

Emotional Health and Wellbeing policy guidance for schools

This document outlines **guidance** to help you develop an Emotional Health and Wellbeing policy for your school.

A policy should be developed using a Whole School Approach and designed with active involvement from school staff, pupils, parents/carers, and school governors. The policy should demonstrate how the school plans to embed an emotional health & wellbeing philosophy across the setting and its learning curriculum. Policies are essential for maintaining clear leadership and should be reviewed every 2 years to remain relevant to the school's needs.

This guidance was developed by the Leicestershire Healthy Schools Team and will be reviewed every 6 months (next review date June 2023).

Your policy should include the following information:

Introduction

- Name of staff member/s responsible for EH&WB in your school with a brief description of role.
- Describe/define your school or college's approach to emotional and mental health issues.

World Health Organisation's definition of mental health and wellbeing: ... *"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"*.

- Ways in which positive Health and Wellbeing is embedded within the school ethos.
- Links to other relevant policies, e.g., Anti-Bullying, Safeguarding, SEND to ensure the approaches within each are aligned.
- Acknowledge that a mental health condition that adversely affects behaviour may amount to a disability, under the Equality Act 2010 and is therefore a protected characteristic.

These policies need to be consistent with schools' duties under the Equality Act 2010. For example, where a pupil has a mental health impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities in the school setting this amounts to a disability. In such instances, the Act imposes a duty on the school to make reasonable adjustments to its policies, the physical environment, the support it offers, and how it responds in particular situations. (Mental Health and Behaviour in Schools, DfE 2018).

- A statement on emotional health and wellbeing is on your school or college website/prospectus.

Proactive measures to promote positive emotional health and wellbeing

- The school setting ensures that there are proactive ways in which EH&WB are embedded within the school curriculum.
- There are procedures in place and available (CPD) to increase understanding and awareness of mental health issues. These are used to better facilitate early intervention and alert staff to warning signs and risk factors.
- Guidance is provided to all staff, including non-teaching staff and governors, on ways of supporting pupils experiencing a mental health problem.
- The school setting promotes proactive ways in which school staff can manage their own mental health and wellbeing.

Reactive measures to promote positive emotional health and wellbeing

- Provide support and guidance to pupils experiencing a mental health problem, as well as guidance and support for their parents/carers.
- There are strategies in place to support staff with their own EH&WB.
- There is clarity on how disclosures are dealt with and the use of confidentiality.
- There has been active discussion about suitable specialist services and how/when they might be approached.

Useful links and organisations

- Anna Freud - <https://www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/5-steps-to-mental-health-and-wellbeing/leading-change/ensure-there-is-a-robust-mental-health-and-wellbeing-policy/#:~:text=A%20mental%20health%20and%20wellbeing%20policy%20should%20aim%20to%3A,warning%20signs%20and%20risk%20factors>

Policy review

- Review process to take place at least every 2 years.
- Review process to include the whole school community (e.g., school staff, pupils, parents & carers, and school governors)