

Whole School Approach Framework for Schools to Support Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing



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Foreword



It is now widely acknowledged that mental health and wellbeing are as essential as physical health to the positive life chances of children and young people and the wider population. Protecting mental health at an early age is vitally important to ensure future mental wellbeing and resilience. This has become even more important as the country responds to the ongoing pandemic. We recognise the very important role that schools are currently playing, and the hard work which all school staff have done, in supporting children and young people's mental health at this time. As we move forward through the phases of this pandemic, there will be a continued focus on good mental wellbeing, and on ensuring that the right help and support is available whenever it is needed. Recognising that teachers and school staff are not mental health professionals, this framework is intended to provide schools with guidance to assist in the continued support of children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. The mental health and wellbeing of all staff, as well as children and young people, is key to the whole school approach.

The Scottish Government's Mental Health Transition and Recovery Plan emphasises a health-promoting and preventative approach to mental health and wellbeing. Education has a large part to play in this approach through raising awareness and understanding and supporting the positive mental health of children and young people. Schools can play a key part in helping society recognise that there is a wide continuum of mental health and wellbeing and that children and young people will move across this at different points in their life as challenges and other internal and external factors affect them. Schools can also play a key role in supporting good mental health through practice and clear referral pathways should additional support be required. Education staff working alongside other agencies and the wider public health network can make a significant difference in changing perceptions and developing support for mental health and wellbeing.

The Mental Health in Schools Working Group, on behalf of Scottish Ministers, has produced this framework to support local authorities and schools embed support for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing across all aspects of the school environment. The framework provides guidance on approaches that can be undertaken; it is not intended to be a prescriptive guide. It can be used by schools to complement or strengthen existing approaches in place recognising that many schools have already undertaken a significant amount of work in this area.

We hope that you find this framework useful in your ongoing support for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. We would be really interested to hear your feedback on the framework so that we can ensure it is meeting the needs of your school, your learners, your staff and your wider community.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Caroline Amos".

Caroline Amos

Chair - Mental Health in Schools Working Group



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A. Context

Schools play a unique and key role in supporting children's mental health and wellbeing, which is underpinned by Getting It Right for Every Child (GIRFEC). This approach supports children and young people so that they can grow up feeling loved, safe and respected and can realise their full potential.¹ Positive mental health and wellbeing can be supported using the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators, (Safe, Healthy, Achieving, Nurtured, Active, Respected, Responsible, Included) along with the Responsibility of All Experiences and Outcomes.

Multiple indicators suggest an increase in prevalence of mental health and wellbeing stressors for Scotland's children and young people, even prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, and that many young people are experiencing mental health stigma and discrimination.

This framework recognises that the school alone cannot and should not meet all the wellbeing needs of children and young people. Parents, carers, families and a range of partners in schools and the wider community play a role in meeting those needs. It sets out the range of factors involved in ensuring that the whole school community supports the wellbeing needs of its children and young people. A range of supports including the professional learning resource² and the Mental Health Knowledge and Skills framework helps to build on the existing good practice on whole school approaches within the school environment.³

Included in this framework are considerations for local authorities and guidance for schools to develop and embed policy and practice within schools and the wider community; underpinned by robust processes using universal, targeted and specialist interventions to ensure equity for all. Building resilience and support for children and young people will require school leaders to work with all staff, children and young people, parents and carers, and the wider community.

This framework is also intended to support schools in evaluating their own mental health and wellbeing approaches and developing plans to identify areas for improvement within the school community.⁴ It can augment national and local approaches to self-evaluation by providing a more explicit focus on a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

The wider legislative and policy context within Scottish education emphasises the wellbeing of children and young people. See Appendix 1 for wider policy context.

¹ [Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\) - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

² [Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing: A Professional Learning Resource For All School Staff](#)

³ [Positive mental wellbeing - resources to support children and young people](#)

⁴ [How good is our school? - HGIOS 4 | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

B. Terminology

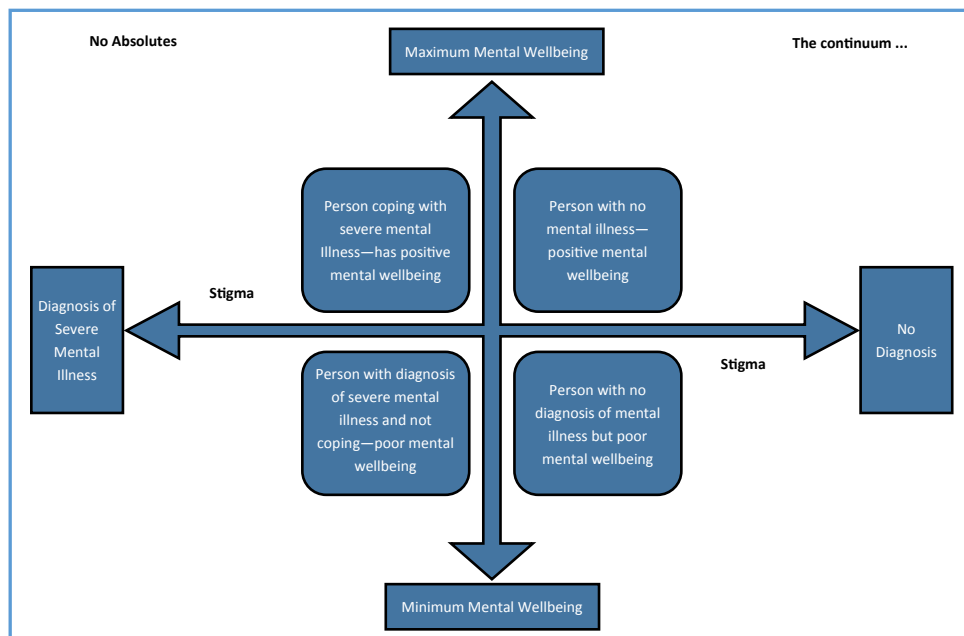
A whole school approach involves cohesive, collective and collaborative engagement by a school community. It takes account of the wider social, environmental and cultural needs of a community including the school ethos and culture.

There are many different perceptions of what mental health and wellbeing is, these are often impacted upon by the current cultural context. The online professional learning resource 'Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing: A learning resource for all school staff', developed by the Scottish Government, states that 'personal wellbeing is how satisfied we are with our lives, our sense that what we do in life is worthwhile, our day-to-day emotional experiences (happiness and anxiety) and our wider mental wellbeing.'⁵ Many definitions recognise the importance of mental health in the overall health of an individual. The World Health Organisation defines mental health as:

Health is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity ... Mental health is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

(WHO, 2014)

In this framework, we understand mental health to be and refer to it as a continuum of needs from overall positive wellbeing to mental ill health. This is outlined in the continuum of mental health diagram below.



