

# A Whole School Approach to Promote Social and Emotional Well-Being



# Introduction

It is widely recognised that a child's emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning<sup>i, ii</sup>, as well as their physical and social health and their mental wellbeing in adulthood.<sup>iii, iv, v</sup>

This document sets out key actions that headteachers and college principals can take to embed a whole school approach to promoting emotional health and wellbeing. These actions are informed by evidence<sup>iv, v, vi, vii</sup> and practitioner feedback<sup>vi</sup> about what works. They build on what many schools and colleges are doing across the country but, if applied consistently and comprehensively will help protect and promote student emotional health and wellbeing. We pose one key question in each chapter aimed at helping the reader to reflect on implications for practice, and we give some examples of local practice.

Our hope is that this document will also be useful to school and college governing bodies, school nurses, local public health teams, academy chains and others whose role it is to promote the health and wellbeing of children and learners. The document signposts to practice examples (at [www.cypmhc.org.uk/schools\\_mental\\_health/](http://www.cypmhc.org.uk/schools_mental_health/)) and resources to support implementation. It also highlights action taken by schools and colleges to promote emotional health and wellbeing link with Ofsted inspection criteria.

This document should be read alongside statutory guidance on 'Keeping children safe in education',<sup>viii</sup> 'Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions'<sup>ix</sup> and existing advice on targeted approaches for supporting pupils with, or at risk of developing mental health problems including:

- statutory guidance on 'Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked after children'<sup>x</sup>
- advice for school staff on 'Mental health and behaviour in schools'<sup>xi</sup>
- advice on 'Counselling in schools'<sup>xii</sup>

Other supporting documents include guidance from the PSHE Association to support schools in teaching about mental health safely and effectively ([www.pshe-association.org.uk/emotionalhealth](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk/emotionalhealth)) and 'Resilience and results'<sup>xiii</sup> which outlines how schools can work with external agencies to commission additional support for pupils with behavioural and emotional difficulties.

# Rationale

In an average class of 30 15-year-old pupils:

- three could have a mental disorder <sup>xiv</sup>
- ten are likely to have witnessed their parents separate <sup>xv</sup>
- one could have experienced the death of a parent <sup>vi</sup>
- seven are likely to have been bullied <sup>vi</sup>
- six may be self-harming <sup>xvi</sup>

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: “in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy”.<sup>xi</sup> There is good evidence to support this assertion<sup>i</sup> and Ofsted has highlighted that children and young people themselves say that they want to learn more about how to keep themselves emotionally healthy.<sup>xvii</sup> Moreover schools have a duty to promote the wellbeing of students.<sup>xviii</sup>

The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) advises that primary schools and secondary schools should be supported to adopt a comprehensive, ‘whole school’ approach to promoting the social and emotional wellbeing of children and young people.<sup>iv,v</sup> Such an approach moves beyond learning and teaching to pervade all aspects of the life of a school, and has been found to be effective in bringing about and sustaining health benefits.<sup>ix</sup>

DfE also identifies a whole-school approach to promoting good mental health as a protective factor for child and adolescent mental health.<sup>xiv</sup> The report of the Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce (2015) <sup>xix</sup> identifies a national commitment to “encouraging schools to continue to develop whole school approaches to promoting mental health and wellbeing”

Although schools and colleges play a significant and valuable role in helping to promote student emotional health and wellbeing, their contribution should be considered as one element of a wider multi-agency approach. The Healthy Child Programme<sup>xx</sup> (2009) from five to 19-year-olds sets out the recommended framework of universal and progressive services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing.

# Eight principles

The following diagram presents eight principles to promote emotional health and wellbeing in schools and colleges. Each of these principles will be outlined in the following chapters along with a key question and examples of local practice relating to each principle.



Figure 1. Eight principles to promoting a whole school and college approach to emotional health and wellbeing

# Leadership and management

Support from the senior leadership team is essential to ensure that efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing are accepted and embedded.<sup>iv,xxi</sup> Having a governor with knowledge and understanding of emotional health and wellbeing issues is highly desirable in championing organisation-wide practices.

To ensure actions are integrated, sustained and monitored for impact it is important that a commitment to addressing social and emotional wellbeing is referenced within improvement plans, policies (such as safeguarding; confidentiality; personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) education; social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) education; behaviour and rewards) and practice.<sup>iv</sup> It is also important to involve pupils, staff and parents in developing these policies so that they remain 'live' documents that are reviewed and responsive to the evolving needs of the school community.

In addition to leadership from senior management, feedback from practitioners highlights the importance of having a champion who will promote emotional health and wellbeing across the organisation. Such champions do not have to be senior managers, but they do need the support of the senior management team and governors in order to take work forward in a way that is embedded across the school.

School leaders have an important executive role in advocating for the needs of children and learners within the context of wider local strategic planning and in influencing local commissioning arrangements. The Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce recommends that schools assign a lead on mental health issues who would be responsible for linking schools with expertise, identifying issues and making referrals. It also recommends that local mental health commissioners and providers assign a point of contact in specialist children and young people's mental health services for schools as well as in GP practices who would be responsible for advising on the management of specific cases.<sup>xix</sup>

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

## **Links with the Ofsted inspection framework**

One of the four key Ofsted judgements is "the quality of leadership in, and management of the school".<sup>xxii</sup> Schools have to demonstrate how effectively leadership and management enable all pupils to overcome specific barriers to learning, for example through effective use of the pupil premium and sports premium, and the extent to which leaders and managers create a positive ethos in the school. The framework also specifies that schools should demonstrate capacity for further improvement, for example

by working in partnership with other schools, early years providers, external agencies and the community; as well as by engaging with parents.

