Draft framework guidance on embedding a whole-school approach

Draft framework guidance on embedding a whole-school approach to mental health and emotional well-being

Draft guidance

Draft framework guidance on embedding a whole-school approach

Audience

There are a range of intended audiences and partners involved in delivering this guidance, set out on page 6.

Overview

The framework is intended to support schools in reviewing their own well-being landscape and in developing plans to address their weaknesses and build on their strengths. It recognises that the school alone cannot meet all the needs of a complex population of children and young people, and sets out the role of regional bodies, the NHS and others such as the third sector, in supporting the school. It is meant to support and complement the new national curriculum for Wales and in particular the Health and Well-being Area of Learning Experience.

Action required

The purpose of this consultation is to seek the views of stakeholders to ensure the new guidance meets the needs of all users.

Further information

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Additional copies

This document can be accessed from the Welsh Government's website at https://gov.wales/embedding-whole-school-approach-mental-health-and-well-being

Mae'r ddogfen yma hefyd ar gael yn Gymraeg.
This document is also available in Welsh.

Contents

1. Ministerial foreword

Childhood is a time of wonder, of exploration, of growth, development and of pushing boundaries, as our children and young people mature physically, emotionally, socially, and develop their independence. It is a time of great change as they move from infancy into childhood, to adolescence and young adulthood. It is also a time of great emotion. As adults, we often forget the feelings and emotions which come with those first tentative steps into the world of developing new relationships and friendships, rising to new challenges, overcoming them and also the fear of not being able to overcome them.

To us, as adults, this is all part of growing-up, learning to deal magnanimously with our successes and taking the lessons from our failures so that we can grow stronger. However, some of the children and young people in our schools will be facing additional challenges, for example from traumatic experiences, mental ill health, caring responsibilities, or children with social, emotional or developmental delays, and will need additional support within school and from services beyond the school. In addition, if the experience of the Covid19 pandemic has taught us anything, it is that there will be times when the challenges we face can feel overwhelming. These testing times can be difficult enough for adults, let alone our children and young people.

This is why we support our children and young people, earning their trust, so that when they do encounter problems, be they the everyday issues of growing up, more complex needs, or times of national crisis beyond their control, they know there is someone to turn to who will set their problems in context and help them move on, building their resilience so that they can cope with the next challenge life will throw at them.

Most children and young people are fortunate in that they will have several trusted adults who they can turn to for support and comfort, whether in their family, in school or elsewhere. However, for a variety of reasons, some children and young people do not have that one trusted relationship, where they can turn in times of need. Above all that is what this guidance is about – developing and maintaining trusting relationships.

The four purposes of our new curriculum are that all children and young people will be ambitious, capable learners; enterprising, creative contributors; ethical, informed citizens; and healthy, confident individuals. Schools will design their own curriculum which enables learners to make progress to these purposes. Our whole-school approach supports these aims and the evidence points to academic and social development as being intrinsically linked. Within the new curriculum, the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience is the anchor around which our whole-school approach to emotional well-being will be built.

Relationships are at the heart of the whole-school approach and this guidance. It is about the child or young person knowing that their school values them as an individual, supports them, understands the implications of their personal circumstances and that there are adults within the school who they can turn to when they need to. This in itself may often be enough to stop many problems escalating.

However, when we talk about relationships we are not just talking about the one between the learner and teacher. It is also important that relationships are developed among professionals supporting the school. The whole-school approach needs to sit within a whole systems approach to well-being, which is every agency's business – especially health. Our hope for a whole-school approach is that the systems and support available are clearer for

teachers and wider school staff, that they know where to turn, and know that their well-being is at the heart of this too.

This is particularly true as we ease out of the Covid19 'lockdown'. We know life as we knew it is unlikely to return for some time to come and our school community will be on the frontline of the physical and emotional aftermath. It is our teachers and the wider school staffs' human and relationship building qualities that will be most useful and the most likely to make a difference to even our most distressed young people.

Kirsty Williams
Minister for Education

Vaughan Gething
Minister for Health and Social Services

2. Intended audience

A range of audiences and partners will be involved in delivering this guidance, including:

- All maintained school senior leadership teams (headteacher, teacher-in-charge of pupil referral units, deputy heads and departmental heads) and wider school staff (teaching, administrative, etc).
- Governing bodies of maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools

- Local Authority Directorates of Education and regional education consortia.
- Local Health Board primary and secondary care services.
- Local Authority Children's and Social Services.
- Local Authority Young Carers' Services.
- Parents and carers plus the wider school community.
- Youth Services, Youth Workers, Youth Offending Teams and Youth Work Organisations (both voluntary and local authority).
- Youth Offending Institutes and secure children's homes
- Local Authority Families First Leads
- Third Sector organisations.
- Children and young people within maintained schools.
- Children and young people in education otherwise than at school (EOTAS) and pupil referral units (PRUs)
- Independent schools
- Whilst not specifically intended for further education (FE) and higher education (HE, the issues in this document are of equal value in those settings and complement existing guidance such as the Public Health Wales Healthy and Sustainable Colleges and Universities Framework.

This document contains both statutory guidance and non-statutory advice.

The whole of this document is issued as statutory guidance to:

- Governing bodies of maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools
- Local authorities in Wales

and provides non-statutory advice to other persons or bodies who may have a role in helping to support the mental health and emotional well-being of learners in maintained schools and other settings.

Local authorities and governing bodies **must** have regard to this statutory guidance when carrying out their duties in promoting the welfare of children who are learners at the education setting, including meeting their mental and emotional well-being needs. The guidance also applies to activities taking place off-site as part of normal educational activities.

Other bodies **should** have regard to this guidance.

What legislation is this guidance issued under?

Section 175 of the Education Act 2002[1] places a duty on local authorities and governing bodies to make arrangements to ensure their functions are exercised with a view to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in school or another place of learning. This includes supporting the mental health and emotional well-being of learners.

In meeting the duties under section 175 of the Education Act 2002, local authorities and governing bodies **must** have regard to guidance issued by the Welsh Ministers under this section.

Section 21(5) of the Education Act 2002 places a duty on governing bodies to promote the well-being of learners at the school so far as related to the matters mentioned in section 25(2) of the Children Act 2004, which includes physical and mental health and emotional well-being, education, training and recreation, and social well-being.

The non-statutory advice contained within this document is issued in exercise of the Welsh Ministers' duty to promote the education of the people of Wales and their power in relation to the promotion or improvement of the economic, social and environmental well-being of Wales.

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[1] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/175

3. Background

3.1 The whole school approach and Covid19

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has resulted in an unprecedented situation where, in order to respond to, and where possible mitigate, the public health emergency, significant, complex and often difficult decisions have had to be taken often within very compressed timescales.

In March the Welsh Government announced schools and settings would close for statutory provision of education with the exception of provision for those who were vulnerable, or whose parents were critical to the COVID-19 response so they could continue to work. Following initial decisions to re-purpose schools and keep learners safe and learning planning for increasing operations in schools got underway as part of a cross-Government response. Welsh Government has been clear that provision would not mirror what schools would offer during normal times.

In May the Welsh Government published the decision framework for the next phase of education and childcare: considerations, planning and challenges[2]. That document set out the approach to changing the operations of schools over time in response to COVID-19. The framework was informed by discussions with key stakeholder groups, including head teachers, unions, Public Health Wales and other education support organisations. It set out five key principles for education in the next phase i.e. re-opening schools and increasing operation and the Minister for Education has been clear that first and foremost of the five is the safety, mental, emotional and physical well-being of learners and staff.

Since the decision to close schools for statutory provision, our understanding of the virus and its longer-term impacts has continued to develop. We know that we are going to have to live with the effects of COVID-19 for some time and that it will remain our biggest challenge for the foreseeable future.

On 10 June the Welsh Government published Operational guidance for schools and settings: Keep Education Safe (Covid19)[3] and Keep Education Safe: guidance on learning over the summer term[4]. The guidance provides practical support on preparing for and increasing operations during a phased return, up to the end of the summer term. It emphasises the importance of both learner and staff well-being and in particular the importance of rebuilding relationships with peers and also teachers, which will have been lacking and which may have adversely effected learners during 'lockdown'.