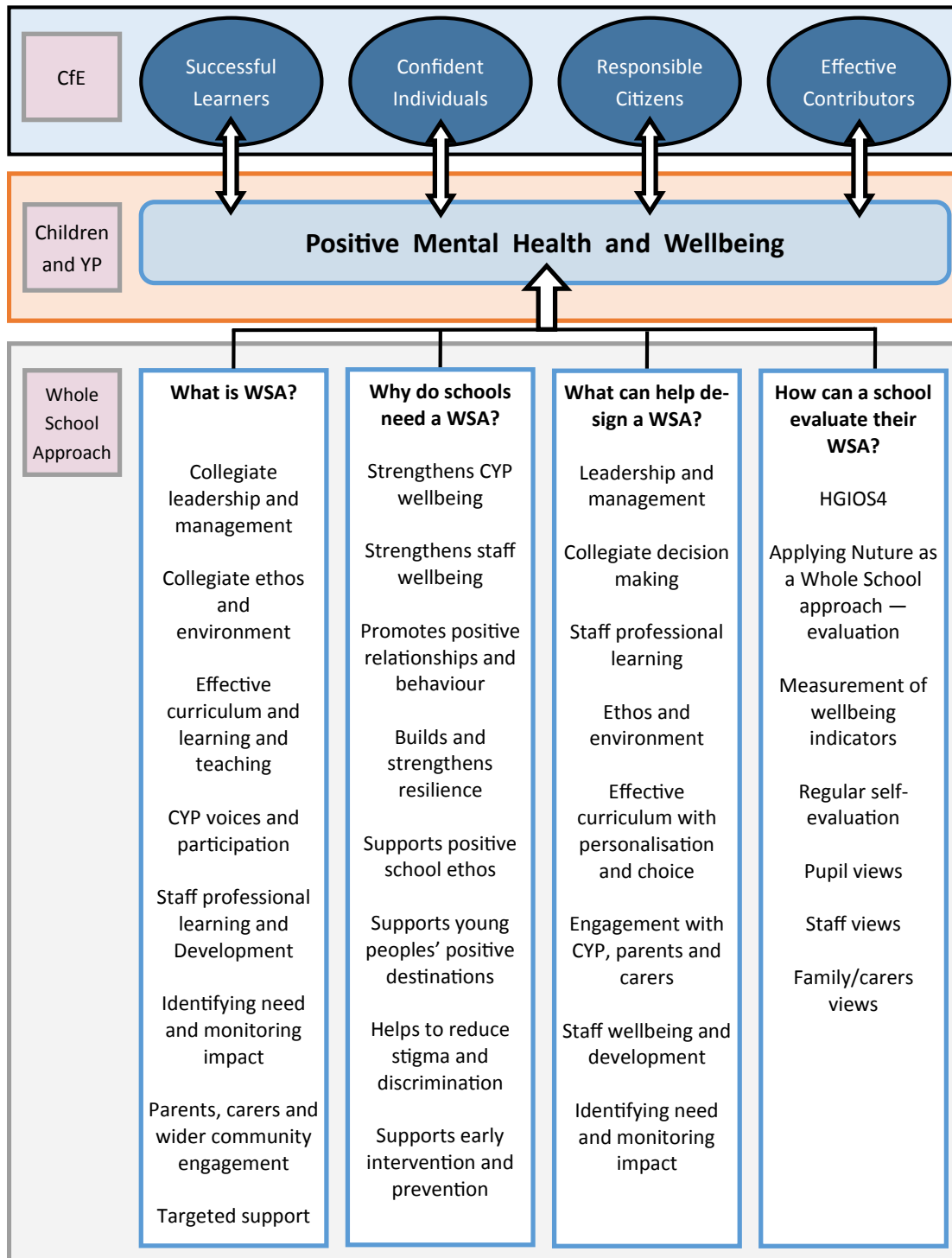
Adapted from Tudor, K. (1996)

It is important to recognise that the perception of mental health and wellbeing is rooted in values, beliefs and cultures and that the language used to describe it may differ in different cultures and communities. Schools should ensure they are informed about the cultural influences, beliefs and values of their communities and be sensitive to this when taking forward a whole school approach.

⁵ [CYPMH - Professional Learning Resource](#)

C. A Whole school approach

There is a growing evidence base that schools need to take a whole school approach in order to promote mental health effectively. A whole school approach is preventative, universal and includes targeted interventions to ensure that all members of a school community can flourish and sustain a state of being mentally healthy. Taking a whole school approach can also achieve positive outcomes such as helping to reduce stigma and discrimination for those seeking help; support early intervention; promote positive mental health for all and improve the capacity of specialist services by providing support to those who need it at a universal and targeted level.



A whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing needs strong leadership to ensure that it can be taken forward across the whole school community. Other key factors include:

- using a holistic model of health;
- being proactive rather than reactive;
- focusing on ethos, relationships, policies and pedagogy;
- taking account of the wider contextual determinants of mental health and wellbeing;
- involving parents/carers and wider community partners;
- focusing on processes and not just programmes; and
- developing skills in both staff and children, young people and parents.

Whole school approaches will: develop all staff's understanding and support skills in mental health and wellbeing (including leadership and management); develop resilience and mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing in children and young people; help engage with and improve the capacity of parents and caregivers to understand and support mental health and wellbeing, and, work towards removing stigma and discrimination. A whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing also links well with whole school relationship-based and nurturing approaches, is [trauma-informed](#) and strengths-based.

D. The role of the local authority in supporting a whole school approach

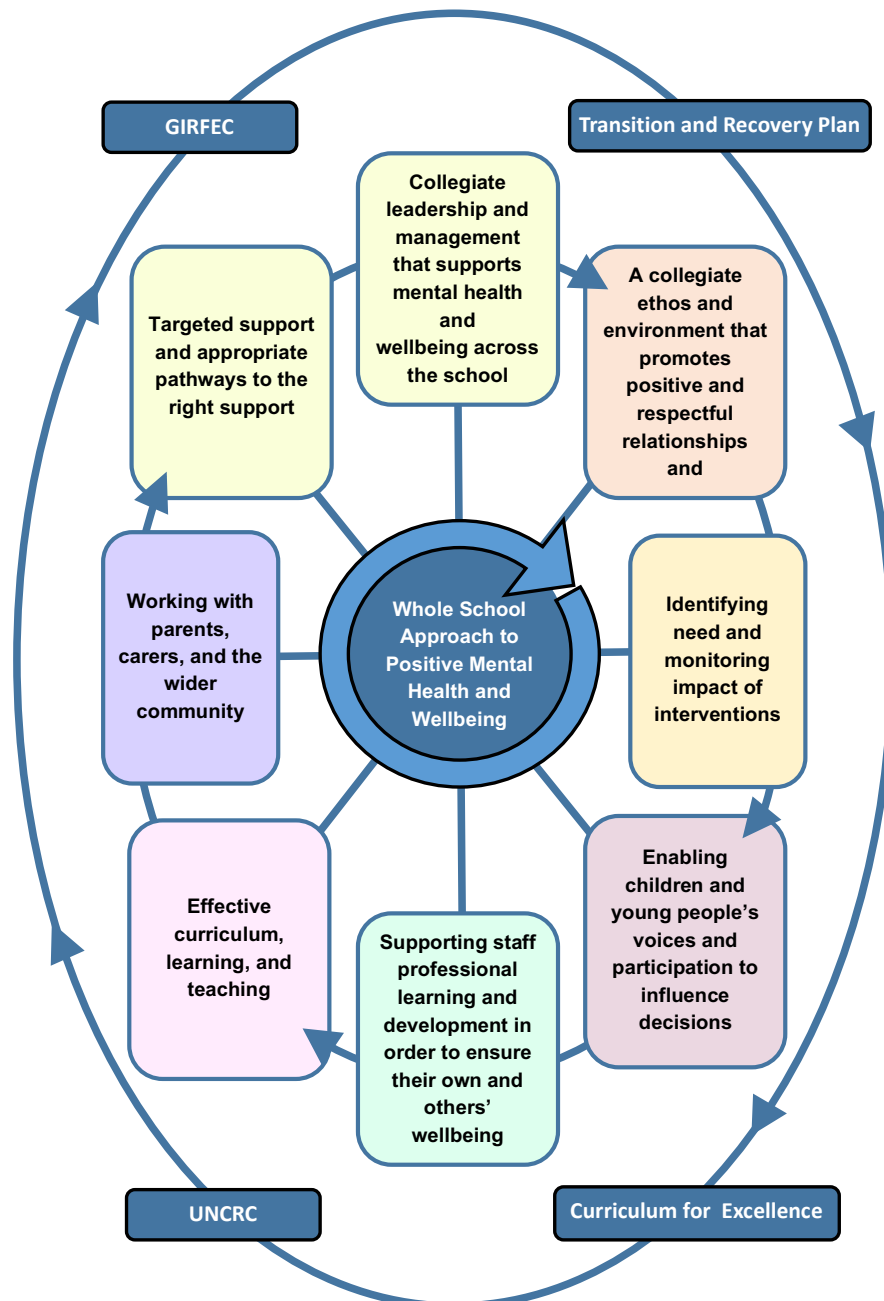
Most Scottish schools exist within a local authority context and the local authority has a key role to play in partnership with the school in the development of an overall culture and ethos of acceptance and de-stigmatisation of mental health. Crucially this includes supporting schools to develop whole school approaches to mental health and wellbeing. This could be achieved through:

