wellbeing and mental health. Defining pupil need on a more formal basis can help to inform commissioning decisions at school level, across clusters of schools or at a local authority level. It is equally important to be able to record and monitor the impact of any support that is put in place. You can click on these links to find out more:

- find out more about [measuring pupil wellbeing](#) from the Anna Freud Centre
- also from the Anna Freud Centre is advice on identifying pupils at risk and developing and measuring interventions: [Understanding Need \(annafreud.org\)](https://www.annafreud.org/understanding-need)
- use the [statutory SEND code of practice](#) to identify emerging mental health issues and whether a child needs SEND provision
- get guidance on [mental health and behaviour in schools](#) and the CPD support you can use to:
 - identify underlying mental health issues early
 - understand what is and is not a cause for concern
 - what you should do if you think you have identified a cause for concern

The Psychology and Therapeutic Service is currently using two structured interventions for auditing whole school mental health and well-being, and then helping schools to develop action plans from these. One of these is the Sandwell Charter Mark, and the other is SWERL (Supporting Wellbeing, Emotional Resilience and Learning).

If you would like to know more about either of these two approaches, please email:

Claire Darwin, Principal Educational Psychologist and SWERL facilitator Claire.Darwin@suffolk.gov.uk

Or Kay Breton, Specialist Educational Psychologist Mental Health & Whole School Approaches Kay.Breton@suffolk.gov.uk

5. Working with families...

(especially parents and carers)



Key question: How does the school or college work in partnership with parents and carers to promote emotional health and wellbeing?

The family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. NICE guidance recommends that both primary and secondary education providers:

- offer support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes
- give all parents details of the school's policies on promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems
- work in partnership with parents, carers and other family members to promote young people's social and emotional wellbeing
- ensure parents, carers and other family members living in disadvantaged circumstances are given the support they need to participate fully in activities to promote social and emotional wellbeing.

You can explain to families what help you can offer on your setting's website or other communications channels and use these [mental health resources for parents and carers](#)

Click on this link for guidance from the Anna Freud Centre on engaging parents and carers on the topic of mental health and wellbeing in school:

[supporting-schools-to-engage-with-all-parents-and-carers-booklet.pdf \(annafreud.org\)](#)

<https://mindedforfamilies.org.uk/> – advice and information from trusted experts to help improve understanding of mental health problems, and how parents and carers can best support their families.

6. Targeted support... and appropriate referral



Key question: How does the school or college ensure timely and effective identification of students who would benefit from targeted support and ensure appropriate referral to support services?

According to the research gathered and then summarised for the document [Identification and assessment of needs \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk) there were several areas of key learning and 'top-tips' that schools and colleges highlighted to aid the identification and assessment of need process. These included having:

- a school culture where it was acceptable and normal to talk about mental health for all staff and students.
- a variety of pathways to the identification of need to ensure schools do not miss any needs.
- regular and frequent pastoral support meetings to discuss children staff had concerns about to identify and assess needs quickly. These meetings needed to be prioritised over other work to highlight the importance of supporting mental health.
- access to mental health professionals to assist with the identification process and particularly assessment process.
- pastoral staff who students will talk to about their issues and concerns. Pastoral staff benefit from training about mental health and basic counselling to ensure they respond appropriately to students problems.
- procedures for children, young people and parents to refer students they are concerned about. Procedures should be publicised and accessible throughout the school or college

NICE guidance recommends that primary and secondary providers:

- identify and assess in line with the common assessment framework children who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress or behavioural problems, discuss options for tackling these problems with the child and their parents/carers and agree an action plan as the first stage of a 'stepped care' approach
- provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns.
- particularly providing young people in secondary provision with opportunities to build relationships, especially those who may find it difficult to seek support when they need it. This could involve developing a peer education or peer mediation approach where young people who act as peer supporters are trained and supported appropriately
- <https://www.corc.uk.net/outcome-experience-measures/> – provides easily accessible resources for individuals looking for information on how to measure children and young people's mental health and wellbeing
- <http://www.annafreud.org/media/4612/mwb-toolki-final-draft-4.pdf> – this toolkit aims to raise awareness amongst school and college staff of the range of validated tools that are available to help measure subjective mental wellbeing amongst the pupil population

7. Curriculum, teaching and learning...

that promotes resilience and supports social and emotional learning.