These decisions and proposals for the future of education are in line with the whole school approach and this guidance supports the well-being response to Covid19 in the short, medium and longer-terms.

3.2 Purpose

This guidance aims to address the emotional and mental well-being needs of children and young people accessing their education through maintained schools, although other education settings should also have regard to this document. It also recognises that the

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[2] https://gov.wales/decision-framework-next-phase-education-and-childcare
[3] https://gov.wales/operational-guidance-schools-and-settings-keep-education-safe-covid-19
[4] https://gov.wales/keep-education-safe-guidance-learning-over-summer-term#section-43594

school alone cannot meet all the needs of what is a complex population of young people, whose needs will vary as they progress through infancy to adolescence and early adulthood.

Supporting the well-being of children and young people is everybody's business and we all have a role to play in supporting and working with schools to ensure children and young people are able to fulfil their potential. It is not meant to be bureaucratic, building on existing activity and good practice wherever possible, with Estyn's 'Happy and Healthy' report[5] showing approximately half of Welsh schools are already engaging in whole-school approaches to some degree. For these schools the guidance will support the process of reviewing and improving work that has already been done. For schools that have yet to embark on the journey, this guidance will support them in developing the culture which supports the well-being of children and young people.

The Framework also recognises that learner well-being is impacted by their surroundings and the adults they have contact with, in particular the teachers and other school staff, whose well-being needs require attention as much as their learners. It recognises that effective learning can only occur in an environment where all are engaged and when children are in an emotional state where they are receptive to learning.

This guidance provides direction and a template to develop and embed consistent policy and practice within schools and the wider community; underpinned by robust processes, procedures, administrative and governance arrangements to ensure continuity and equity for all. It is underpinned by:

- Our commitment to children's rights and specifically Articles 12 and 29 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child[6] (UNCRC). Article 12 states that children have a right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taking into account. Article 29 states that children should develop each child's personality and talents to the full. It should encourage children to respect their parents, and their own and other cultures..
- Our National Mission[7] Enabling objective 3 (Strong and inclusive schools committed to excellence, equity and well-being) which recognises that all learners must be supported to be emotionally and physically ready to learn in safe and supportive environments. Every school will implement its new curriculum from 2022 for learners up to and including year 7. Secondary schools will then roll-out their curriculum on year on year basis. Every school's curriculum will need to place health and well-being at its heart. Together with changes in assessment, evaluation and accountability arrangements it will drive future behaviour. It will ensure mental health is given parity with physical health and emotional well-being and attainment.

It is further underpinned by the Welsh Government's commitments to children and young people's well-being, which is set out in a range of legislation and strategy. The key legislative and strategic drivers are outlined in annex 1.

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[5] https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/healthy-and-happy
[6] https://www.unicef.org.uk/what-we-do/un-convention-child-rights/
[7] https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/education-in-wales-our-national-mission.pdf

3.3 Key actions/requirements

- All partners/stakeholders involved in the delivery of this guidance should be open and responsive to each other and be clear on their roles and responsibilities in meeting the emotional and mental well-being needs of children.
- Within the school, delivering the approach involves collaborative and sustainable effort involving all members of the school community; it is the responsibility of the governing body, senior management team, teaching and support staff. Schools, led by the governing body and headteacher, need to make a strong statement that well-being supports academic attainment and wider benefits to community and society, both in the here and now and future. This should be recognised in their School Development Plan. Developing children and young people who have the understanding of their own well-being is an important outcome in itself.
- Partners/stakeholders should involve and engage children and young people to understand this guidance. Children and young people should have a route to tell partners/stakeholders what they think about the arrangements being put in place and what is important to them within the guidance.
- Whilst delivering this guidance is everybody's business, school governing bodies and headteachers, particularly in larger schools, should appoint a named person to lead implementation and act as co-ordinator and engage with other staff, learners, parents/carers and external agencies. This individual may already have experience of such work in relation to coordinating Welsh Network of Health School Scheme activity, or leading pastoral care, for example.
- This guidance is not intended to be overly bureaucratic (effective implementation and delivery may bring benefits, for instance, in teachers feeling more supported in the classroom). Wherever possible, existing delivery mechanisms should be used for delivery of this guidance.
- In delivering children's and young people's universal and targeted interventions, or any interventions aimed at improving teacher knowledge, understanding of their own well-being, school's senior leadership team will ensure only those interventions with a sound, or innovative and developing evidence base are delivered. In this respect the Welsh Government will develop a repository of resources and evidence based interventions and staff continuous professional development resources for adoption by schools to complement this guidance.
- Schools (the whole academic and support staff, led by the senior leadership team) should implement and integrate this guidance, making links with their curriculum, especially with learning in the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience, in order to maximise the opportunities they both present and recognise the link between the two.
- Linked to the school improvement planning cycle, the school's senior leadership team will undertake a review of their emotional and mental well-being needs and implement a plan to address issues and build on areas of strength.
- The School's senior leadership team should engage partners and their learners to keep activity against this guidance under review and in line with the National Participation Standards for Children and Young People[8] and National Principles for Public Engagement in Wales[9].

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[8] https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-02/Bilingual-Participation-Standards-poster2016.pdf
[9] https://participation.cymru/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/PC-National-Principles-Poster3.pdf

- This guidance will be kept under review and evaluated to ensure it is fit for purpose. The Welsh Government is considering the short, medium and long-term evidence to help inform evaluation.

3.4 Context

This guidance is underpinned by a rights based approach, which aims to achieve a positive transformation of power by strengthening the capacity of duty bearers and empowering the rights holders. The UNCRC is a legally-binding international agreement, embedded by the Welsh Government in legislation, setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of every child, regardless of their race, religion or abilities. In particular:

- Article 6 which recognises that all children and young people have the right to survive and the right to develop.
- Article 12 which states that children have a right to say what they think should happen, when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taking into account.
- Article 24 which says that healthcare for children and young people should be as good as possible, but also goes further than this by saying children and young people have the right to be both physically and mentally fulfilled.
- Article 29 which says that a child or young person's education should help their mind, body and talents be the best they can. It should also build their respect for other people and the world around them. In particular, they should learn to respect: their rights and the rights of others.

The World Health Organisation defines health as 'a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity'. It further defines mental health as 'a state of well-being in which every individual realizes 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.'[10] Mental well-being includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices.

1 in 10 children between the ages of 5 and 16 have a mental health problem and many more have behavioural issues, and approximately 50% of people with enduring mental health problems will have symptoms by the time they are 14 and many at a much younger age.[11] However, this belies the scale of poor mental well-being among children and young people and most of the emotional issues young people and school staff will encounter are not clinical in nature and do not require specialist interventions. Rather, it is about supporting the young person, building their resilience and fostering a sense there is someone they can trust.

Developing these trusting relationships is central to the whole-school approach. Developing positive relationships between a teacher and learner is a fundamental aspect of quality teaching and learning. The effects of teacher-learner relationships have been researched extensively, and point to how positive relationships can have good social and academic outcomes. Being taught by highly trained, highly motivated, trauma-informed teachers who

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[10] https://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en/
[11] https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/121031tmhfinalen.pdf

are aware of the impact they have on the young person's overall development, inside and outside the classroom, is central to promoting emotional and mental well-being.

The whole-school approach recognises the complexity of managing school emotional well-being. These will range from teaching young people to understand their own emotions and how they can adapt and cope with the challenges they will face, through to managing low level short-term challenges, such as exam stress, to some young people managing some extremely challenging and complex situations like parental ill health, substance misuse, caring responsibilities, life events and unexpected events. It is important that schools can provide a place where adults and children and young people work together to overcome challenges. Children and young people will experience many different relationships throughout their formative years; short-lived friendships, ones that have been built on trust over a number of years and ones that will continue to grow throughout their adult lives. School life can and should be challenging and having at least one strong relationship, someone they trust, somebody who is more experienced and somebody who they feel has their interests at heart is paramount to, not just their academic achievement, but also their social development.