- Having clear alignment in the approach to mental health between the different departments within the local authority. This will contribute to a coherent whole systems approach that is responsive to local social and economic circumstances. This alignment should be reflected in local authority policy, guidance and reporting including in the Children's Service Plan. There are many risk factors that can contribute to poor mental health and it is vital that partnerships are in place to support the mental health of individuals and families across the local authority.
- Supporting staff wellbeing at all levels and ensuring clear pathways for support at a corporate level including Human Resources and Occupational Health, along with links to national supports.
- Working closely with partners, including trade unions, to ensure high-quality professional learning opportunities are available that respond to need.
- Listening to and acting upon the views of children, and young people, and staff, including those with lived experience of mental health and wellbeing needs, when implementing the approach.
- Taking a clear and consistent approach to quality assurance and self-evaluation that emphasises the importance of mental health and wellbeing.
- Using data effectively to help identify where needs lie within their own context and ensuring any approaches to supporting mental health and wellbeing are carefully evaluated for evidence of impact and shared with others. Local authorities can support the collection of meaningful data through partnerships with networks, and the Health and Wellbeing census will also support the collection of data.

Mental health and wellbeing should be promoted and championed by all leaders within the local authority and this should be demonstrated through their values and practice, including how staff are supported with their own mental health, and how mental health stigma and discrimination is addressed. Local authority staff need to support a clear balance between attainment and wellbeing in schools and seek to ensure that wider achievement and flexible positive destinations are valued equally. The young person should be put at the centre of decision making about any future learner pathway.

E. Eight principles of a whole school approach to support mental health and wellbeing

A whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing incorporates eight key principles that emphasise a health-promotion and preventative approach. The eight principles outlined here are largely adapted from those first identified by Public Health England/National Children’s Bureau and outline what a whole school approach will look like in practice.⁶



⁶ Promoting children and young people’s emotional health and wellbeing - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk); Whole school approach | NCB

1. Leadership and management that supports mental health and wellbeing across the school

Effective leadership can ensure that this strong commitment to mental health and wellbeing is visible within the school community, and well communicated to all stakeholders. As a result, staff, children and young people, parents, carers and partners are included and valued in the school and form a key part of developing the whole school vision and approach to support mental health and wellbeing. Creating a clear sense of ownership and autonomy where individual and collective contributions are valued.

School leaders have a critical role in creating the conditions for, and delivering a whole school approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing. Effective leadership should be supported at all levels, ensuring that health and wellbeing is supported by all, and that the key components of a whole school approach, outlined here, are in place.⁷ Where staff have more formal roles and responsibilities in this area, these should be made clear to colleagues, children and young people, and parents and carers, and support the delivery of the whole school approach. Distributive leadership and collegiate decision making is essential in taking this approach forward.

A clear vision for whole school mental health and wellbeing should be evident and will be expressed through school values and practices.⁸ The vision should be co-constructed with staff, key partners and include children and young people and their families. Leaders should also model these values in their interactions with the wider school community. Shared aspirations and high expectations relating to mental health and wellbeing outcomes are communicated and demonstrated by leaders and are agreed and accepted by all. Staff should be supported and challenged, as required, to drive changes in knowledge, attitudes and behaviours in relation to mental health and wellbeing. This will be evident in School Improvement Plans and approaches to quality assurance and self-evaluation.

Positive leadership will ensure that the importance of mental health and wellbeing is agreed, accepted and embedded by the whole school community. This is based on a shared understanding of the clear link between mental health and wellbeing, attainment, achievement and life chances for children and young people. Leadership will be encouraged at all levels including providing opportunities for staff, children and young people, and parents and carers to lead on aspects of supporting mental health and wellbeing.

Strong leadership of change requires a **clear implementation plan** which has an accurate understanding of the challenges and the responses required in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of children, young people and their families, based on a thorough self-evaluation (see Appendix 4). Leaders should consider their current priorities, processes and systems to ensure they are aligned with this approach and use their existing data and evidence to determine where any gaps lie. Staff may find the Framework for Implementation (see Appendix 3) helpful in these considerations. Additionally, this process can be informed by the self-evaluation framework (see Appendix 4). School leaders should support their wider staff teams in developing a clear understanding of what is required in terms of next steps at a whole school level and with partners to develop mental health and wellbeing as well as an understanding of how changes and improvements will be supported and sustained.

⁷ [Health and Wellbeing across learning: experiences and outcomes](#)

⁸ [Human Rights: Children's Rights - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

As part of a whole school approach, leaders should ensure that there is an agreed and **robust policy framework** which promotes mental health and wellbeing across the life of the school. Mental health and wellbeing should be reflected in the wider school policies, such as Promoting Positive Relationships, Anti-Bullying and Equalities, and consideration should also be given to whether a specific policy on mental health and wellbeing is required.

Policies should be up to date, and clearly define responsibilities and expectations.

Robust and ongoing self-evaluation will ensure that policy inform practice. Thorough consideration will be needed to ensure each is coherent with an approach that promotes positive wellbeing and ensures stigma-free support for mental health for the whole school community.

2. An ethos and environment that promotes positive and respectful relationships and values diversity

School ethos and environment are key determinants in promoting mental health and wellbeing for everyone within the school community. Everyone within the school setting and its wider community, whatever their contact with children and young people may be, share the responsibility for creating a positive ethos and climate of respect and trust. One in which everyone can make a positive contribution to the wellbeing of each individual within the school and wider community.⁹

Evidence has consistently suggested that the strong connections we make throughout our lives can help buffer the impact of additional stressors and risk factors and the impact of adverse childhood experiences. A school ethos and environment that best supports mental health and wellbeing is **underpinned by relational approaches** such as whole school nurture and restorative approaches that promote positive relationships.¹⁰ A relational approach enhances a sense of belonging, connectedness to school, and helps build resilience for all. Positive relationships at all levels, including peer-to-peer, teacher-to-pupil, teacher-to-teacher and parent-to-teacher relationships can impact positively on mental health and wellbeing for all.

A whole school nurturing approach is often seen as synonymous with a relational approach and can provide schools with a blueprint of how to promote positive relationships throughout the school community.¹¹ Nurturing approaches focus on a balance of care and challenge, incorporating attunement, warmth and connection alongside structure, high expectations and a focus on achievement and attainment. Supporting mental health and wellbeing will require both warmth and support alongside clear expectations and structures to allow children and young people to thrive. A nurturing ethos emphasises modelling positive behaviour which promotes mental health and wellbeing, such as kindness, compassion, and giving, where children and young people are communicating emotional distress through their behaviours and interactions and ensures that they are given the right support.

⁹ [Human rights: Children's rights - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

¹⁰ [Positive mental wellbeing - resources to support children and young people | Learning resources | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://education.gov.scot)

¹¹ [Applying nurture as a whole school approach - A framework to support self-evaluation | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://education.gov.scot)

The school climate and ethos will also be underpinned by a **shared commitment to and understanding of Children's Rights and the Human Rights of adults** working in schools, where children, young people, and staff feel included, respected, safe and secure, and where their achievements and contributions are valued and celebrated.