**NICE guidance recommends that:**

head teachers, governors and teachers should demonstrate a commitment to the social and emotional wellbeing of young people. They should provide leadership in this area by ensuring social and emotional wellbeing features within improvement plans, policies, systems and activities. These should all be monitored and evaluated.<sup>iv</sup>

**Practice examples**

At Samuel Rhodes Primary School the head teacher is a champion for promoting emotional health and wellbeing and is an integral part of a multidisciplinary team who support children, parents and staff. This arrangement helps to ensure a good fit between the work of the multi disciplinary team and the leadership priorities for the school.

At Bacon's College the head teacher provides strong leadership in recognising that the emotional health and wellbeing of all pupils, supported by a strong commitment to sport and physical activity, is a pre-requisite for their capacity to learn.

Hitchin Girls School is developing a whole school approach to emotional wellbeing which it calls *Re:mindme*. Its psychology teacher champions the work but has established a working group with representation from staff and students to steer the work forward. Support from the head and senior staff is helping to ensure effective implementation. An integral part of the approach has involved staff being encouraged to think about their own emotional health and wellbeing and how they can be role models for the students.

The Harbour School is a special school in Portsmouth that has established a whole school approach through strategic and systemic planning reflected in their school development plan. There are five key strands in this plan which are systematically and robustly reviewed:

- attendance
- social and emotional progress
- behaviour, exclusions and reintegration
- curriculum achievement and attainment
- outreach services based on one of their school sites



# School ethos and environment

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.<sup>xxiii</sup>

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.<sup>xxiv</sup>

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

## **Links with the Ofsted inspection framework**

When judging behaviour and safety Ofsted looks for evidence of a positive ethos that fosters improvements in the school as well as the promotion of safe practices and a culture of safety.<sup>xxii</sup>

As part of the inspection process inspectors will ask to see records and analysis of bullying, including racist, disability and homophobic bullying and will ask young people about their experiences of learning and behaviour in the school, including bullying. The school will be judged on the effectiveness of its actions to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying and harassment.<sup>xxii</sup>

## **NICE guidance recommends that:**

primary education providers:

- create an ethos and conditions that support positive behaviours for learning and for successful relationships
- provide an emotionally secure and safe environment that prevents any form of bullying or violence

secondary education providers:

- foster an ethos that promotes mutual respect, learning and successful relationships among young people and staff. Create a culture of inclusiveness and communication that ensures all young people's concerns can be addressed (including the concerns of those who may be at particular risk of poor mental health)
- provide a safe environment which nurtures and encourages young people's sense of self-worth and self-efficacy, reduces the threat of bullying and violence and promotes positive behaviours

## Practice examples

Framwellgate School Durham sees emotional wellbeing as a key factor in enabling students to achieve their full educational potential and to become responsible individuals well prepared for life beyond school. It has peer mentoring schemes and anti-bullying ambassadors. It has commissioned a social enterprise to run inspirational workshops with the students which focus on personal, social and employability skills. Evaluation of the work demonstrates that it has helped students gain an insight into why they behave in the way they do, and has made them more confident, and more empathic.

At Epsom Downs Primary School, the children are taught to embrace and value difference and this is incorporated into the curriculum wherever possible. The school takes an active role in anti-bullying week and children from across the key stages take part in workshops and activities to teach them to address diversity in a positive way.

The first wave of the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) programme<sup>xxv</sup> delivered in England focussed on creating an ethos and climate in schools to promote social and emotional skills. The evaluation found 50% of teachers perceived that pupil listening skills had improved and 44% perceived that pupil concentration levels had improved. Factors identified as contributing to the programme's efficacy included the commitment of senior management, sufficient time allocated for staff to develop an understanding of the programme and to plan for its implementation, appointing a designated coordinator and adopting a whole school approach.



# Curriculum, teaching and learning

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.<sup>i, xxvi</sup>

Opportunities exist to develop and promote social and emotional skills through both a dedicated Personal Social Health and Economic education (PSHE) curriculum and the wider curriculum. The PSHE Association has published advice for teachers on preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing

Pupils and students are more likely to engage in lessons that focus on emotional wellbeing if they are of practical application and relevant to them. There are a range of ways of getting insights into pupil need ranging from validated assessment tools (see p17-18) to feedback from existing fora such as school councils or local area youth councils. Assessment of learning is important and both teachers and pupils will want to know that what has been taught has been learnt, and that learning is progressing.

There may be stages during the academic year that provide opportunities for a specific curricular focus, for example learning skills for coping with transition periods or learning skills for coping with the pressures of studying for exams. There may also be times when it will be appropriate for a focus to be given to a locally topical issue.