The whole-school approach seeks to support good emotional and mental well-being by strengthening the relationships between teacher and learner; between teaching staff; with the school senior leadership team and wider school staff; with parents and carers; and with other professionals working with the school, as well as the wider community that surrounds the school. With the school as the hub and centre of community life. There is much strong work upon which to build this approach – no teacher enters the profession because they do not care about children and young people. This approach builds resilience[12] among young people, it focuses on prevention and early intervention when required. When more targeted approaches are needed, to tackle existing or developing poor emotional and mental well-being, then services work together in a timely fashion to provide appropriate interventions.

It is about embedding good well-being through teaching as well as all the other aspects of school life. It is an ethos which values inclusion, where everybody works together, contributing their individual skills and resources to the collective good. Creating a supporting environment where young people are encouraged to fulfil their personal and academic potential, where they thrive, learn and emotionally develop, supported by teachers who operate in a culture which equally values their own well-being.

It incorporates and builds on existing good practice in the field such as the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes[13]. It also incorporates the work of others such as CAMHS, which has traditionally offered assessment, treatment and interventions and which should now be viewing the child and their needs more holistically.

Considerable work has also taken place in recent years in relation to the impact of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs), which has been built on in education by the Adverse Childhood Experience (ACE) Support Hub[14], which has equipped teachers and other school staff with the tools to identify and address the impact of ACEs. In particular Public Health Wales explores the impact of adults on children and young people in the 2018 report on

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[12]http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/888/ACE%20%26%20Resilience%20Report%20%28Eng_final2%29.pdf
[13] https://www.publichealthnetwork.cymru/en/social-determinants/education/welsh-network-of-healthy-school-schemes-wnhss/
[14] https://www.aceawarewales.com/about

ACEs[15]. The report highlights that 'having at least one trusted, stable and supportive relationship with an adult is emerging as one of the most important aspects of childhood resilience. This is reinforced through ACE Support Hub training in education settings which has reached over two thirds of schools in Wales and which forms a foundation upon which to build whole-school approaches.

Well-being is also about recognising neurodiversity, a fairly new term, which recognises the fact that our brains (neuro-) naturally vary from person to person (are diverse). It moves away from medical words such as 'disorder', 'disability' and 'difficulty'. Instead of just looking at what someone struggles with, it encourages us to think about them as a whole. What are they good at? What do they need support with? Neurodiversity means talking people and pathways, not labels and silos and considers the person in the context of their lives, past and present.

3.5 Importance of good emotional and mental health and emotional well-being

Numerous studies show that education and mental well-being are closely linked and promoting the health and well-being of learners within schools can positively impact learner cooperation, commitment, learning and engagement.[16] This means having a school culture, ethos and environment that nurtures learners' health and well-being can improve their educational outcomes. Equally the relationship between physical and mental health cannot be understated - physical health problems significantly increase the risk of poor mental well-being, and vice versa.[17]

Good emotional and mental well-being allows children and young people to develop the resilience to cope better with the challenges which face them and grow into well-rounded, healthy adults. Things that can help keep children and young people mentally and emotionally well and resilient include:

- being listened to, feeling valued, respected and known as individuals
- being in good physical health, eating a balanced diet and getting regular exercise
- having time and the freedom to play, indoors and outdoors
- being part of a family that gets along well most of the time
- going to a school that looks after the well-being of all its learners
- taking part in local activities for young people.

Other factors are also important, including:

- feeling loved, trusted, understood, valued and safe
- being motivated and interested in life and having opportunities to enjoy themselves
- being hopeful and optimistic
- being able to learn and having opportunities to succeed
- accepting who they are and recognising what they are good at
- having a sense of belonging in their family, school and community

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[15]https://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/documents/888/ACE%20&%20Resilience%20Report%20(Eng_final2).pdf
[16]https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/370686/HT_briefing_layoutvFINALvii.pdf
[17] https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/projects/time-think-differently/trends-disease-and-disability-mental-physical-health

- feeling they have some control over their own life
- having the strength to cope when something is wrong or challenging (resilience) and the ability to solve problems.

There are certain risk factors that make some children and young people more likely to experience problems than other children, they do not occur in isolation and an individual may experience several at any given time. The following is not an exhaustive list, they carry varying degrees of risk, can be short or long-term and some are more common than others, they include:

- having a long-term physical illness
- having a parent who has had mental health problems, problems with alcohol, substance misuse or within the criminal justice system. In addition to affecting the young person's own well-being, this could also lead to stigma and discrimination
- experiencing the death of someone close to them
- having parents who are in conflict, separate or divorce
- having been bullied
- having been physically or sexually abused
- living in poverty
- being homeless
- experiencing domestic violence and neglect
- experiencing discrimination, perhaps because of their race, sexuality or religion
- having a special educational need
- acting as a carer for a relative, taking on adult responsibilities
- having long-standing educational difficulties, as a result of being in care or on the edge of care
- children that have been subject to many changes trauma or ACEs
- experiencing loneliness and isolation
- care experienced children

Independent counselling services data for Wales for the academic year 2018-19 shows that of the 11,753 children who received counselling the presenting issues were:

Issue	Percentage	Issue	Percentage
Family	30.5	Abuse (including sexual)	2.2
Anxiety	29.2	Relationship with boyfriend/girlfriend	1.9
Stress	12.0	Illness	1.8
Anger	15.5	Relationships with teachers	1.6
Self-worth	10.2	Domestic abuse	1.1
Behaviour related	9.4	Eating disorders	1.0
Relationships other	9.5	Sexual (including orientation)	2.4
Depression	9.3	Not known	0.8
Bereavement	8.8	Caring responsibility	0.8
Bullying	5.9	Transgender issues	0.7
Self-harm	7.3	Substance misuse	1.0
Academic	4.7	Financial concerns/poverty	0.2
Suicide	3.2	Other*	0.3
Other*	2.5	Not known	0.1

* Local authorities can record up to three presenting issues per child or young person.

These figures have not fluctuated significantly in several years and the top presenting issues have consistently related to family, anxiety, stress and anger, reflecting a trend in well-being among these young people. Many of these issues are not clinical in nature and

did not require clinical interventions, with very few of the young people requiring any onward referral to more specialist services. Children and young people face many of the challenges adults face on a day-to-day basis. However, unlike adults who often have the experience and resilience to overcome their challenges, children and young people often lack the experience, maturity and ability to place their challenges in context. They are also unable to directly control certain aspects of their lives or to cope well when things go wrong. Minor issues can seem like potentially life changing events for young people. Therefore, having a trusted adult who they can talk to and who could provide an appropriate empathetic response and place their problems into context will be enough in many cases.

3.6 Review of implementation

The implementation and application of this guidance will be formally reviewed following introduction. This will ensure schools and their partners are adhering to the guidance, that it is being consistently implemented across Wales and that it remains fit for purpose.

4. Introduction

4.1 Overarching principles

- All children in Wales have rights under the UNCRC to be safe, treated with equality and non-discrimination, be supported to develop their physical and mental health, to express their thoughts and feelings, be involved in decisions made about them, receive extra support if they are disabled, and receive an education that enables them to fulfil their potential.
- A whole-school approach should be viewed as central to the success of learning about health and well-being and the four purposes of the new curriculum.
- The responsibility for all school staff to take a whole-school approach to the promotion of good mental health and emotional well-being is universal and integral to a successful school environment. However, each school is different and will face different challenges, so there is no one size fits all approach. The school's senior leadership team will use this guidance to help assess where they need to do more and adopt practice that meets their specific needs.
- A whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being is achievable through effective leadership, positive culture, and co-productive implementation in partnership with all school stakeholders, ranging from governors and heads to learners, from teaching and support staff to auxiliary staff such as cleaners, caretakers and canteen staff.
- A whole-school approach that puts the child at the centre of decisions made about them, needs partnership and involvement with families, the community, other statutory bodies and the third sector. Activity within the school is part of a wider whole system approach to emotional and mental well-being. School staff can therefore be expected to do only what is within their competence and resource.
- Promoting equity for all, reducing variation and using evidence based practices consistently and transparently, both in terms of use of data for planning and any interventions.