Diversity and difference are welcomed and celebrated by the school community, with a clear link being made between equity, equality and the promotion of mental health. In particular, school staff recognise the importance of providing additional support and understanding for vulnerable groups such as those living in poverty and those who might experience prejudice or prejudice-based bullying.¹² While it is important not to stereotype particular groups, it is important to recognise the challenges that some groups of children and young people may face. Data about the need for support and the results of monitoring can be used to ensure that the ethos and environment is one that promotes positive and respectful relationships, and values diversity.

The key to achieving an ethos and environment able to support mental health and wellbeing is ensuring that everyone within **the school community recognises that we all have mental health**, and everyone is at different points on that continuum at various points in their lives.¹³ It is vital that anyone experiencing concerns with their mental health is treated in a non-stigmatising and discriminatory way and is provided with the support they require. It is important to recognise cultural sensitivities and to ensure that all children, young people, and their families are aware of the support available. Expressing feelings and showing emotional vulnerability should be seen as positive attributes and children and young people should be encouraged to open up to others when they require support.

3. Effective curriculum and learning and teaching to promote resilience and support mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing and learning

Curriculum for Excellence already places **health and wellbeing at the heart of the curriculum** and this will be further emphasised within a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.¹⁴ COVID-19 Educational recovery guidance similarly emphasises mental health and wellbeing within the curriculum.¹⁵ Learning across the whole curriculum as outlined within Health & Wellbeing Responsibility of All should ensure that children and young people develop the knowledge, understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing. Well-chosen and evidence-informed programmes may complement curriculum delivery, and will be most effective when they are well integrated into the day-to-day curriculum.

Curricular approaches which focus on promoting resilience can be adapted to reflect the current, local context and ensure their relevance to children and young people. Learning and teaching should also take account of prior knowledge and understanding as well as respond to and act upon what the children and young people want to learn about. As well as building resilience there should be opportunities for children and young people to develop mental, emotional, social and physical skills, problem-solving, coping, and relationship management skills. Enabling children and young people to learn that there are a range of strategies available to enhance mental health and wellbeing. The importance of outdoor activities to support and maintain mental health and wellbeing should also be emphasised.

¹² [Respect for All: national approach to anti-bullying - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

¹³ [Human rights: Children's rights - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

¹⁴ [Scotland's Curriculum for Excellence Health and wellbeing across learning: Experiences and outcomes \(education.gov.scot\)](http://www.education.gov.scot)

¹⁵ [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\): guidance on reducing the risks in schools - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](http://www.gov.scot)

The school will **provide children and young people with meaningful opportunities to contribute** to, influence and lead on aspects of their learning within health and wellbeing. Where possible, children and young people should take ownership of their learning and progression within health and wellbeing, and help co-design and deliver core components of the HWB curriculum as well as wider aspects of school life.¹⁶

Scotland's curriculum promotes the engagement of children and young people in the delivery of learning in our schools. Young people can be provided with **learning opportunities**, including peer led opportunities, to develop activities for other children and young people with support from school staff. These can raise awareness of the continuum of mental health, the extent to which we all lie along this continuum, and how we can promote better mental health and wellbeing for ourselves and others. Young people can use this knowledge to work alongside school staff and third sector partner agencies to ensure that there is a culture and ethos that is non-stigmatising. Opportunities for peer leadership, mentoring and support should be encouraged.

School **approaches to learning and teaching should engage children and young people fully** in the learning process and promote their resilience and wellbeing, aligned to the ethos of the school. Schools can support classroom organisation and management which is consistent with an approach that supports wellbeing and promotes pedagogy that is suited to their pupils' needs. This should be in keeping with guidance on COVID-19 recovery.

There should be **clear tracking and monitoring approaches in place** to ensure children and young people make progress, based on the Health and Wellbeing Experiences and Outcomes. This includes evaluating progress within Responsibility of All, which can link to the wellbeing indicators as well as assessing progress of PSE, using the Benchmarks. This should be in keeping with Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers guidance.

Schools should also support a **clear balance between academic, attainment based subjects and opportunities for vocational and wider achievement**. Schools will already recognise the links between positive mental health and wellbeing and achievement. Schools should continue to provide children and young people with strategies and opportunities to manage times when their positive mental health and wellbeing may be challenged, such as in exam periods or in periods of isolation, to support their resilience and overall mental wellbeing.

4. Enabling children's and young people's voices and participation to influence decisions

A **children's rights-based approach** across the school emphasises their entitlement to be kept fully informed and right be included in decisions regarding all aspects of school life. We know that many children and young people have been negatively impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic and this makes it even more vital that they are supported to have their voices heard with regard to the appropriate ongoing support that is required.

¹⁶ [Health and wellbeing across learning: Experiences and outcomes \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/health-and-wellbeing-across-learning-experiences-and-outcomes)
[Health and wellbeing: Experiences and outcomes \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot/health-and-wellbeing-experiences-and-outcomes)

Authentic and supported involvement in decisions that affect their own lives enhances children and young people's sense of autonomy and belonging and is a significant protective factor that supports mental health and wellbeing. It is important not only to enable and listen to and act on views, but to ensure these views influence decisions across the school community and that young people are aware of the impact sharing their views have had.¹⁷

There will be a **wide range of areas of the life of the school community** that will benefit from children and young people's participation in decision making, including key policy development; curriculum; learning and teaching; clubs and committees and the design of targeted supports and interventions for mental health and wellbeing. They should also be involved in shaping the whole school vision and values on how to support mental health and wellbeing. Children and young people have much to contribute in terms of what supports their own mental health and wellbeing and what is likely to impact negatively upon it and it is essential that their views and experiences are fully heard and acted upon where possible. Children and young people should be encouraged to support schools in their self-evaluation processes using tools such as How Good is Our School?¹⁸ (HGIOS 4).

Children's views are vital within **individual planning as part of staged intervention and GIRFEC planning processes**, and children and young people should be empowered to express their views regarding their needs, supports and services.¹⁹ It is also important that children and young people are aware of the advocacy arrangements that are in place to support them. A whole school approach should try to ensure that wherever possible children and young people are comfortable seeking help from adults when needed, whilst recognising that children and young people may also value peer support to better support mental health and wellbeing. Children and young people can make significant contributions by acting as peer educators and mentors, delivering mental health and wellbeing messages to their peers and providing credible role models. They can also build the capacity of schools to deliver health and wellbeing experiences and outcomes in a highly relevant, meaningful and sustainable way.

5. Supporting staff professional learning and development in order to ensure their own and others' wellbeing

Professional learning and development can be key factors in empowering staff to effectively support children and young people's wellbeing as well as their own wellbeing. Staff may benefit from being afforded opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes so that they can positively impact on the wellbeing of others. Schools may want to consider the specific needs of staff with regard to professional learning, reflecting on the 'practice levels' of informed, skilled and enhanced from **Knowledge and Skills Framework for Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing (NES)**²⁰

¹⁷ [Standards in Scotland's Schools etc. Act 2000 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#)

¹⁸ [How good is our school? - HGIOS 4 | Self-evaluation](#)

¹⁹ [Getting it right for every child \(GIRFEC\) - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

[Additional support for learning review - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](#)

[UNCRC Articles Archive - The Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland \(cypcs.org.uk\)](#)

²⁰ [Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing : a knowledge and skills framework for the Scottish workforce | Turas | Learn \(nhs.scot\)](#)

- The **Informed Practice level** describes the baseline knowledge and skills required by everyone who works with children and young people in the Scottish workforce (**Support for All**)
- The **Skilled Practice** level describes the knowledge and skills required by all workers who have direct and/or substantial contact with children and young people who may be experiencing mental health challenges (**Early Support**)
- The **Enhanced Practice level** details the knowledge and skills required by workers who have more regular and intense contact with children and young people who are known to have difficulties with their mental health, and who provide specific supports or interventions and/or who direct or manage services. (**Additional Support**)
- The **Specialist Practice Level** details the knowledge and skills required by staff involved in specialist assessment and interventions. This level will not be applicable to school staff.