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

## **Links with the Ofsted inspection framework**

The quality of teaching in the school is a key Ofsted judgement area. The inspection criteria states that the role of teaching is to promote learning and the acquisition of knowledge by pupils and to raise achievement, but also to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.<sup>xxii</sup>

## **NICE guidance recommends that:**

primary education providers:

- include a curriculum that integrates the development of social and emotional skills within all subject areas (these skills include problem-solving, coping, conflict management/ resolution and understanding and managing feelings)

secondary education providers:

- provide a curriculum that promotes positive behaviours and successful relationships and helps reduce disruptive behaviour and bullying. This can be achieved by integrating social and emotional skills development within all areas of the curriculum. Skills that should be developed 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
- tailor social and emotional skills education to the developmental needs of young people. The curriculum should build on learning in primary education and be sustained throughout their education, reinforcing curriculum learning through, for example, extra curricular activities

### **Practice examples**

The Penn Resilience Programme<sup>xxvii</sup> (PRP) is an 18-lesson curriculum for 11-13 year olds, which supports young people to develop skills such as emotional intelligence, flexible and accurate thinking, self-efficacy, assertive communication and problem solving. The programme is intended to empower young people to be more resilient in dealing with setbacks and make the most of opportunities both inside and outside of school. Three local authorities in England piloted the programme. The evaluation found the programme had a positive impact on pupils application of skills to real life situations, a short term improvement in depression symptom scores, school attendance rates and academic attainment in English and greater impact for the most vulnerable groups.

How to Thrive provide training for teachers who want to teach the Penn Resilience Programme (PRP) lessons. How to Thrive provide a five-day programme that provides the skills and knowledge required to teach the PRP curriculum to children and young people. This training allows participants to develop their own personal resilience and then apply this insight to teaching the curriculum to young people. The PRP is a licenced model and only those who have received training through an accredited body such as How to Thrive can legitimately teach the PRP curriculum. How to Thrive are currently leading a national project called Healthy Minds that is training teachers in 32 schools to deliver a four year curriculum (including the PRP).

Wellington College has been teaching wellbeing lessons since 2006. PSHE lessons were overhauled in order to effectively engage students. A 60-hour programme embedded over a four year period has been developed focussed on enabling students to flourish. Students embark upon this course in year 9 when they arrive at the school and complete it at the end of their lower sixth form year.

The PSHE Association has produced a number of resources to help schools incorporate emotional health and wellbeing into PSHE lessons.

YoungMinds suggests some simple and practical ways of incorporating emotional wellbeing into the curriculum.

# Student voice

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.

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

## Links with the Ofsted inspection framework

Ofsted Inspectors must have regard to the views of pupils.

When assessing the level of behaviour and safety in schools, inspections should look at a small sample of case studies in order to evaluate the experience of particular individuals and groups, including disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs, looked after children and those with mental health needs. <sup>xxii</sup>

## NICE guidance recommends:

that secondary education providers:

- develop partnerships between young people and staff to formulate, implement and evaluate organisation-wide approaches to promoting social and emotional wellbeing
- introduce a variety of mechanisms to ensure all young people have the opportunity to contribute to decisions that may impact on their social and emotional wellbeing
- involve young people in the creation, delivery and evaluation of training and continuing professional development activities in relation to social and emotional wellbeing

## Practice examples

St Albans Youth Council (SAYC), which is supported by Youth Connexions, works alongside and presents its concerns to the district council. Following a number of suicides in the area, SAYC conducted a survey of 1,800 year 8 and year 10 students in 2012 from schools in the district and a follow-up survey in 2014 of 2,700 people, which included students and teachers. It identified high levels of stress in students with some requiring support for more serious mental health issues. Many of these students did not

know about school-based counselling and indicated that they would approach their teacher if they needed support for a personal issue.

The SAYC was so concerned about the high levels of mental health need and the funding difficulties of a local youth counselling service that it presented a letter to the district council asking it what it was going to do to prevent suicides in local young people. As a result of this the district council set aside £15,000 of ring-fenced money to promote mental health and wellbeing. This ring-fenced money is being used to promote workshops focussed on the five ways to wellbeing.

The Haven is an integrated health centre that is co-located and managed by Budehaven Community School. There is a student management group which has representation from young people of all ages, including sixth formers. Involving young people in this way helps to give them ownership of the centre. The student management group was involved in setting-up and running the Haven. It was heavily involved in designing the Haven and was instrumental in obtaining funds to furnish the building. This has resulted in the service being very young person friendly, which encourages students to access the service.

# Staff development, health and wellbeing

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. This includes being able to refer them to relevant support either within the school or from external services. The report of the Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce recommends that staff working with children and young people in universal settings, including schools, should receive training in children and young people's development and behaviours but should not be expected to replace specialist services.<sup>xix</sup>

DfE has produced advice to help schools identify potential mental health problems as well as give advice on commissioning services and how to make a referral to child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS).<sup>xi</sup>

The government has also funded an e-learning platform developed by experts in children and young people's mental health and emotional health and wellbeing called MindEd

Promoting staff health and wellbeing is also an integral principle of the whole school approach to emotional health and wellbeing. Teaching and learning establishments can demonstrate a commitment to staff health and wellbeing in a number of ways. For example, by providing opportunities for assessing the emotional health and wellbeing needs of staff, by providing support to enable staff to reflect on and to take actions to enhance their own wellbeing and by promoting a work-life balance for staff. A good way of driving these changes is through the Workplace Wellbeing Charter National Standards. The standards set out action across a number of areas, including mental health and wellbeing, and provide a roadmap for driving improvements in workplace health.