Key question: What focus is given within the curriculum to social and emotional learning and promoting personal resilience, and how is learning assessed?

NICE guidance recommends that education providers include a curriculum that integrates the development of social and emotional skills within all subject areas (these skills include motivation, self-awareness, problem-solving, conflict management and resolution, collaborative working, how to understand and manage feelings and how to manage relationships with parents, carers and peers), and that this should be sustained throughout their education and reinforced where possible through extra curricular activities.

School-based programmes of social and emotional learning have the potential to help young people acquire the skills they need to make good academic progress as well as benefit pupil health and wellbeing.

These resources are available to help you:

- plan and teach the compulsory [RHSE modules](#)
- encourage physical activity, which is part of wellbeing, with the [The School Sport and Activity Action Plan](#)
- use the [Character and education framework](#) to help with pupils' spiritual and mental development
- access the "Relationships, health and sex education (RHSE)" training module. This resource helps subject leads and school staff:
 - get the content they need to teach young people about managing their mental health and wellbeing
 - see examples of good practice
 - access training resources and templates you can customise

How to access the support:

Access the [Mental health and wellbeing training module](#).
Get further guidance on [Planning your RHSE curriculum](#).

8. Enabling student voice...

to influence decisions



Key question: How does the school or college ensure all students have the opportunity to express their views and influence decisions?

Involving students in decisions that impact on them can benefit their emotional health and wellbeing by helping them to feel part of the school and wider community and to have some control over their lives. At an individual level, benefits include helping students to gain belief in their own capabilities, including building their knowledge and skills to make healthy choices and developing their independence. Collectively, students benefit through having opportunities to influence decisions, to express their views and to develop strong social networks.

- Young children and people can also play an active role in creating a supportive school environment. You can use the findings from the [Anna Freud peer support programme](#) to develop your own in-school activities.
- Click on this link [Pupil voice : Mentally Healthy Schools](#) for further guidance from the Anna Freud Mentally Healthy Schools webpage on why gathering 'pupil voice' is important, and supporting pupil participation at both primary and secondary levels
- Between November 2020 and January 2021, the Anna Freud Centre surveyed 3,298 young people aged between 11 and 19, asking them about factors relating to their mental health and wellbeing. The purpose of the survey was to hear the views of children and young people with regards to mental health in secondary schools and further education (FE) colleges, so that school leaders can develop a better understanding about how to build a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing. Click on this link to read more about what was learned from this student survey [working-towards-mentally-healthy-schools-and-fe-colleges-final.pdf \(mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk\)](#)



Key Documents for Further Reading:



- [A whole school framework for emotional well being and mental health A self-assessment and improvement tool for school leaders Partnership for Well-being and Mental Health in Schools](#)
 - [Developing a whole organisational approach by the Department for Education](#)
 - [Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
- [Mental health resources for teachers and teaching staff \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
 - [Mental health and behaviour in schools \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
 - [HT_briefing_layoutvFINALvii.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](#)
 - [Back on Track Guidance.pdf \(ucl.ac.uk\)](#)

Click on each of the above to access the document directly.



Key Sources of Additional Information:



<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-in-schools> – Tom Bennett's independent review on behaviour in schools, which looked at leadership, culture and methods to improve pupil behaviour

<https://www.ncb.org.uk/resources-publications/resources/whole-school-framework-emotional-well-being-and-mental-health> – The National Children's Bureau's self-assessment and improvement tool for school leaders, to support them in implementing a whole school approach for emotional wellbeing and mental health

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-mental-health-in-schools-and-colleges> – this report presents pen portraits of mental health provision based on case study research in 36 schools, colleges and other educational institutions across England

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/> – is recommended by NAHT, and brings together quality-assured information, advice and resources to help primary schools understand and promote children's mental health and wellbeing.

<https://whatworkswellbeing.org/> work with a network of researchers, think tanks, businesses, government departments and non-profits to provide evidence, guidance and discussion papers on a range of subjects, including community wellbeing and measuring wellbeing.