The leadership team can support this by **promoting continuous high-quality professional learning opportunities** to ensure that all staff are enabled to promote the mental health and wellbeing of all children and young people across the life of the school and community and recognise and respond to need effectively. Learning opportunities should be individualised to staffs' own development needs and reflect the needs of the school population and local community. It is also essential as the world responds to the COVID-19 pandemic for some time to come, that learning opportunities reflect the needs that have emerged as a result of this.

The GTCS standards for registration states as part of the professional values and personal commitments, 'promoting health and wellbeing of self, colleagues and the children and young people in my care' and 'understanding health and wellbeing and the importance of positive and purposeful relationships to provide and ensure a safe and secure environment for all learners and colleagues within a caring and compassionate ethos.'²¹ Opportunities for professional learning in mental health and wellbeing could be made available as part of teacher's probation period as well as part of career-long professional learning. Schools should also consider how they can be flexible in order to best include all support staff in development opportunities in this area.

As part of a wider focus on mental health and wellbeing, staff development opportunities for wider staff might include:

- Child development
- Attachment and trauma
- Promoting positive relationships
- Resilience
- Understanding of the mental health continuum and specific areas of mental health
- Recognising, responding to and supporting needs within mental health
- Additional interventions
- Curricular approaches to supporting wellbeing
- Prevention of suicide and self-harm.

²¹ [Standard-for-Full-Registration.pdf \(gtcs.org.uk\)](https://www.gtcs.org.uk/standard-for-full-registration.pdf)

A range of partners can provide support for staff development opportunities, including Educational Psychology Services and Education Scotland.

An online professional learning resource entitled 'Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing: A learning resource for all school staff, has been developed by the Scottish Government.²² The resource takes a **whole school approach** centred around **prevention and early intervention to promote positive mental health and wellbeing** for everyone in the school community. It aims to **provide school staff with knowledge and understanding of mental health** and wellbeing in schools and a range of opportunities to learn about experiences and advice from practitioners and young people. There are four main sections which include: An overview of mental health and wellbeing; Factors influencing mental health and wellbeing; Applying prevention based approaches to mental health and wellbeing in schools, and; School staff wellbeing.

Promoting staff wellbeing is also a core component of a whole school approach and should be given the priority and importance required in a school. Professional learning should not just focus on how staff support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing but how they can support their own and colleagues' wellbeing needs.²³ It is vital for its own sake but will also ensure staff are best supported to work with children and young people experiencing distress and support them appropriately.

At a leadership level the understanding of the factors that affect staff mental health and wellbeing in the workplace is essential; including organisational, job-related and individualised factors. **A range of embedded supports and structures** that can assist and reassure them in their day-to-day roles should be available and made known to staff. These should specifically promote positive mental health and wellbeing, and provide a specific support for mental health and wellbeing needs as required. Leaders at all levels should be mindful of the pressures on staff and of conditions of service.

Ongoing staff development and support may involve mentoring, coaching, check-ins, debriefing and peer and management support. School staff may call upon staff in the wider local authority and partners to be involved in this support. Educational Psychology Services will have a key role to play in this. Staff should be encouraged to seek support when needed and there should be no stigma around this as part of a whole school approach to addressing mental health and wellbeing.

As part of the overall culture and ethos of the school on mental health and wellbeing, it should be clear that it is okay not to be okay, for staff, and there should be clear pathways for those needing more personalised support.

Staff feedback, including for example, gathering views and more formal wellbeing surveys, could be used to capture staff experience and inform approaches and next steps. When formal 'measures' of wellbeing are used, these should be used with sensitivity and appropriate safeguards should be in place. The approaches to supporting staff mental health and wellbeing include staff working at all levels, including senior leaders.

²² [Professional Learning Resource - CYP MH](#)

²³ [Support for the education workforce during covid-19 National Improvement Hub](#)

6. Identifying need and monitoring impact of interventions

If taking a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing, schools should consider having effective arrangements in place to ensure they identify need at the whole school, group and individual level.

Identification of individual pupil wellbeing needs is a key aspect of the Getting it right for every child approach in Scottish schools, alongside Health and Wellbeing Responsibility for All within the Curriculum for Excellence, and inform a whole school approach to addressing mental health and wellbeing needs. The national health and wellbeing census will support the monitoring of need and next steps in schools and education authorities.²⁴

The **overall school approach to identifying need and monitoring impact** will be built on existing robust self-evaluation approaches which take into account a broad range of data and evidence, including robust stakeholder engagement and consultation with children and young people to gather their views. This engagement should include identifying school staff needs and monitoring the impact of interventions to support the mental health and wellbeing of staff. Schools should ensure that their self-evaluation and quality assurance processes take into account mental health and wellbeing needs explicitly and includes relevant data and evidence in this area to inform next steps. How Good Is Our School? 4 has a range of quality indicators which can support this and Applying Nurture as a Whole School Approach can also help to further inform evaluation and reflection on practice in this area.²⁵ Additionally, the self-evaluation framework at Appendix 4 can further support in identifying improvement priorities.

In terms of identifying the children and young people's individual needs, **the most effective way of monitoring impact is via quality relationships and being attuned to young people and present for them.** This will be further supported by schools ensuring that they have robust systems in place to evaluate progress in Health and Wellbeing underpinned by a shared understanding of Experiences and Outcomes within Responsibility for All and the GIRFEC wellbeing indicators. Holistic assessment of individual wellbeing needs includes children's and young people's views and those of parents and carers and information from wider professionals as appropriate.

Arrangements for identifying children who need targeted support for their mental health will be informed by shared understanding of how to recognise a child who is distressed. It is important that a wider holistic and contextual view of needs is taken into account and that all behaviour is understood as communication.

In understanding the wider contextual factors that can impact on mental health and wellbeing, schools may be able to take an early intervention and preventative approach to alleviate further concerns. This should take account of the wider contextual, environmental and structural factors within a school that may be barriers to wellbeing. Where appropriate, additional wellbeing assessments (examples in Appendix 2) can be considered, to identify children and young people who are distressed and in need of further support. This should be outlined as part of staged intervention processes and planning cycle and may be supported through further consultation and advice from

²⁴ [Health and Wellbeing Census - gov.scot \(www.gov.scot\)](https://www.gov.scot)

²⁵ [How good is our school? - HGIOS 4 | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\); Applying nurture as a whole school approach - A framework to support self-evaluation | Self-evaluation | National Improvement Hub \(education.gov.scot\)](https://www.education.gov.scot)

visiting specialists such as the Educational Psychological Service or the school counselling service where appropriate. When carrying out individualised assessment and support, it is vital that mental health and wellbeing is recognised as being impacted upon by wider environmental factors and not as a within-child difficulty.

It is important that when implementing interventions to support mental health and wellbeing, such as nurture groups, school counselling, resilience, HWB programmes and anxiety based supports such as Lets Introduce Anxiety Management (LIAM), there are also **robust evaluations in place to evaluate the efficacy** of such interventions.²⁶ Whilst many of these interventions may be evidence-based, the impact may be attributable to implementation factors. Schools may wish to use an Implementation Science approach (see Appendix 3) to help them to consider the factors that contribute to successful implementation. When utilising the Framework within Scottish schools, leaders will need to be mindful of LNCT agreements on workload, school improvement planning, and classroom observation.