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

## **Links with the Ofsted inspection framework**

The quality of teaching is a key judgement area for Ofsted. The inspection criteria refers to the importance of ensuring that all teaching staff benefit from appropriate professional development and that performance is rigorously managed.<sup>xxii</sup>

When assessing leadership and management, inspectors must consider the school's use of performance management and the effectiveness of strategies for improving teaching. This should include the extent to which professional development is based on

the identified needs of staff and the induction needs of newly qualified teachers and teachers at an early stage of their career.

**NICE guidance recommends:**

that primary education providers:

- offer teachers and practitioners in schools training and support in how to develop children’s social, emotional and psychological wellbeing
- train and develop teachers and practitioners so that they have the knowledge, understanding and skills to deliver a curriculum that integrates the development of social and emotional skills within all subject areas effectively. The training should include how to manage behaviours and how to build successful relationships
- ensure teachers and practitioners are trained to identify and assess the early signs of anxiety, emotional distress and behavioural problems among primary school children. They should also be able to assess whether a specialist should be involved and make an appropriate request

that secondary education providers:

- integrate social and emotional wellbeing within the training and continuing professional development of practitioners and governors involved in secondary education
- ensure practitioners have the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to develop young people’s social and emotional wellbeing

**Practice examples**

Hitchin Girls School’s *re:mindme* initiative actively encourages staff to think about their own emotional health and wellbeing.

Bristol University is undertaking a research project that is looking at the effects of providing school staff with support for their wellbeing via a peer support service, and training in supporting student wellbeing using Youth Mental Health First Aid (MHFA). The project is called Wellbeing in Secondary Education (WISE).

Islington CAMHS offer all schools the ‘Solihull Approach Training’<sup>xxviii</sup> which gives school staff a framework to help them work with children and parents and gives them a better understanding of mental health issues and how they can help support their students. The training also gives schools a shared language with the CAMHS workers which helps support integrated working.



# Identifying need and monitoring impact

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. Examples of validated tools that can measure mental wellbeing include:

- the Stirling children's wellbeing scale - this is a holistic, positively worded scale, developed by the Stirling Educational Psychology Service, that is suitable for educational professionals looking to measure emotional and psychological wellbeing in children aged eight to 15 years
- the Warwick-Edinburgh mental wellbeing scale (WEMWBS) – this is also a positively worded scale that can be used to measure wellbeing with young people aged 13 and over. It is recommended that it is used with samples of over 100 people.

For tools, such as the strengths and difficulties questionnaire (SDQ), designed to focus more on assessing targeted and specialist mental health needs, please see DfE guidance.<sup>xi</sup>

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

## **Links with the Ofsted inspection framework**

When inspecting the quality of leadership in and management of the school Ofsted inspectors should consider the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation and the extent to which it is shared with governors. They should also consider how well the school meets the needs of all vulnerable groups of pupils.<sup>xii</sup>

Assessing and responding to the emotional health and wellbeing needs of children and learners, and taking steps to mitigate the impact this has on their capacity to learn could provide supportive evidence in relation to all key judgement areas: the achievement of

pupils at the school, the quality of teaching in the school, the behaviour and safety of pupils at the school and the quality of leadership in and management of the school.

**NICE guidance recommends:**

that secondary education providers:

- systematically measure and assess young people’s social and emotional wellbeing and use these outcomes as the basis for planning activities and evaluating their impact

**Practice examples**

Epson Down’s Primary School uses happy/sad sheets to enable lunchtime staff and class teachers to track emotional wellbeing and look for signs of bullying or withdrawal. The school provides a range of support for children from assigning them a lunchtime buddy to providing a ‘Circle of Friends’ intervention,<sup>xxix</sup> a team of support, primarily peer support around the child, and via its ‘Nurture Room’ service.

At Langley Primary School each child has a peg with their name on it. Every morning and at points throughout the day they are invited to place the peg on the class’s feelings chart. This gives the teacher some immediate feedback as to how each child is feeling.

Smithy Bridge Primary School in Rochdale used an adapted version of the Stirling Wellbeing Scale to measuring wellbeing in year 6 students. It used its data to evaluate how well new activities and interventions designed to improve wellbeing were actually working and whether they were worth the investment.

Framwellgate School Durham was able to demonstrate to its governors that its counselling service enhanced the motivation of students, impacted positively on their attendance and learning, and as such improved standards. This enabled the school to invest in further developing the counselling service.

Place2Be uses well-researched measures to assess how its services are improving children’s emotional wellbeing. This data is used to evaluate how well a commissioned service or other intervention is working and whether it is actually helping students.

# Working with parents/carers

The family plays a key role in influencing children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing.<sup>xxx, xxxi</sup> There is strong evidence that well implemented universal and targeted interventions supporting parenting and family life that offer a combination of emotional, parenting and practical life circumstances (combining drug, alcohol and sex education, for example) have the potential to yield social as well as economic benefits.<sup>xxxii</sup>

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

## **Links with the Ofsted inspection framework**

The Ofsted inspection criteria expects schools to be engaging parents in supporting pupils' achievement, behaviour and safety and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Ofsted inspectors have a duty to have regard for the views of parents. Inspectors will also take account of the results of any surveys carried out or commissioned by the school.<sup>xxii</sup>

## **NICE guidance recommends:**

that primary education providers:

- support all pupils and, where appropriate, their parents or carers (including adults with responsibility for looked after children)
- offer support to help parents or carers develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by community nurses (such as school nurses and health visitors) or other appropriately trained health or education practitioners
- give all parents details of the school's policies on promoting social and emotional wellbeing and preventing mental health problems

that secondary education providers:

- work in partnership with parents, carers and other family members to promote young people's social and emotional wellbeing
- help reinforce young people's learning from the curriculum by helping parents and carers to develop their parenting skills. This may involve providing information or offering small, group-based programmes run by appropriately trained health or education practitioners
- 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. This should include support to

participate fully in any parenting sessions, for example by offering a range of times for the sessions or providing help with transport and childcare. This might involve liaison with family support agencies

### **Practice examples**

Samuel Rhodes Primary School has successfully provided parenting classes, which were delivered by the multidisciplinary team who work within the school.