4.2 Values

The whole-school approach is based on the core values of belonging, efficacy and having your voice heard. These dictate the school ethos and the behaviours expected of the whole school population, applying equally to all, not just the learner. Considering the well-being of the school in the context of the core values will help the senior leadership team determine if they are on the right path and meeting their well-being goals. It should not be seen by schools as a 'tick box exercise', rather it helps schools consider health and well-being in their own local context; thinking about the positives; the areas for improvement; and considering how best to develop and express them through policy and practice

	Belonging	Efficacy	Voice
School senior leadership team	How does your school contribute to a sense of belonging?	I role model the behaviour I want to see at all levels of the school and build relationships based on respect, trust and fairness.	I make space for conversations, giving and receiving constructive feedback, acting on the views of others to help us be at our best more of the time.

Teachers / staff	Am I aware of the well-being needs of my learners and colleagues?	I understand my own well-being needs and the impact my well-being has on those around me.	I have the time to listen to the young people in my care and advocate for them when needed.
Learners	Do I feel safe, valued, treated with respect, connected and supported whilst at school?	I have self-esteem, aspirations, self-confidence and empathy; am able to form and maintain trusting relationships with peers; and know there are adults I can trust and talk to when I need to.	I feel supported to speak my mind safe in the knowledge that my views are acted on.
Parents / carers / family	What contribution can I make to my child and his peers' well-being, both in and outside school?	I am able to positively influence my child in a healthy and success-promoting manner and maintain beneficial ties to the school to support and promote wider community benefits.	I feel confident and able to raise and discuss issues and know how to navigate a system that works with me to find appropriate support when needed?

4.3 Local and Regional Support

The whole school population needs to be supported in developing their whole-school approach and as our National Mission states local authorities and regional education consortia have an important role to play in co-constructing policies, co-ordinating services, mapping provision and delivering professional development opportunities with other key stakeholders.

Specifically local authorities can support implementation of the whole school and system approach by:

- Providing guidance on promoting an emotional and mental well-being friendly environment, including advice on early intervention and prevention and good practice models;
- Mapping services and provision that support mental health and emotional well-being within a local authority footprint;
- Providing, in collaboration, clarity on relationships and protocols with other agencies, particularly health, social care and the police;
- Ensuring, in reference to key partner agencies, that resources, financial and otherwise, are strategically managed in order to maximise their impact on learners' mental health and emotional well-being needs;
- Supporting school's senior leadership team to evaluate their learning environments and practice in the context of mental health and emotional well-being and to fully include learners in this process;
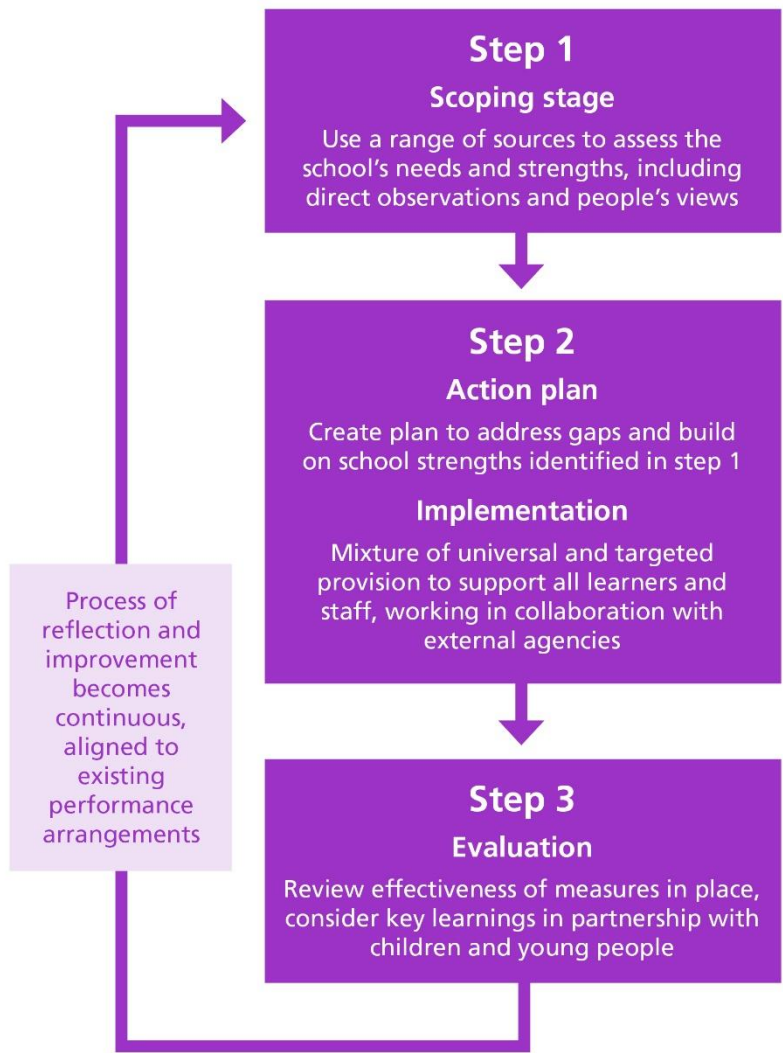
- Working with other key agencies to monitor local practice and provision, including the evaluation quantitative and qualitative information relating to emotional health and well-being;
- Representing schools' interests at a local level through PSBs (Public Services Board) and at a regional level through RPBs (Regional Partnership Boards) to ensure that all key stakeholders and partner agencies are aware of and work together to address issues and provide a whole system approach;
- Supporting the commissioning of statutory and third sector providers of emotional well-being support and advice to work with schools (individually and on a cluster basis), ensuring robust evidence based interventions are available to support implementation of a school's curriculum; and support learner and staff well-being;
- Facilitating access to the broad range of expertise within the local authority and its partners, including services like educational psychologists, Youth Workers, school based counsellors, healthy schools practitioners, advisory teachers, safeguarding teams and behaviour support services;
- Developing and commissioning a range of support at different levels, such as preventative, universal or targeted services for all young people;
- To interpret data to inform practice such as SHRN[18] and vulnerability tools; and
- To identify those learners in need of targeted intervention, including through successful approaches like the Youth Engagement and Progression Framework, ensuring the interventions are those most appropriate to the learner.

Specifically, regional education consortia can be commissioned by local authorities to support implementation of the whole school and system approach by:

- Supporting school based staff's professional development in relation to health and well-being and supporting curriculum development;
- Supporting consistent professional learning and continuous improvement opportunities not only for teachers, but all layers of school staff, minimising duplication of effort and achieving economies of scale; and
- Supporting governing bodies to understand their role and responsibilities in relation to learners' health and well-being.

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[18] The School Health Research Network: http://www.shrn.org.uk/

Flow diagram illustrating process for embedding a whole-school approach to mental health and emotional well-being

Step 1
Scoping stage
Use a range of sources to assess the school's needs and strengths, including direct observations and people's views

Step 2
Action plan
Create plan to address gaps and build on school strengths identified in step 1

Implementation
Mixture of universal and targeted provision to support all learners and staff, working in collaboration with external agencies

Step 3
Evaluation
Review effectiveness of measures in place, consider key learnings in partnership with children and young people

Process of reflection and improvement becomes continuous, aligned to existing performance arrangements

The flow diagram outlines the process a school's senior leadership team will follow in implementing their whole-school approaches, having regard to the overarching principles and values. The process is not completed overnight and will require space and time. Changing things can feel risky for both managers, staff and learners, but small changes create confidence to embark further on the journey towards a whole-school approach in which every action considers the well-being of all.

It is not meant to be over burdensome but is intended to provide some consistency and equity of provision across Wales, building on the requirements of the new curriculum. A number of vehicles already exist which support activity and can be used to take forward the requirements of this guidance, such as the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes and the work of the ACE Support Hub.

5. Scoping stage

The planning process needs to start with a school's senior leadership team assessment of the school's emotional and mental health needs – the local 'landscape'. It should highlight the schools' gaps in provision and also their strengths which can be further built upon.

Measuring and assessing well-being is complex, with the mental health and emotional well-being of children and young people frequently changing throughout the course of their lives. In particular, during secondary school there are some dramatic changes in children's well-being, self-reported health and lifestyles. This illustrates the importance of assessing emotional and mental well-being using a range of sources to gain a robust evaluation that reflects all the needs of the school community.

