

Analyse Your Situation

What does your school or college already do to promote and protect the mental health and wellbeing of all?

Use the statements below as a reflective tool to get a snapshot of your current provision and to highlight strengths and areas to develop.

This tool is not an exhaustive summary of the many dimensions of school mental health, but it does provide a simple bird's-eye view of the components of an effective Whole School Approach to mental health.

To what extent is each of the following statements true in your context...

1. Consider the whole child



Involving children and young people

- Children and young people have opportunities to talk about their experiences of school and provide feedback and suggestions
- Children and young people influence school decision making around wellbeing and mental health
- There are mechanisms for peer to peer wellbeing support
- Children and young people have discrete ways of asking for, and receiving, support

Working with parents and carers

- Staff have strong relationships with parents and carers
- Staff have regular open conversations with parents and carers about children and young people's mental health and wellbeing
- Parents and carers are given information and support to promote children and young people's mental health and wellbeing
- Where needed, parents and carers are supported to improve their own wellbeing and mental health

To what extent is each of the following statements true in your context...

2. Consider the whole school and plan strategically

Leadership

- Mental health and wellbeing are an explicit part of the school or college vision
- There is a planned, strategic Whole School Approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing
- There is an overall strategic lead for school mental health and leaders at all levels with a responsibility for this area
- Strategies to promote wellbeing and mental health are based on secure evidence
- Initiatives to support wellbeing and mental health are effectively evaluated
- A deep knowledge of the local context, and strong relationships with the local community, inform the approach to wellbeing and mental health
- There is a consistent language around wellbeing and mental health across the school community
- Senior leaders regularly and explicitly talk about and champion the importance of mental health and wellbeing
- Leaders demonstrate vulnerability and talk honestly about their own wellbeing and mental health
- Mental health and wellbeing considerations affect the way strategic decisions are taken

Culture and Environment

- The physical environment of the school promotes wellbeing and mental health
- School routines promote wellbeing and mental health
- Teachers create a deliberate classroom culture that promotes wellbeing and mental health
- There is a culture of protecting and promoting the wellbeing of staff
- There is a culture of protecting and promoting the wellbeing of children and young people
- Interactions between staff are supportive and caring
- Interactions between staff, children and young people are supportive and caring
- Staff are encouraged and supported to look after their own wellbeing
- Children and young people are encouraged and supported to look after their own wellbeing
- There is a strong anti-bullying culture and bullying is dealt with effectively
- Diversity is celebrated and there is a strong culture of inclusion
- There are calm, safe places children and young people can go to if they are experiencing difficulties

To what extent is each of the following statements true in your context...

3. Look at the whole picture and take preventative measures



- Mental health and wellbeing for the whole school community are explicitly promoted within policies and procedures
- School systems and processes are organised with staff workload and wellbeing in mind
- Staff receive effective training on how to support their own, and their colleagues', mental health and wellbeing
- Staff receive effective training on how to support young people's mental health and wellbeing
- Staff receive support identifying children and young people who are experiencing mental health difficulties
- Staff have strategies for developing resilience and promoting wellbeing within their teaching
- Staff develop strong trusting relationships with children and young people
- Opportunities are identified within different subject areas to discuss and promote mental health and wellbeing
- There is high quality PHSE teaching delivered by trained school staff
- There is a range of extra-curricular opportunities that support mental health and wellbeing
- Children and young people are encouraged and supported through high stakes tests and exams, without 'teaching to the test' or being exposed to undue pressure



To what extent is each of the following statements true in your context...

4. Look at the whole system and be proactive

Identifying concerns

- Staff are trained in identifying the early signs and symptoms of mental health difficulties
- All staff know the appropriate communication channels to flag a concern
- All staff know the pathway for enabling children and young people to access support
- Staff are equipped and able to risk assess for mental health needs, as appropriate for their role

Providing additional support

- Additional interventions are targeted at children and young people who need it
- Additional preventive and protective measures are in place for groups of children and young people who face particular risks to their wellbeing and mental health
- The effectiveness of interventions is regularly assessed

Making referrals to external agencies

- There are clear policies around what can be addressed in house and when a referral is required
- There are clear referral pathways and protocols
- There is close and effective working with external agencies and health providers



To what extent is each of the following statements true in your context...

5. Consider your role and be reflective, as the lead for mental health:

- You see supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people as a key part of your role
- You are open to learning more about school mental health and are proactive in deepening your own knowledge
- You proactively champion and talk about mental health and wellbeing in your setting
- You have introduced preventive measures to promote mental health and wellbeing
- You have planned how promoting mental health and wellbeing can infuse all aspects of your work
- You know what to do if you have a concern about a child or young person's mental health
- You have effective strategies for looking after your own mental health and wellbeing
- You are prepared to challenge your own beliefs and assumptions, using evidence and reflection to develop deeper levels of self-awareness



This tool was developed using the following sources:

Stirling, S., & Emery, H., 'A whole school framework for emotional well-being and mental health: Supporting resources for school leaders', National Children's Bureau, 2016

'Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing: A whole school or college approach', Public Health England, 2021

Abdinasir, K., 'Making the Grade: How education shapes young people's mental health', Centre for Mental Health, 2019

'A Head Start: Early support for children's mental health', The Children's Commissioner, 2022

McShane, A., Munnely, C., Dorrell, E., 'Fixing a Failing System: Rethinking Mental Health Support in Schools for the Post-Covid Generation', The Coalition for Youth Mental Health in Schools, 2021