Kings Hedges Primary School has commissioned a service for parents called The Red Hen Project. This project is located within the school and is provided by a local charity. The project provides home-school workers who build relationships with families, and works with the children in school and the family at home. It helps families to address issues such as attendance problems, bullying and family break-ups that may cause a barrier to learning.

The Centre for Mental Health has written a briefing for schools about the importance of parenting programmes.

How to Thrive runs evidence-based interventions in the classroom and other settings to help young people and adults learn the skills of emotional resilience and wellbeing. Parent workshops are one key aspect of How to Thrive's work, helping parents to be a role model for their children regarding how they deal with setbacks and develop resilient thinking.

# Targeted support

Some children and young people are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health. For example those who are in care, young carers, those who have had previous access to CAMHS, those living with parents/carers with a mental illness and those living in households experiencing domestic violence. Delays in identifying and meeting emotional wellbeing and mental health needs can have far reaching effects on all aspects of children and young people's lives, including their chances of reaching their potential and leading happy and healthy lives as adults.<sup>xiii</sup>

There is good advice already available from DfE that focusses on the role of schools in providing targeted support and specialist provision for pupils with particular mental health and wellbeing needs.<sup>ix, x, xi, xii</sup> This document, therefore, purposefully does not duplicate these existing resources.

The Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce has proposed the introduction of transformation plans for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. These would be developed with the contribution of schools and would articulate the local offer of services for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing.<sup>xix</sup>

School nurses and their teams have an important role to play in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of school-aged children<sup>xxxiii</sup> and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. Their skills cover identifying issues early, determining potential risks and providing early intervention to prevent issues escalating.<sup>xxxiv</sup> Student feedback indicates how much they value the trusted adult role, face to face interaction and other support provided through school nursing teams.

The Youth Wellbeing Directory ([www.youthwellbeingdirectory.co.uk/](http://www.youthwellbeingdirectory.co.uk/)) helps service users and funders find high-quality services to improve the emotional wellbeing and/or mental health of children and young people directly, or by supporting their families and caregivers. The directory enables users to search for services in their area and to have the reassurance that the services being promoted adhere to quality standards.

Schools wishing to gain accreditation for the emotional health and wellbeing support they provide could work towards the AcSEED Award ([www.acseed.org](http://www.acseed.org)). This scheme was founded by young people with direct experience of mental illness. The AcSEED quality assurance mark is presented to schools that have made a substantial effort to support the mental health of their students

**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?**

### **Links with the Ofsted inspection framework**

Ofsted inspectors will be interested in how monitoring ensures that individual children or groups of children with identified needs are targeted, and appropriate interventions are secured so that children receive the support they need, including through effective partnerships with external agencies and other providers.<sup>xxii</sup>

### **NICE guidance recommends:**

that primary education providers:

- provide specific help for those children most at risk (or already showing signs) of social, emotional and behavioural problems
- schools and local authority children's services should work closely with child and adolescent mental health and other services to develop and agree local protocols. These should support a 'stepped care' approach to preventing and managing mental health problems, as defined in NICE clinical guideline 28 on depression in children and young people. The protocols should cover assessment, referral and a definition of the role of schools and other agencies in delivering different interventions, taking into account local capacity and service configuration
- 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. Agree an action plan as the first stage of a 'stepped care' approach
- provide a range of interventions that have been proven to be effective, according to the child's needs

that secondary education providers:

- ensure young people have access to pastoral care and support, as well as specialist services, including child and adolescent mental health services, so that emotional, social and behavioural problems can be dealt with as soon as they occur
- provide young people with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns. Any support offered should take account of local community and education policies and protocols regarding confidentiality

- provide young people with opportunities to build relationships, particularly 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

### **Practice examples**

Samuel Rhodes Primary School is a special school in Islington that has set-up a multidisciplinary team comprising of a speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, CAMHS workers and a school support worker. This team meets regularly to share information and provide support including training for school staff.

Leeds TAMHS (Targeted Mental Health Services in Schools ) is a city wide project managed by the health and wellbeing service. It has built on the success of being a TAMHS pilot and provides emotional wellbeing and mental health support in schools, including providing young people with swift and easier access to mental health professionals. Funds were made available by Leeds City Council, NHS Leeds and the Schools Forum to further develop the project after funding of the national pilot ended. The schools have seen the benefits of the service and have match funded the project following an application process.

Framwellgate School Durham has a well-established counselling service and it views this provision as part of its duty of care to its students. The counsellors are employed by the local authority and the school buys in their service under a service level agreement.

Kings Hedges Primary School has commissioned a local charity to provide a school-based counselling service that provides one-to-one counselling and mentoring. Its work with young children uses a play and arts based approach to develop coping strategies which helps improve pupils' school performance.