A school's senior leadership team should utilise a range of data sources to assess their own needs and strengths, triangulating these to ensure findings are robust. Sources include:
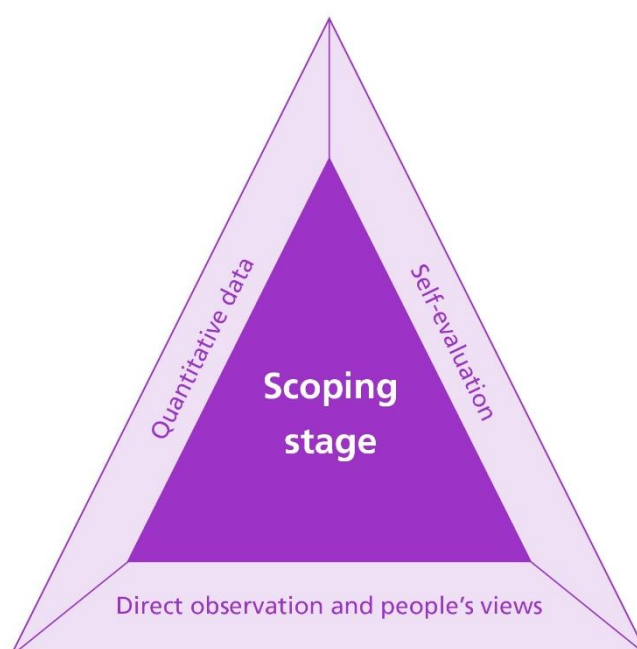
5. 1 Self-evaluation

Effective self-evaluation is at the centre of creating a school as a learning organisation and supporting improvement. In Wales, we are at the international forefront of developing a more sophisticated approach to self-evaluation and improvement planning; with self-evaluation at the heart of the new evaluation and improvement arrangements. This approach will support school leaders, teachers, support staff, local authorities and regional education consortia to achieve the four purposes for children and young people with learning and well-being at the heart of the school's curriculum.

In particular, the Welsh Government is developing a National Evaluation and Improvement Resource. The resource will promote self-evaluation and improvement planning as integrated features of effective school improvement processes. It will support schools' improvement work by providing principles of evaluation, as well as practical guidance regarding gathering, evaluating and analysing first hand evidence through a range of activities. The resource will support building capacity across the system by focusing on

strengthening leadership, well-being of learners and staff, encouraging innovative practice, promoting reflection, and supporting professional learning.

The resource will support schools to engage in evidence-based self-evaluation of what is working well and what needs to improve and have greater positive impact on the well-being of learners. This will support schools to develop the behaviour and practices that will support change and help prepare for the design and implementation of their new curriculum.

A school's senior leadership team will be expected to have effective evaluation arrangements in place to identify their strengths and priorities for improvement. Outcomes of the self-evaluation arrangements will inform the School Development Plan improvement priorities which will be shared with stakeholders. Rigour and appropriate support will be achieved through effective, consistent, contextualised inspection and regulation.

5.2 Direct observations and people's views

Schools' senior leadership teams are able to access data and intelligence on well-being needs through direct observation and gathering people's views. Direct observations can take place across various leaning contexts, both inside and outside of the classroom. Key stakeholders including staff, parents/carers, learners and governing bodies should all receive regular opportunities to share their views. Examples of how views can be gathered include discussions with parents/carers on their child's progress, specific focus groups with parents/carers or learners, staff feedback, or as part of lessons working with learners to develop questionnaires and surveys to capture their views. Another important source of observation is provided by Estyn evaluations:

5.2.1 Estyn evaluations
Estyn will continue to undertake school inspections and thematic reviews of activity, such as the 'Healthy and Happy' report[19] which, amongst other things, evaluates how well primary and secondary schools in Wales support the health and well-being of learners. School inspections will continue to assess the contribution of the school to the well-being of learners; the extent to which learners feel safe and secure and how well they are becoming healthy, confident individuals and understand how to make healthy choices in a range of areas. Inspectors will continue to assess how schools track and monitor learners' well-being and determine how successful a school's provision is in helping learners to understand the impact of lifestyle choices and behaviours on their present and future mental and physical health and well-being.

5.3 Quantitative data

There is a range of quantitative data sources, both internal and external, that a school's senior leadership team may wish to use during the scoping stage. These include:

5.3.1 School Health Research Network (SHRN) data
Learners in maintained secondary schools in Wales currently complete the bilingual, electronic Student Health and Well-being Survey every two years. This survey forms a key part of the work of the School Health Research Network (SHRN), of which all secondary schools in Wales now participate. The student level is complemented by a School

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[19] https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/healthy-and-happy

Environment Questionnaire, which the senior leadership team in all schools complete on health related policies and practices.

Schools that join the Network and collect data receive an individualised Student Health and Well-being Report, based on learner responses to the Health and Well-being Survey. These reports provide member schools with data on key emotional and physical health topics with national data for comparison and includes mental and emotional health and well-being.

5.3.2 School-based management and regional data

Schools collect a range of data and intelligence, which can be used to inform and understand the well-being both of the learners and the school staff. This includes information on learner and staff absenteeism; exclusions; and intelligence obtained through discussion with other professionals such as Educational Psychologists. However, caution needs to be exercised so that data collection at the learner level is not used to attempt to identify children who might need extra help or to diagnose an individual's specific needs. Where specific concerns do exist, these should be discussed with the relevant specialists and referrals made as appropriate.

Schools may also already be actively involved with the Welsh Network of Health School Schemes (WNHSS) or other providers of emotional and mental health support such as school and community counselling services in statutory and third sectors and may be capturing information via them.

Local authorities can also provide benchmarking data, which compares information on a range of like schools or a cluster of geographically located schools. They can also provide wider information which should inform planning such as local area needs assessments. Local authorities, regional education consortia and other partners (such as the WNHSS) should work with a school's senior leadership team and their partners to ensure that they are aware of the range of data sources available to them. They should also work with the school's senior leadership team to develop more robust data sets that profile community based needs and inform the interventions and strategies employed by schools. Other sources of well-being information could also come from agencies such as the Youth Service, police and youth justice teams.

Case Study[20]
Y Pant Comprehensive School carries out a well-being audit regularly, which the school created themselves using free software. This audit gives every learner a valuable opportunity to share how they feel about themselves, their relationships and their progress in school. This is used well by staff alongside other information they have about their learners, such as their attendance and behaviour, to identify those who may benefit from additional support.

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[20] From Estyn Healthy and Happy Report 2019

6. Action plan and implementation

Schools already produce development plans[21] which provide a strategic plan for improvement. The development plan sets out the actions a school will take to improve learner outcomes. It is informed by continuous self-evaluation and contextual data (e.g. from SHRN), and contains the school's improvement priorities together with short-term and longer-term targets. It sets out how the school will achieve its targets, in relation to its priorities, and how it will use the resources it has available, including funding. It must also set out how the school intends to develop its staff. It is a live document that should be continuously refreshed to reflect the school's progress in meeting its priorities, taking account of the range of qualitative and quantitative data.

School plans should now include emotional and mental well-being as a matter of course and should be informed by the requirements of this guidance to ensure consistency of provision. The plan should be informed by the findings of the school needs assessment and is a process to help focus ideas and to decide what steps need to be taken to achieve the whole-school approach. It should not merely focus on areas which require attention, but also those strengths which have been identified to see how these can be built upon to further embed a whole-school approach. It should set out what the school wants to achieve over a given period of time.

School senior leaders should undertake a holistic approach to ensuring the well-being requirements of all learners and staff are met and should consider as part of their planning:

6.1 School ethos

The OECD[22] identifies four key broad areas which influence learner well-being:

- Psychological - Learners' life satisfaction, sense of purpose, self-awareness, and absence of emotional problems.
- Physical - Adapting a healthy lifestyle and learners' overall health.
- Social - Learners' relationships with family, peers and teachers, and learners' feelings about their social life.
- Cognitive - Learners' proficiency in applying what they know to solve problems.

An emotionally and mentally healthy school is one that adopts a whole-school approach to well-being. It is a school that helps children flourish, learn and succeed by providing opportunities for them, and the adults around them, to develop the strengths and coping skills that underpin resilience. A mentally healthy school sees positive mental health and emotional well-being as fundamental to its values, mission and culture[23].