7. Working with parents, carers and the wider community

Parents and carers are instrumental in supporting their children's mental health and wellbeing and learning and are key to building an effective and inclusive whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Parents, and carers, positive relationships with their children are a powerful protective factor for their mental health and wellbeing. They have unique knowledge about their children and diverse experiences and skills that can contribute to the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. The needs of children and young people who are care experienced will require particular attention.

Strong school, family and community partnerships can also greatly enhance the impact of actions to support positive outcomes. Schools should foster a positive environment where relationships and partnership working are strong and communication is effective.

Effective partnership working in this area will be underpinned by understanding that some families may feel blame and stigma, for themselves and for their children and young people where there are mental health issues. They may have fears about reaching out for support and will need a compassionate response and personalised approaches to help overcome this. Any approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing should ensure that all parents and carers, including those who are harder to engage, have their voices heard. This reflects the work of The Promise, which emphasises the need for families to be given support to overcome some of the difficulties that get in their way.²⁷ Parents and carers should also be helped to feel confident that their child is getting the right support for mental health and wellbeing at both a universal and targeted level. There should be a recognition of the importance of cultural values and beliefs and how they impact on the way that mental health and wellbeing is perceived in families and a culturally responsive approach to addressing the needs of children and young people which promotes positive mental health for all.

Parents and carers should also be involved in discussions about key developments within the school and contribute to the vision and values around whole school mental health and wellbeing.

²⁶ [LIAM Videos | Turas | Learn \(nhs.scot\)](#)

²⁷ [Home - The Promise](#)

Parent Councils have an important role to play and are well placed to support schools and head teachers in developing school policies, and advising on how best to engage with the wider parent body. Schools should endeavour to capture the views and experiences of the wider parent bodies in creative and innovative ways to ensure that even the most vulnerable families have their voices heard. Efforts to engage parents and carers should also take into account cultural needs and language barriers. Schools are best placed to understand the needs of their school community and respond to these appropriately. This might include: breakfast blethers; mental health and wellbeing workshops; parent-led events. Other communications to parents such as social media approaches can also help share positive messages with parents about mental health and wellbeing and signpost them to supports. Overall, strong partnership working in this area will mean that parents will feel more open to support and advice with regards to supporting their child and seeking appropriate external support for their own mental health and wellbeing where required.

As part of a whole school approach, **appropriate support for parents will be well signposted** and the approaches taken by the school can have a positive impact on parental mental health and wellbeing. Effective engagement with parents will support the school to understand and provide support at a universal or targeted level that enhances knowledge and understanding of mental health and wellbeing for example by providing an input to parents and carers on managing formal assessment and exam stress, sleep, distressed behaviour, understanding and responding to the teenage brain, or having regular supportive conversations about emotions and wellbeing.

The wider school community will include connections with local groups such as community groups, sports and leisure facilities, business and enterprise, cultural venues and civic groups. Strong partnerships with the third sector will greatly enhance the whole school approach. Community Learning and Development Services will also have a significant role to play and can include collaborative approaches to youth work, family learning and early intervention work.

New and enhanced community mental health services, to complement existing local provision are also currently being developed and delivered by local authorities to provide support for children and young people around emotional support and distress. These are aligned to a Children and Young People Mental Health and Wellbeing Supports and Services Framework and are intended to provide support upstream of CAHMS services. Additional services provided by or enhanced through this framework will complement current universal and targeted services provided by a whole school approach.

Family - school - community partnership can ensure an integrated approach to support children, young people and families, and communities can provide schools with a context and environment that can reinforce the work of the school in general and in supporting mental health and wellbeing. It can extend the physical, cultural, social and vocational opportunities for children and young people and enhance their wellbeing and connection to community, and social capital.

Appropriate consultation and participation with these wider stakeholders enhances the health-promoting school and provides learners and staff with a context and support for their actions.

8. Targeted support and appropriate pathways to the right support

Targeted support within the school builds upon **effective universal support** offered as part of a whole school approach that includes staff accepting that mental health and wellbeing is the responsibility of all staff and it is a key part of the curriculum. This approach also builds upon the key principles of Getting it Right for Every Child which includes being child focused, based on an understanding of the wellbeing of a child in their current situation; requires joined up working and is based on tackling needs early. Effective universal support will ensure a minimally intrusive approach is in place, and that when targeted support is sought it is appropriate and timely.

Pastoral care teams within schools should have clear and effective structures and systems that ensure that they are able to identify the children and young people who require additional support. This should involve; regular dialogue between staff with pastoral responsibilities and wider school staff, effective assessment, referral processes, and ongoing professional learning and support for relevant staff so that they can identify children and young people who are in distress and require more intensive support.

A range of school supports can also be accessed which offers targeted support for mental health and wellbeing, including access to counselling through schools for children and young people of 10 years and over. Educational psychologists can also offer ongoing consultation, advice and support for staff, children and young people and their families. School nursing also have a key role to play in supporting school-age children with emotional health and wellbeing. These additional services are intended to complement a whole school approach to wellbeing. There may be times, however, when maintaining and extending the support from a key adult is a more appropriate alternative to a child starting counselling.

Joined-up partnership working is a fundamental aspect of the whole school approach; where children, young people, parents and carers, and the services they need all work together in a co-ordinated way to meet specific needs and improve the child or young person's wellbeing. This should involve partnerships across the local authority, with health and social care partners, and with third sector partners. Multi-agency teams working with schools to support wellbeing will need to remain mindful of any relevant public health advice.

In order to ensure the right support is offered at the right time, there is a need for **good understanding of local pathways and the role of agencies** across the local community and beyond. School staff should have a good awareness of the role and scope of supports such as school counsellors, educational psychology, community mental health services, CAMHS and the third sector.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Policy framework

The legal and policy context in Scotland emphasises the need to take a child-centred, rights-based and preventative approach to supporting positive mental health and wellbeing. Below are some of the key policies and legislation that will be relevant to this framework

1. [Getting it right for every child](#) promotes the need for children and young people to get the right support at the right time in the right place and this is now enshrined in legislation in the [Children and Young People \(Scotland\) Act \(2014\)](#) which also emphasises the rights of the child. The National Practice Model within Getting it right for every child also offers a helpful framework to help identify wellbeing needs and identify the risk and protective factors that contribute to mental health and wellbeing.
2. Learning in Health and Wellbeing is a key part of the [Curriculum for Excellence](#) and [Building the Ambition](#) which emphasises the need to ensure that children and young people develop the knowledge and understanding, skills, capabilities and attributes which they need for mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing as outlined within Responsibility of All. Within Curriculum for Excellence, health and wellbeing is a 'responsibility of all'.²⁸
3. The [National Improvement Framework](#) sets out clear priorities to deliver excellence and equity, including: closing the attainment gap between the most and least disadvantaged children and young people, and; improving children and young people's health and wellbeing.
4. The [Mental Health Transition and Recovery Plan](#) has a clear vision where people get the right help at the right time, expect recovery and fully enjoy their rights, free from discrimination and stigma. Prevention and early intervention lie at the heart of this.
5. The [Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework](#) sets out a clear broad approach for the support that children and young people should be able to access for their mental health and emotional wellbeing within the community. It states that the kind of support provided by community mental health services is additional to what can be provided through universal services, including by educational establishments, and to the clinical services provided through CAMHS.
6. [Counselling through Schools](#) is now in place in all Scottish local authorities for children 10 and over. Guidance for local authorities on counselling states that counselling is one of a range of services, and is best seen as part of a whole school approach to supporting wellbeing.
7. A range of Mental Health Quality Indicators have also been developed by Public Health and can be found here: [Quality Indicators | Mental Health Quality Indicator Profile | Health Topics | ISD Scotland](#)

²⁸ [Health and wellbeing across learning: Experiences and outcomes \(education.gov.scot\)](#)
[Health and wellbeing: Experiences and outcomes \(education.gov.scot\)](#)

Appendix 2 – Additional wellbeing assessments

This list contains a small number of examples of additional wellbeing assessments that may complement embedded school-based approaches to evaluating progress and assessing wellbeing, as outlined in section 6. The focus of each will vary, and careful consideration and sensitive implementation is essential when using additional assessments. For a more comprehensive list, [Anna Freud](#) and the [Child Outcomes Resource Centre \(CORC\)](#) offer detailed review of further assessments. Selection of additional wellbeing assessments will depend on a range of factors in terms of purpose and some will be better for use at individual level, and others for wider use. It will be essential to be clear about a rationale for why a particular assessment is used, what question it is asking, what will be done with the confidential information gleaned, and what feedback will be offered.