There are school-based counselling services that work nationally. Place2Be, for example, provides one-to-one counselling, group work and a lunchtime self-referral drop-in for when students need a quiet place to talk to a counsellor, as well as providing support for teachers and parents.



Hitchin Girls School has prioritised self-harm as an issue they are addressing. It has been raising awareness of self-harm for students and staff through assemblies. It has been working through how to talk to parents about self-harm as part of their child protection policy. It has also brought in some online training sessions to help give students a better understanding of self-harm. The school also uses a worries box where students can post a note if they are having any problems or if they are concerned about a friend. The school's student development co-ordinator and mental health lead is responsible for the postbox but the aim is for the schools' peer mentors to help these students by listening to their concerns and signposting them to additional support if necessary.

Epsom Downs Primary School has invested in support from an external agency that delivers early intervention group support for key stage 1 children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. This service provides support to all key stage 1 children from across the North Downs Confederation area. It also have a nurture room, which is a small structured teaching group for students showing signs of behavioural, social or emotional difficulties, particularly those who are experiencing disruption or distress outside of school. Nurture groups work with individual children or small groups and provide targeted support. This service is run by two specially trained and experienced emotional literacy support assistants.

Complex cases at the Harbour School are discussed and planned in ways that better meet the individual's emotional needs. The most complex cases are referred to senior leaders on a pupil placement panel who suggest ways forward. They also work with the multi-systemic team to help some of the hardest to reach and complex families.

Budehaven Community School provides a wide range of services through its integrated health centre known as The Haven. These services include CAMHS, diabetic clinics, school nursing services and careers advice. Having services provided on the school site means that young people have easy access to the services they need with minimum disruption caused by taking time out of lessons to access the services and helping to reduce the stigma associated with accessing mental health support.

Walsall school nursing service uses the 'FRIENDS' programme, which is an evidence-based cognitive behavioural programme. School nurse teams are trained to deliver programmes in schools and other venues, targeting children and young people with anxiety or low self-esteem and confidence. Sessions are co-facilitated with school staff, helping to build the capacity of the school to offer early intervention.

# Resources

Some local authority public health teams provide coordinated health and wellbeing support for teaching and learning providers. In some areas this includes helping schools to audit current whole school practice and identify priorities for continuing development, as well as helping schools to address the identified needs.

There is a wide range of resources and support available to help promote children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing. The list below aims to signpost and categorise some of these sources based on insights from the Children and Young People's Mental Health Coalition as well as feedback from individual schools. The list is not exhaustive and many other useful organisations and services exist. All of the links listed below were correct at the time of publication.

To assure the quality of services aiming to improve the emotional wellbeing and/or mental health of children and young people and their families, the Youth Wellbeing Directory ([www.youthwellbeingdirectory.co.uk/](http://www.youthwellbeingdirectory.co.uk/)) provides one way of promoting services that demonstrate adherence to defined quality standards. The PSHE Association ([www.pshe-association.org.uk/](http://www.pshe-association.org.uk/)) also offers a quality mark relating to curriculum resources judged by schools to be useful in supporting effective delivery of the PSHE curriculum.

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## **Government guidance and advice**

**Mental health and behaviour in schools** (2014) is departmental advice for school staff. Department for Education

**Counselling in schools: a blueprint for the future** (2015) is departmental advice for school staff and counsellors. Department for Education

**Preventing and tackling bullying** (2014) advice for head teachers, staff and governing bodies. Department for Education

**Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children** (2015) is statutory guidance for local authorities, clinical commissioning groups and NHS England. Department of Health and Department for Education

**Keeping children safe in education** (2014) is statutory guidance for schools and colleges. Department for Education

**Supporting pupils at school with medical conditions** (2014) is statutory guidance for governing bodies of maintained schools and proprietors of academies in England. Department for Education

**Healthy child programme from 5 to 19 years old** (2009) is a recommended framework of universal and progressive services for children and young people to promote optimal health and wellbeing. Department of Health

**Health visiting and school nursing programme supporting implementation of the new service offer: promoting emotional wellbeing and positive mental health of children and young people**

**Future in mind – promoting, protecting and improving our children and young people’s mental health and wellbeing** (2015) is a report produced by the Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce to examine how to improve mental health services for children and young people. Department of Health

### **Evidence**

**NICE guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in primary education**

**NICE guidance on social and emotional wellbeing in secondary education**

**NICE social and emotional wellbeing for children and young people pathway**

**What works in promoting social and emotional wellbeing and responding to mental health problems in schools? (2015)** Advice for schools and framework document written by Professor Katherine Weare. National Children’s Bureau

## Data

**Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing profiling tool** collates and analyses a wide range of publically available data on risk, prevalence and detail (including cost data) on those services that support children with, or vulnerable to, mental illness. It enables benchmarking of data between areas

**ChiMat school health hub** provides access to resources relating to the commissioning and delivery of health services for school children and young people and its associated good practice, including the new service offer for school nursing

**Health behaviour of school age children** is an international cross-sectional study that takes place in 43 countries and is concerned with the determinants of young people's health and wellbeing. Publication of the England report for 2013-14 is forthcoming

**Local public health teams** operating from within the local authority may be able to provide insights into relevant local data sources

## Useful curriculum resources

### *Cross-phase*

**Social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL)** are materials used in primary and secondary schools to deliver a whole-school approach to promoting social, emotional and behavioural skills