It involves all parts of the school working together and being committed. It needs partnership working between governors, senior leaders, teachers and all school staff, as well as parents, carers and the wider community. The whole-school approach needs to be embedded in a school's culture and ethos and has a significant impact on learners' health and well-being as it influences learners' sense of belonging and value. Learners expect

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[21] https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/school-development-plans.pdf
[22] https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264273856-6-en.pdf?expires=1578990731&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=7F4AA3FA436BE68A54F1761164F43F3C
[23] https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/

school to be a safe and secure place, where they are valued equally and respected, and where their rights are promoted and upheld[24].

The key points can be summarised as follows and school's senior leadership team should ensure:

- the school takes a holistic approach to supporting good mental health which is seen as everybody's business;
- schools support every member of staff, including non-teaching staff, to work with learners in a nurturing way, treating learners with respect;
- schools have in place appropriate policies or practices which actively promote and enhance well-being, such as ensuring appropriate levels of homework.
- schools' behavioural and other policies should contain positive messages about the importance of learner well-being;
- all aspects of the school day contribute to the sense of good well-being from arrival, through lessons and play/break times and on departure. The Estyn Healthy and Happy Report (2019) highlighted the best schools are proactively positive with learners, greeting learners by name, smiling, providing a reassuring presence and quickly identifying anyone who may benefit from additional support;
- learner feedback is actively encouraged and acted on;
- learners are encouraged to work in partnership, moving from being competitive to collaborative; and
- parents/carers are seen as equal partners and are encouraged to engage in the school community. If parents/carers understand what is being taught in the classroom there is potential for them to transfer this to the home environment, reinforcing and building on the school's good work. In this respect activity is already underway with the ACE Support Hub looking to extend activity to early years, pre-school, the foundation phase, parents and the wider communities around schools.

> **Case Study**[25]
> At **Ysgol Gynradd Pencarnisiog**, the headteacher has successfully improved the culture of the school over the last two and a half years. The school historically had a culture that implied that small, rural schools do not have issues with learners' well-being, and being a learner in need of support or intervention carried a stigma. As a result, learners were not always supported well enough. The headteacher has worked with staff and parents to promote health and well-being, putting it at the heart of her vision for the school. Learners in the school now speak freely about well-being and the importance of sharing worries and fears. Learners understand the value and impact of the intervention service in the school for learners who are struggling, even if they have not received support themselves. Staff in the school have a better understanding of the needs and feelings of learners and are improving learning experiences and support services in response.

6.2 Staff well-being

For a whole-school approach to be successful it cannot be limited to learner well-being, but must also consider the well-being of all school staff. Issues which affect teacher well-being can have a significant knock-on effect for learner well-being. Emotionally and mentally healthy teachers are better able to develop strong teacher-learner relationships. This in turn

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[24] https://www.estyn.gov.wales/thematic-reports/healthy-and-happy
[25] From Estyn Healthy and Happy Report 2019.

is important not simply in terms of ensuring academic attainment, but in fostering an ethos which nurtures the young person, building their cooperation, commitment, resilience and confidence.

All school senior leadership teams need to be aware of particular areas of stress that impact on staff well-being, and should ensure that evidence based interventions are promoted, with staff supported in a timely and appropriate fashion when needed. In-school factors are not the only issues that can affect teacher well-being. The Estyn/OECD self-evaluation resource for schools enables senior leadership teams to review teacher well-being and identify common stressors such as high workload or excessive burdens of out-of-classroom activities. The resulting priorities and actions will form part of the school improvement planning process and help inform policies and plans related to addressing the workload and well-being of the education workforce.

The Welsh Government's National Mission reinforces a commitment to reduce unnecessary workload and bureaucracy by providing greater clarity of what is and not required in the classroom.

Steps already taken to address some of the issues include:

- development of a new evaluation and accountability system based on trust, respectful professional dialogue and proportionality;
- publication of resources on 'Reducing Workload', training materials and guidance in conjunction with our stakeholders including Estyn, consortia and unions;
- introduction improvements to ensure equity of access for teachers to digital services via Hwb; and
- establishing the Managing Workload and Reducing Bureaucracy Group, in partnership with key stakeholders from all tiers and teacher trade unions, to address workload issues for the education workforce.

Whilst it is clear that we are making progress, we need to continue to work collaboratively across the education profession. The Managing Workload and Reducing Bureaucracy Group is working towards the following four key priorities, as announced by the Minister for Education:

1. To develop a Workload and Well-being Charter and Toolkit for the school workforce.
2. To refresh and promote the Reducing Workload Resources and Training Pack and monitor take-up.
3. To further develop and circulate the training models and exemplar case studies produced across all four consortia regions to develop a cohesive approach to be applied on a national basis; and
4. To carry out a sector wide audit exercise to examine what data is collected across all tiers and how impact assessment on workload should be considered as part of policy development.

On completion of a Workload and Well-being Charter, toolkits for both Workload and Well-being will be developed with key partners (e.g. the Health and Safety Executive) to provide resources and support to teachers.

However, schools' senior leadership teams need to recognise the varied factors which affect teacher well-being. The Welsh Government has commissioned research to further

investigate these factors, and to establish what type of interventions may help to address them.

Whilst workload and the pressures of the profession are factors directly linked with well-being, another equally important 'stressor' is classroom behaviour and having to deal with behavioural and other issues related to the children and young people they teach. The whole-school approach and this guidance is designed to address those factors in particular, by ensuring staff are supported to deal appropriately with issues in the classroom and be ensuring their own well-being is equally valued.

Case Study[26]
Penllergaer Primary School, Swansea, paid for the local school-based counselling service to provide regular supervision for any member of staff who wished to participate. Staff who participated found it valuable to be able to share their feelings and experiences and learnt skills in supporting each other. The school now runs its own supervision in-house.

6.3 School Environment

The school physical environment (classrooms, outdoor spaces, dining and other communal areas and toilets) all contribute to young people's sense of well-being. The use of space, lighting, noise, temperature and use of walls for display can all contribute to behaviour, ability to regulate and the extent of social interaction between learners. Access to and use of outdoor spaces also contribute to good physical and mental well-being.

For young people experiencing distress having access to safe, private (but not isolated) and calming spaces where they are not overlooked or overheard is important. Schools are used to providing spaces for use by school counsellors which meet these criteria, though there is also a need to balance the need to provide an available private nurturing space, together with not having any such space labelled so as to avoid any stigma and discrimination attached to its use.

The 21st Century Schools and Colleges Programme[27] is committed to improving learning environments for our children and young people and to supporting schools to consider the effective use of educational spaces for all learners needs. Early stakeholder consultation into the design of new-build and major refurbished school buildings ensure the health and well-being of young people is considered at the earliest stages. Local Authorities and Further Education Institutions are also encouraged to integrate appropriate design measures in order to make a positive impact on well-being.

6.4 Information, awareness raising and advocacy

Good progress has been made in recent years in raising awareness of poor mental health and tackling stigma and discrimination across society. In the school environment school teaching staff should encourage learners to discuss, and consider their own and others emotional and mental well-being, including how to develop empathetic responses to their peers. The new curriculum, and in particular, the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience, provides opportunities to embed this approach within specific lessons and across learning as appropriate.

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[26] From Estyn Healthy and Happy Report
[27] https://gov.wales/21st-century-schools-programme

Mental health literacy, arising from the concept of health literacy, is defined as understanding how to obtain and maintain positive mental well-being[28]. It is an important empowerment tool, as it helps people better understand their own well-being and enables them to act on this information. It increases people's resilience and control and enhances help-seeking behaviour.

Schools can play a key role in developing the mental health literacy of their learners and empowering children and young people to make informed decisions. School senior leadership teams should consider their target audiences (e.g. learners, parents/carers and staff) and look for innovative ways of making information available to each. For instance on the school website, supporting older learners to act as peer mentors, and encouraging all school staff to feel comfortable signposting to relevant well-being support resources and information. They should ensure that information is publicised at times of possible greatest need (e.g. during exams), ensuring regular campaigning and key messages are promoted in appropriate formats, such as social media.