Evaluation	Description	Target Group	Free to use
Boxall Profile	A psycho-social assessment tool used to determine children and young people's social and emotional functioning and wellbeing. Completed by school staff.	Children and young people who may require nurturing intervention. – Primary and Secondary versions, cover age range 5-16	No
Child and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM)	A self-report measure of social-ecological resilience.	Child measure – 5-9 years Youth measure – 10-23 years	Yes
Glasgow Motivation and Wellbeing Profile (GWWP)	A 20 item questionnaire that explores motivation and wellbeing in a learning context. Can be completed by children and young people and adults who work with them.	3-18 years old	Yes
PASS for primary PASS for secondary	A GL assessment that measures pupils wellbeing in 3 broad areas – how they feel about themselves, engagement with the curriculum and feelings about school and offers practical next steps.	4-18+ year olds	No
SHINE pupil mental health and wellbeing survey	An online survey for SHINE member schools – a comprehensive measure of different aspects of mental health and wellbeing, producing data reports which can be shared across the school community.	P6-S6	Yes
Stirling Wellbeing Scale	Measures mental and physical wellbeing in children. Self-reporting.	5-18 years	Yes
Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ)	A brief behavioural screening questionnaire – completed by staff/parents and older young people. Measures emotional symptoms; conduct problems; hyperactivity/inattention, peer relationships and pro-social behaviour.	3-16 year olds	Yes
Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWS)	Positively worded, covers feeling and functioning aspects of mental wellbeing.	13-16 years	Yes



Appendix 3 – Implementation Science framework

Framework for Implementation (adapted from Fixen et al, 2009)

This framework may be helpful for schools to use to support their implementation of a whole school approach. It is based on the principles of implementation science that supports the implementation of any new approach in a real world context. When utilising the Framework within Scottish schools, leaders will need to be mindful of LNCT agreements on workload, school improvement planning, and classroom observation.

Stages of implementation	Core component	Possible tasks	Where are we now	Next steps
1. Exploration and Adoption - Getting ready for change	Readiness and commitment (needs analysis) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collect data • Gather views • Readiness for change • Involve stakeholders • Evaluation measures 	<i>Use a readiness checklist to assess readiness for change</i> <i>Gather data – e.g. SIMD, exclusions, HWB tracking and monitoring, attendance, Impact of individual interventions, existing MHWB survey data</i> <i>Consult with stakeholders on their views on needs of school</i> <i>Decide on evaluation measures to be used</i>		
	Developing a clear vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research evidence • Goodness of fit (evidence and data) • Linking to policies and practices 	<i>Look at research evidence</i> <i>Decide on what approach best fits needs of your context</i> <i>Carry out a SWOT analysis</i> <i>Link with school's current ethos, priorities, plans</i>		
	Implementation group (timeline, vision, etc)	<i>Set up an Implementation/ Steering Group (consider who to invite)</i>		

Stages of implementation	Core component	Possible tasks	Where are we now	Next steps
2. Installation - Capturing hearts and minds	Building knowledge, understanding and confidence Staff selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify appropriate staff to support training, implementation, etc. Pre- and in-service training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness raising (all staff) SMT involvement In-depth training for implementation group 	<i>Identify the key staff who will take forward training for staff - in whole school and targeted approaches</i> <i>Arrange an awareness-raising session for all staff</i> <i>Arrange for additional training for those who are more involved in the implementation of MHWB approach</i>		
	Organisational structures Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial, organisational, human Physical capacity of school Consultation and coaching <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who will coach How will they coach 	<i>Explore capacity within school to take MHWB approach forward</i> <i>Consider how you can access additional funding if required</i> <i>Apply for funding for staff/resources/training</i> <i>Decide on who is best to take coaching forward</i> <i>Explore whether LA has a model for coaching and support</i> <i>Consider whether action research might support implementation</i>		

Stages of implementation	Core component	Possible tasks	Where are we now	Next steps
	<p>Policies and procedures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to check fit with school's current plans and procedures – keep, rebrand or let go of those that don't fit • Include in School Improvement Plan 	<p><i>Ensure that a MHWB approach fits with current policies and procedures – adapt policies that are congruent with this approach and revise or get rid of those that don't fit with this approach</i></p> <p><i>Ensure stakeholder engagement</i></p> <p><i>Include the implementation in your SIP</i></p>		
	<p>Evaluation and measurement</p>	<p><i>Decide on what measures will be used to keep track of progress – individual pupil HWB measures, staff attitude, environment audit, parent questionnaires, attainment</i></p>		

Stages of implementation	Core component	Possible tasks	Where are we now	Next steps
<p>3. Initial implementation</p> <p>- Getting the ball rolling</p>	<p>Developing practice (focusing on the vision)</p> <p>Whole school (vision, roles, tracking, procedures, evaluations)</p>	<p>Whole school</p> <p><i>Identify MHWB areas that you will focus on</i></p> <p><i>Train whole staff in approaches/supports for MHWB</i></p> <p><i>Identify implementation group meetings/evaluation points, etc. in school calendar</i></p> <p><i>Develop classroom practice around MHWB</i></p> <p><i>Decide on staff who will monitor progress and support implementation</i></p> <p><i>Discuss and implement approaches to support pupils – discuss at staged intervention meetings, etc.</i></p> <p><i>Discuss MHWB at staff meetings, assemblies</i></p> <p><i>Liaise with parents/carers</i></p>		

Stages of implementation	Core component	Possible tasks	Where are we now	Next steps
	Problem identification and solution finding <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept barriers/problems as part of process • Provide opportunities to discuss these and find solutions • Continue to gather evidence and data and ensure decisions are based around these 	<p><i>Ensure coaching/mentoring procedures take place to share successes/problems</i></p> <p><i>Set up opportunities to share classroom experience - teacher learning conversations</i></p> <p><i>Set up networking opportunities for staff or embark on an action research group to monitor and evaluate practice</i></p> <p><i>Continue to evaluate and measure impact</i></p>		
4. Full Implementation - Making it natural	Gaining momentum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership - keep on agenda • Share aims with all • Update policies • Information sharing 	<p><i>Ensure the aims of the intervention are understood and shared by all staff, pupils, parents/carers and the wider community including partner agencies.</i></p> <p><i>Develop a communication/information sharing strategy.</i></p> <p><i>Key members of staff should model the approach - use the relevant language</i></p> <p><i>Keep on SMT agenda</i></p> <p><i>Update whole staff, pupils, Parent Council on progress using a wide variety of communication channels</i></p> <p><i>Development of an information sheet or information on the website on MHWB for parents/carers</i></p>		