**PSHE Association** helps support PSHE practitioners across all phases to raise the quality of PSHE teaching and raise its status in the curriculum

### *Primary age*

**Feeling good: promoting children's mental health** are activity sheets aimed at children aged 4-7

**How to get up and go when you are feeling low** is a booklet providing top tips for year 4 students when they are feeling upset or stressed

### *Secondary age*

**Stop stigma** is a classroom-based resource for secondary schools that helps address mental health stigma and raise awareness about mental health

**Time to change** provides a collection of resources including videos, lessons, assemblies, and toolkits for teachers and youth workers to reduce stigma and discrimination faced by people with mental health problems

**What's on your mind?** is a resource pack that includes a video along with downloadable lesson plans to help teachers introduce the subject of emotional wellbeing and mental health to students. Produced by the Scottish anti-stigma programme 'See Me'

**I gotta feelin'** Is a booklet providing top tips for year 7 students on how to feel good

**Notes to self** is a film and mental wellbeing teaching resource for use with young people at key stages 3-5. It helps students get a better understanding of mental health issues and why they should seek help. The film and teaching pack cost £35, but the trailer is freely available online

**Dove self-esteem workshops** are for students aged 11-14

*Resources to support children and young people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities and chronic illness*

**Children and young people with learning disabilities: understanding their mental health** is an information pack providing an introduction to learning disabilities among children and young people

**FRIENDS for life: learning disabilities** is part of FRIENDS for Life, a group programme that teaches children and young people techniques to cope with anxiety and promote wellbeing, social and emotional skills and resilience. The FRIENDS for Life Learning Disabilities development project was adapted to be accessible for children and young people with learning disabilities

**Feeling down: looking after my mental health** is an easy-read guide for people with learning disabilities from the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities. The guide provides information and advice on how to look after oneself and get the best out of life

**Circle of friends** helps children, especially those with a disability, to build a support network

**I Can** produces factsheets about speech, language and communication difficulties, and has a helpline for parents and practitioners

**National autistic society** has a website that provides information about autism

#### *Specific issues*

**Ofsted** has produced short videos that help illustrate what a primary school and a secondary school have done to reduce bullying

**Childhood bereavement network** offers resources to help schools deal with a bereavement within the school

**OCD action** has produced an online guide on OCD for teachers, parents and young people

**On edge: learning about self-harm** is a film and lesson plan resource pack for teachers and other professionals working with young people. Developed by NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde

#### *General*

**Learning to ride elephants: teaching happiness and wellbeing in schools** (2009) is a book about positive psychology and the teaching of wellbeing by Ian Morris who runs the Wellbeing programme at Wellington College

#### **Resources written by young people, for young people**

**Reach out north east newsletters** are about mental health

**The Site** provides information on a range of topics including mental health

## **Training**

**MindEd** is a portal that provides free, online bite sized chunks of 'e-learning' available on tablets, phones or computers to help adults to identify, understand and support children and young people with mental health issues. The learning materials were written and edited by leading experts from the UK and around the world. Different learning pathways can be followed according to professional or other interests

**ADDISS** is the National Attention Deficit Disorder Information and Advice Service which provides training for schools on ADHD management and information about ADHD. 'School Report: Perspectives on ADHD' illustrates what it is like to be a child with ADHD in the school system

**Alumina** is an online course for young people aged 14-19 years and provides group and individual courses

**How to thrive** provides training for teachers who want to teach the UK Penn Resilience Programme (PRP). Participants develop their own personal resilience and then apply this insight to teaching the curriculum to young people. The PRP is a licenced model, and only those who have received training through an accredited body such as How to Thrive can legitimately teach the PRP curriculum

**In our hands** provides training on a wide range of emotional wellbeing and mental health issues from promoting positive mental health to holding sessions on eating disorders, and self-harm. It ensures that advice, guidance and support is practical and relevant to the school environment by working with school staff to develop new materials. The website includes some free resources that can be delivered to young people, teachers and parents

**Intellectual disability mental health first aid manual** provides guidance on how to support people with a learning disability who are experiencing difficulties associated with emerging mental health problems including mental health crises

**Mental health first aid England** is an educational course focussing on young people's mental health and how to identify, understand and help a young person who may be developing mental health problems

**Mindfulness in schools project** offer a range of courses including " .b," which stands for 'Stop, Breathe and Be,' and can be used with a range of different age groups

**National Association of Independent and Non-Maintained Special Schools (NASS)**



is a membership organisation working with and for special schools in the voluntary and private sectors within the UK. 'Making sense of mental health' is an e-learning resource for staff working in schools with children and young people who have complex special educational needs. The e-learning training increases staff knowledge about mental health and how this relates to children with disabilities

**Place2Be** provides counselling services for children and support for teachers and parents. It also provides continuous professional development training sessions that address themes related to children's emotional wellbeing in schools, such as safeguarding, attachment, understanding risks and resilience and others. The sessions help reduce teacher and staff stress by providing practical approaches that help them deliver effective support. It also provides a range of professional qualifications around counselling in schools

**YoungMinds** provides a range of support to schools, including training. It provides a varied training calendar and schools are also able to commission bespoke training packages

### **Examples of organisations providing support to schools to provide emotional wellbeing support**

**Achievement for All (AfA)** delivers a whole school improvement framework that raises the aspirations, access and achievement of vulnerable and disadvantaged pupils, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, EAL, looked-after children and children on free school meals. The programme has four elements: leadership, teaching and learning, parental engagement, and wider outcomes