There are also a range of external agencies that can provide schools with support and resources, both in terms of providing information and support for learners and parents/carers, training staff and providing advocacy services. Access to advocacy support, particularly for those with greater levels of poor mental well-being, can be especially helpful, as children and young people often report feeling unsure and not knowing where to turn to during this difficult period. Access to youth worker support can help provide an accessible relationship with a trusted adult, particularly for those young people who may find it difficult to look for support from teachers or those perceived as in positions of authority.
As part of our commitment to support a consistent whole-school approach across Wales, the Welsh Government will work with partners to provide a range of agreed information and awareness raising materials which schools can access.

6.5 Universal provision

The new curriculum will support all learners to develop a positive approach to maintaining good mental health and emotional well-being, as well as how to recognise when they are not mentally well and to seek help. The Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience highlights the importance of mental health and emotional well-being and its links with physical well-being and resilience. Learning about mental health and emotional well-being form one of the statements of What Matters in the Curriculum for Wales Framework. It is proposed that these statements will be mandatory elements of every school's curriculum. Conversations about well-being should be both trauma-informed and rights-informed and discuss the importance of things such as self-care, and coping strategies for everyone, not just as a tool for those experiencing poor mental health.

All children and young people should have access to a range of tools and support for their emotional and mental well-being at school. Universal provision is not about learners requiring and accessing dedicated specialist support, rather it is about supporting them in understanding their own well-being, in building resilience and developing coping mechanisms to manage the everyday stresses and challenges experienced throughout life and knowing when and how to access support. This should be reflected by a range of universal provisions that learners receive both within the classroom, such as introductions to emotional literacy, or outside of the classroom, including though youth work approaches or universal pastoral support. In this respect the mental health and well-being element of the

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[28] https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/a-to-z/m/mental-health-literacy

Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Scheme (WNHSS) provides a clear criteria for delivering a comprehensive universal offer. The revised and strengthened National Quality Award criteria for mental well-being and resilience is set out in annex 2.

Universal support does not need to be through the provision of formal programmes, though many formal programmes are available and can provide a structured approach to delivery. Rather the school ethos of nurturing young people, having trusted relationships with school staff, being able to talk about issues, and the way well-being is taught through a school's new curriculum will be all that is required in many instances. Other actions that support well-being such as establishing greater links with PRUs and providing learners with the opportunities for outdoor activities, weekly unstructured time for well-being activities, or quiet drop-in spaces they can access when they need 'time out' should be also be considered.

Where school senior leadership teams do choose to use a structured universal intervention they should have access to evidence based interventions and the autonomy to choose the intervention(s) which best meet their needs. When delivering such interventions, school senior leadership teams should consider working together in clusters and/or with other partners in a multi-agency approach to support each other, develop communities of practice and achieve economies of scale when procuring interventions from external providers. Local authorities and Regional Education Consortia can provide support and commission this on a local or wider regional basis.

School senior leadership teams, teachers and wider school staff should actively recognise the link between learner well-being and their school policies and actions, which include tackling bullying[29], safeguarding, healthy relationships, play and recreational opportunities, learner participation and equalities work. These policies should be reviewed to ensure that they do not detract from, but align and reinforce where possible, their whole-school approach. Senior leadership teams and teaching staff should also consider the importance of maintaining a routine in times of disruption, for instance, ensuring supply teachers are informed of the needs of classes and the learners they are teaching and existing classroom protocols.

As part of our commitment to support a consistent whole-school approach across Wales, the Welsh Government will work with partners to assess the range of universal provision in Wales and provide a 'toolkit' of good practice.

Case Study[30]
Archbishop McGrath Catholic High School[31] has a Friday running club that is for both staff and learners. This club provides a shared opportunity for staff and learners of any ability to go for a run together in the local area during lunchtime. This promotes positive relationships and shared values, and benefits learners' health and well-being.

6.6 Targeted provision

Sometimes, children and young people will need support over and above universal provision. As detailed elsewhere in this guidance being emotionally and mentally healthy is

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[29] https://gov.wales/school-bullying
[30] From Estyn Healthy and Happy Report 2019
[31] From Estyn Healthy and Happy Report (2019)

not black and white. There is a wide spectrum, or continuum, of well-being and everyone, including children and young people, will move across the spectrum at different points in their life as challenges and both internal and external factors affect them. Targeted provision may also need to e considered for some children during times of transition (see section 6.9).

Targeted provision should be proportionate to need and can range from time limited low level support, such as an empathetic response from a trusted professional, such as a teacher, or other talking related therapies; to more specialist support for those with suspected mental health or behavioural problems provided by specialist services such as CAMHS. In each case school senior leadership teams should have access to a range of evidence based interventions (delivered by the school staff or appropriate professional) to support the young person. This provision should be offered and delivered in as de-stigmatising a way as possible, and the offer of targeted provision should not result in learners having to miss their preferred classroom or extra-curricular activities. Wherever possible, parents/carers should be encouraged to be involved in any discussion around provision for their child or young person.

The school's senior leadership team should have good working relationships with external support services and know how to access them when needed. Mental Health services should be available and responsive to support schools in this way, particularly around issues of risk and self-harm. Indeed, often a supportive telephone or face- to- face consultation with a mental health professional can prevent the escalation of a referral to specialist services. For young people, being able to talk to a trusted adult who they know well can be far more therapeutic than being referred to a remote professional they have never met before, and have to wait several weeks to see.

However, school staff need to feel confident that they are doing all they need to, and are not missing anything important in that supportive role. Telephone advice, regular consultation opportunities and multi-agency meetings are excellent examples that can help staff to feel supported and contained. They can also highlight gaps in knowledge that can inform training packages at a whole school level. Again, the relationship between the school's senior leadership team and its local support networks is a vital element in the success of models like this. Ultimately it supports a move away from a 'refer on' culture, to one where staff feel confident enough to be able to 'hold on', knowing they are supported and that their value as the person who knows the young person best within the school setting is recognised. This is in addition to the value of direct interventions which can include nurture group provision, the role of Emotional Learning Support Assistants (ELSAs) and alternative lunchtime provision for learners with sensory issues or anxiety.

Other, informal methods, such as peer mentoring, can form part of the targeted offer. Targeted provision should be based on evidence of need rather than diagnosis, because, as previously mentioned, many children and young people will have real needs but not diagnosable mental illness. Diagnosis should not be used as a gatekeeping mechanism to accessing targeted interventions either within or outside the school setting.

As part of our commitment to support a consistent whole-school approach across Wales, the Welsh Government will work with partners to assess the range of targeted provision in Wales and provide a 'toolkit' of good practice.

Case Study[32]
Ysgol Gynradd Aberteifi has used Pupil Development Grant funding to create a Pupil Pastoral Worker (PPW) post to develop links with hard-to-reach parents. This person also co-ordinates staff training with a focus on learner well-being, delivers a specific programme to target learners' emotional needs and provides counselling sessions in the school for learners and parents. The PPW works very closely with a wide range of specialist agencies and seeks expert external support where necessary.

The PPW has established trusting relationships with parents and holds regular informal 'drop in' sessions for parents to discuss matters of concern or share information. In addition, the PPW makes regular home visits to parents who do not feel comfortable coming to school. The PPW has been trained to deliver a wide range of beneficial programmes to both children and parents such as coping with bereavement, controlling negative emotions and dealing with domestic violence.

The PPW also co-ordinates the delivery of a wide range of tailored intervention programmes that are delivered by other staff within the school. These include support for anger management, emotion coaching, play interventions and a programme for raising learners' self-esteem.

The school has also provided training to all staff that enables them to use a range of strategies to promote positive engagement at class level. All learners (including those with ACEs) benefit from consistent approaches to develop their resilience and positive mental health. Whole-school training in recent years includes training on attachment disorder, emotion coaching, restorative approaches, and supporting the children of incarcerated parents and those exposed to domestic abuse.