Stages of implementation	Core component	Possible tasks	Where are we now	Next steps
	<p>Continued training and support for whole school community</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning rounds • Involvement of children/young people • Involvement of parents/carers 	<p><i>Follow up on whole staff training by providing more detailed, needs led training</i></p> <p><i>Provide opportunities for staff to observe others lessons (learning rounds)</i></p> <p><i>Introduce MHWB interventions and supports to parents/carers.</i></p> <p><i>Highlight and share innovative practice</i></p>		
	<p>Monitor and review progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to gather evidence in relation to progress/impact • Embed in systems - use language 	<p><i>Use action research or other evaluative measures to ensure that changes have had an impact</i></p> <p><i>Make changes and adapt where necessary</i></p> <p><i>Use language that is congruent with a MHWB approach.</i></p>		
Sustainability	<p>Planning for short and long term</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan for ongoing evaluation • Maintain and review systems • Ensuring planning for long term sustainability 	<p><i>Update evaluations</i></p> <p><i>Use self-evaluation to ensure implementation is going well and look at next steps</i></p> <p><i>Discuss succession planning for different roles</i></p>		

Appendix 4 – A whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing: A self-evaluation framework

Principle 1 – Leadership and management			
Key features	Challenge questions	Areas of strength	Areas of development
Clear school vision for MHWB	<p>To what extent is there a shared and agreed clear vision for promoting whole school mental health and wellbeing?</p> <p>To what extent do leaders understand that tackling mental health and discrimination is essential to creating a mentally flourishing school/workplace?</p> <p>To what extent have we engaged with children and young people in the development of our school vision for mental health and wellbeing.</p>		
Prioritisation of MHWB within planning and improvement activity	<p>How coherently has our whole school work in mental health and wellbeing been considered within existing planning, resourcing, and improvement frameworks?</p> <p>To what extent have we considered our implementation of this approach and developed a clear implementation plan?</p>		
Clear roles, responsibilities and systems that support MHWB	<p>How well do our current systems and processes support mental health and wellbeing in the school?</p> <p>To what extent do our systems and processes address mental health stigma?</p> <p>To what extent are roles and responsibilities in supporting MHWB clear for all staff?</p>		

Principle 1 - Leadership and management

Key features	Challenge questions	Areas of strength	Areas of development
Robust and ongoing self-evaluation around MHWB	How well do we use our data and evidence to determine what the challenges for our children and young people in terms of their mental health and wellbeing?		
Robust supportive policy framework to support MHWB	<p>How well does our current policy framework best support a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing?</p> <p>How would a whole school approach be enhanced by a specific policy on mental health and wellbeing?</p> <p>How well does our current policy framework focus on creating the safe, effective conditions for mental health inclusion across the school environment?</p>		

Principle 2 - Ethos and environment

Key features	Challenge questions	Areas of strength	Areas of development
Stigma-free environment	<p>How successful are we in reducing the stigma around mental health and ensuring children and young people feel comfortable about seeking help for their mental health and wellbeing, in an appropriate way?</p> <p>To what extent have we considered the views of those with lived experience when self-evaluating our systems and processes in terms of their impact on mental health stigma and discrimination? (children and young people, parents and carers, and staff)</p>		
Effective approaches to promote positive relationships across the school	To what extent have we embedded a whole school relational approach and recognise the importance of this in supporting mental health and wellbeing?		
Provision of care and support alongside appropriate challenge	How well do we manage to support a culture and ethos that promotes the twin pillars of warmth and support alongside clear structures and high expectations?		
Celebration of diversity and difference within the school community	How well do our values support diversity and recognise practices which support those with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010?		
Shared commitment to and understanding of children's rights	To what extent are children's rights recognised and realised throughout our school community?		

Principle 3 – Curriculum, learning and teaching

Key features	Challenge questions	Areas of strength	Areas of development
Curricular approaches that promote resilience	<p>What evidence is there that the lesson design and delivery is supporting the development of resilience and mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing?</p> <p>What evidence is there that learning being delivered is supporting recognition and reduction of stigma and discrimination of mental health and wellbeing?</p>		
Agreed and clear tracking and monitoring approaches in place to ensure children and young people make progress	<p>To what extent is there a clear and proportionate approach to monitoring and evaluating progress of wellbeing?</p> <p>How effective is our knowledge and use of additional wellbeing assessment when required?</p>		
Raising of awareness of continuum of MHWB and how to better promote mental health	<p>How effectively does the learning and teaching in the school support an awareness of and strategies to support mental health and wellbeing?</p>		
Children and young people's involvement in curriculum content and delivery	<p>How engaged are children and young people in curriculum delivery and in working alongside partners to develop supports for mental health and wellbeing?</p>		
Promotion of mental health and wellbeing across the whole curriculum	<p>How well are approaches to 'Responsibility of All' in regards to mental health and wellbeing incorporated into wider curriculum content and to the learning and teaching approaches adopted in classrooms?</p>		

Principle 4 - Enabling children and young people's voices and participation

Key features	Challenge questions	Areas of strength	Areas of development
A rights based approaches ensures CYP's²⁹ views are listened to and acted upon when developing the whole schools approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What have the views of children and young people told us about how we are doing, and what we should do next, in terms of the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing? 		
Ensuring CYP's views in delivering targeted support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively have we ensured children and young people's views are listened to and acted upon, for individuals and groups that need targeted support? 		
CYP involvement in delivering MHWB interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent are children and young people making significant contributions to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of peers through our range of approaches? 		

²⁹ CYP is used as an abbreviation for children and young people

Principle 5 - Supporting staff professional learning and development

Key features	Challenge questions	Areas of strength	Areas of development
High quality professional learning	<p>How effective is our Career Long Professional Learning (CLPL) programme in supporting staff to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a consistent relational approach across the school? • Promote resilience and positive mental health for children and young people? • Recognise and respond to mental health/wellbeing difficulty in children and young people? • Address the CLPL needs staff have identified? 		
Strategic approach to professional learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To what extent does our professional learning and development work in mental health and wellbeing ensure both effective universal and targeted approaches to ensure needs are met at the right time from the right people? 		
Staff wellbeing support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively do we promote staff wellbeing and ensure an open, stigma-free environment for accessing help? • To what extent do we have a range of effective supports in place, and clear pathways to ensure access to support outwith the establishment? 		

Principle 6 - Identifying need and monitoring impact of interventions

Key features	Challenge questions	Areas of strength	Areas of development
Identifying need at whole school level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do we use our data and evidence to help us determine mental health and wellbeing needs (including children and young people's views)? 		
Recognising and responding to need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do we have a shared understanding of distress that ensures we recognise and respond to mental health need? 		
Monitoring impact of universal or targeted interventions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To what extent do we evaluate the impact of any interventions we have put in place to support mental health and wellbeing and use this evaluation to amend or adapt the intervention as required? 		

Principle 7 - Working with parents, carers and the wider community

Key features	Challenge questions	Areas of strength	Areas of development
Parents/carers as key partners in supporting their own children's mental health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effective is our partnership working with parents to support mental health and wellbeing for children and young people who need targeted support for their needs? • To what extent do schools work alongside parents and carers to develop positive relationships that will help build parents confidence in seeking help and support when needed? 		
Parents/carer involvement in developing the whole school approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively has our developing vision for whole school mental health and wellbeing involved parental views? • How well do school staff communicate with parents and carers about the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing and help signpost them to supports for themselves and their children? 		
Supporting parents in managing need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively has our work with parents helped them meet support the mental health and wellbeing of their children? 		
Community engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How effectively do we involve the wider community in our whole school work in mental health and wellbeing, enhancing the connection of children and families to their community? 		

Principle 8 - Targeted support and appropriate pathways to the right support

Key features	Challenge questions	Areas of strength	Areas of development
Well considered ongoing referrals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How well do staff work with partners to understand their role and referral pathways to ensure that the referrals are appropriate and timely? 		
Balanced approach with a focus on early intervention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effective are we at providing early interventions, that allow children and young people to be supported in a minimally intrusive way without needing more specialist support? 		
Partnership working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How effective are we at working with the third sector to support good outcomes for children and young people's mental health and wellbeing? 		



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