**AcSEED** encourages all UK schools to achieve and maintain an acceptable threshold of support and to align on best practices that provide a common language and understanding between schools, parents, young people, and associated organisations and charities. The AcSEED initiative was founded by young people with direct personal experience of mental illness at a young age, and is entirely dedicated to supporting the emotional wellbeing and mental health of young people in schools

**ADDISS** (see above)

**Boing Boing** is an evidence based resilience framework for parents, practitioners and young people

**Children and young people's mental health coalition** produced a resource entitled *Resilience and results* that helps schools understand why it is important to promote emotional wellbeing within the school. Insights into a range of support offers available to support schools are also provided

**Family Links** offers a range of 'transforming learning' workshops for schools and trainee teachers to create a school community in which children aspire, flourish and achieve. It also offers training in a parallel programme for parents, providing a consistent positive approach at home and at school. The following link provides more information about its work in schools

**Humanutopia** is a social enterprise that works with schools to offer a range of workshops and courses for students that focus on personal, social development and employability skills. The workshops can help to build confidence, leadership skills, peer mentoring skills and help students overcome barriers to engaging in their own education

**Mental Health Foundation** provides useful information about mental health

**Mentoring and Befriending Foundation** provides services that increase the effectiveness and quality of mentoring and befriending as methods of enabling individuals to transform their lives and/or reach their full potential. It has produced guidance and quality standards to help schools implement peer mentoring support for students

**Nurture Group Network** promotes the development of nurture groups that are small groups of children who need short, focussed support to help address issues connected to social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. It ensures the continuing quality of delivery through accredited training programmes, research on effective practice, relevant publications and information exchange

**Place2Be** (see above)

**Rethink Mental Illness** produces useful information for young people about mental health

**Royal College of Psychiatrists** provides a wide range of leaflets and other information for parents, young people and professionals

**Samaritans** can support schools by giving talks, providing a teaching resource called DEAL, and hosting a suicide response service to support schools following a suicide

**YoungMinds** in Schools programme was funded by the Department for Education and piloted a programme of consultancy and training to four cluster schools in England. This YoungMinds website also provides a useful library of resources for schools

Therapeutic story writing from YoungMinds is an approach to helping support students' emotional wellbeing whilst at the same time improving writing skills

Academic Resilience from YoungMinds is a free resource to help schools support pupils' academic resilience and was devised by Lisa Williams and Professor Angie Hart

### **Approaches to promoting emotional wellbeing in children and young people**

**Circle time** is an approach used in classrooms with a group of children that can help them to develop social and emotional skills

**Classroom Dinosaur Curriculum** is a prevention program delivered by teachers in the classroom and includes group activities and activities for parents and children to do at home

**Friends for life** is a cognitive behavioural (CBT) intervention designed to help children with significant emotional problems

**The PATHS curriculum** is a comprehensive programme from the USA that promotes emotional and social competencies, and reducing aggression and behaviour problems in preschool and primary age children

**Roots of Empathy** offers empathy-based programmes for children. The following video shows how it is being used in schools

**Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning** (see above)

**Therapeutic story writing from YoungMinds** is an intervention that helps support students' emotional wellbeing as well as improve their writing skills

**UK Resilience Programme/Penn Resilience Programme – How To Thrive** provides expertise in the skills that allow children and young people to thrive and flourish

**Zippy's Friends** is a programme that helps young children, aged five, six and seven, to develop coping and social skills

## **Parenting programmes**

**Find a Parenting Programme** is an online database from the Department for Education giving information about specific parenting programmes, who they work best with and what age range they are designed for

**Childhood behaviour problems – a briefing for schools on parenting programmes** is by the Centre for Mental Health

Some of the best tested and most reliable parenting programmes are Incredible Years and Triple P. In order to work best, parenting programmes need to be delivered as they were originally intended and be targeted at those with the right level of need

## **Counselling**

**Good practice guidance for counselling in schools** is in its fourth edition from the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP)

**School Based Counselling – What it is and why we need it** is a short paper from the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy

Other resources from the BACP on school based counselling are also available

## **Helplines**

**Childline School Service** is a service that uses specially trained volunteers to talk to primary school children about abuse. The aim is to give them the skills to protect themselves and know where to go for help. There is also a free helpline for children and young people. The helpline number is 0800 1111

**Get connected** is a free, confidential helpline service for young people under 25, who need help, but don't know where to turn. The helpline number is 0808 808 4994

**Papyrus** is a charity that aims to prevent young suicides. It has a helpline for young people at risk of suicide or for people worried about a young person at risk of suicide called HOPELineUK. The helpline number is 0800 068 41 41

**Relate** provides local counselling services for all ages including young people. It also has an online emotional support and advice resource called IRelate which provides information and access to an online counsellor

**Rise Above** helps 11-16 year olds build emotional resilience by equipping them with knowledge and skills to deal with pressures they may face. It also provides an online platform through which young people can converse with peers alongside professional support

**YoungMinds Parents' Helpline** is a free, confidential helpline for any adult who is concerned about the emotional problems, behaviour or mental health of a child or young person up to the age of 25. The helpline number is 0808 802 5544

**Youth Access** offers a directory of local youth information, advice and counselling services for young people aged 14-25

**Youth Health Talk** provides advice and support on mental health issues from young people for young people

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