6.7 Provision for children and young people with specific needs

School senior leadership teams will support the health and well-being of all of their learners through positive well-being environments, good learner-staff relationships and universal/targeted initiatives as outlined above. However, some patterns of behaviour mean that a child or young person will need more targeted and intensive support. These patterns of behaviour can include:

- Disordered eating and poor body esteem
- Risk taking and continuous disruptive behaviour
- Bullying other children[33]
- Substance misuse
- Frequent school absences and those experiencing loneliness and isolation
- Those suffering low mood and anxiety or poor self-esteem

Schools' senior leadership teams need to be aware of the young people falling within these categories and should consider their learner and parent/carer population when developing well-being plans as part of wider school improvement policies to make sure it accommodates the needs of any learners with specific needs and with what are potentially long-term issues.

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[32] From Estyn Knowing your children – supporting pupils with adverse childhood experiences report (2020)
[33] https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/respecting-others-anti-bullying-overview.pdf

As part of our commitment to work with partners to assess the range of targeted provision and provide a 'toolkit' of good practice, we will consider the particular needs of these children and young people.

Suicidal ideation and self-harm is also an issue school staff will encounter, though contrary to what we hear in the media, suicide is a rare event among children and young people. Self-harm is more common, with around one in ten adolescents reporting having self-harmed, though most young people who self-harm stop before adulthood. However, coming across instances of suicidal thought and/or expressions of self-harm can be very distressing both for the young person concerned and the adult they have disclosed the information to, or who has become aware of the issue from some other source.

Recognising this the Welsh Government published 'Responding to issues of self-harm and thoughts of suicide in young people[34]' in September 2019. The guidance has been produced to support teachers, and other professionals who regularly come into contact with children and young people, in dealing with issues of suicide and self-harm as they arise. It supports early intervention and prevention and the safe management of self-harm and suicidal thoughts in young people when they present. It is not meant to supplant specialist training, rather it provides a quick and accessible source of reference to the general principles of best practice and signposts to other sources of support and advice.

School senior leadership teams , teachers and other school staff should all be aware of the guidance and ensure its existence is promoted widely among staff. They should also not be afraid to talk about the issues, and there is no evidence that a conversation with a young person where you try to understand the reasons and circumstances for self-harming makes them more likely to self-harm or puts the idea into their head. In fact non-judgmental conversations may encourage them to seek help in the future.

In the rare instance of a suicide, this will affect the whole school community and both the school's senior leadership team and their local authority should have suicide prevention and intervention strategies in place; including in relation to postvention to use after a suicide or suicide attempt of a learner or school staff member.

6.8 Provision for vulnerable children and young people

Some children and young people are at higher risk of facing poor well-being and experiencing adverse outcomes. School senior leadership teams should be taking an inclusive and non-stigmatising approach to ensuring good well-being for _all_ of their learners, regardless of circumstance. However, it is important to acknowledge that some children and young people may need additional support at different times.

School senior leadership teams should consider their learner and parent/carer population when developing their well-being plan as part of the wider school improvement process to make sure it accommodates the needs of any learners who are part of one or more vulnerable or historically marginalised groups, including:

- Children and young people under supervision of children's services
- Care experienced children
- Children and young people who are engaged with the youth justice system

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[34] https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-08/responding-to-issues-of-self-harm-and-thoughts-of-suicide-in-young-people-guidance.pdf

- Children and young people with special educational needs
- Children and young people at risk of disengaging with education
- Children and young people at risk of youth homelessness
- LGBT+ children and young people
- Young carers
- Refugee and asylum seeker children and young people
- Gypsy and Traveller children and young people
- Children and young people with chronic illness

In addition, there are times where learners are more likely to need support with their well-being, such as:

- Around times of transition (see section 6.9)
- During exam periods and following the release of exam results
- Following traumatic experience e.g. bereavement or parental separation

Case Study[35]
In **Gilwern Primary School**, trained staff use the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant (ELSA) approach to support vulnerable learners effectively. The approach provides a reflective space where a learner is able to share honestly their thoughts and feelings, and aims to understand the psychological need behind poor self-esteem or undesirable behaviour. Through the approach, a learner in the school with significant behavioural and social needs was supported to relate better to their peers, to improve their decision-making in social contexts, and be better at identifying risky situations. Using the same approach, an anxious learner who had transferred from a different school was helped to settle well, and a learner with a history of poor attendance was supported, through a phased return, back to full engagement with school.

6.9 Transition

Transition between primary and secondary school, or between different schools, has been highlighted as a time which can be particularly destabilising for some children and young people. Schools are very familiar with the issues surrounding transition and many take steps to ensure that transition between settings is made as smooth as possible. The best transition plans[36] clearly set out how primary and secondary schools will work together to effectively meet the emotional and mental health needs of young people (e.g. through peer support networks) in advance of the transition into secondary education.

Consideration should also be given to learners who move schools outside of the primary to secondary transition. These moves are often the result of a geographic relocation, and for some, such as the children of armed forces personnel, can be a frequent issue. The learner may be more vulnerable because of their lack of familiarity with the new area and loss of local friend networks and may be at greater risk of loneliness and isolation. School senior leadership teams and local authorities should have effective information sharing protocols established to support this kind of transition.

The other key transition time for all learners is when they finish school and begin the transition to the workforce or further/higher education. This can be a time of stress and

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[35] From Estyn Healthy and Happy Report
[36] http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2002/32/section/198

anxiety, and additional well-being support to learners in their final year of school is recommended. Research[37] shows that moving to a new environment, academic and social demands, and anxiety around finding a job are all risk factors for learners; mental health. School senior leadership teams should work with colleges, universities and other post-16 learning providers to support learners' transition, including by building resilience and by sharing learner information within agreed data sharing arrangements. This will help post-16 providers to offer the necessary support and ensure that learners can succeed in their studies.

> **Case Study**[38]
> **King Henry VIII Comprehensive School** works closely with its partner primary schools to take a comprehensive approach to making transition as smooth as possible. The focus through the range of activities is to build positive relationships between learners, parents and the staff at King Henry VIII School prior to learners arriving there in Year 7. The approach includes:
> • teachers from King Henry VIII contributing to lessons in Year 5 and 6
> • learners from Year 5 visiting King Henry VIII for activities as well as in Year 6
> • music and sports events during Year 6 for all partner primary schools at King Henry VIII School
> • informal parents' evenings
> • well-being leader from King Henry VIII visiting partner primary schools to meet learners, discuss expectations, hopes and fears about life in secondary school

6.10 Staff training

Positive relationships between school staff and learners are at the heart of ensuring a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being. It is the everyday 'little things' that teachers do which have surprisingly far-reaching outcomes for learner well-being. Studies show that what matters to learners is that teachers listen, are encouraging and positive, take an interest in them as people and empathise with their difficulties[39]. However this is only possible if staff have the confidence and time to actively listen to children and young people and respond appropriately even to challenging or concerning topics. Staff need appropriate training for this and the space to put it into practice. They also need to be supported to maintain their own well-being and have access to appropriate supervision, particularly when dealing with more challenging issues, which have the potential to impact their own well-being.

Teachers should be given opportunities and time to access training on children and young people's well-being. Some teachers may also wish to develop a greater knowledge and professional understanding of more specific issues and should have access to a range of resources and additional training to do so. Such professional learning opportunities will also support the design and implementation of a school's curriculum.

Understanding and having a knowledge of the emotional and mental well-being of learners as well as a need to recognise individual learner needs is a core part of our new programmes in Initial Teacher Education (ITE). To support this and as part of our commitment to support a consistent whole-school approach across Wales, the Welsh

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[37] http://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/improving-school-transitions-for-health-equity
[38] From Estyn Healthy and Happy Report 2019
[39] 'Ordinary magic' needs ordinary magicians: the power and practice of positive relationships for building youth resilience and well-being. Sue Roffey (2017)

Government is working with partners to develop training modules on child development, emotional and mental well-being, neurodevelopment and pedagogy, and others that would be available to teachers from Initial Teacher Training, though Newly Qualified Teachers and as part of continuous professional development.

However, rather than limiting emotional and mental well-being training to teachers, it is important that appropriate training resources are available for all school-based staff who work directly with children and young people. Some school support staff have a specific role in relation to promoting/supporting well-being such as school counsellors, school nurses, educational psychologists and education learning support assistants. Staff in these roles have an important role to play in raising awareness of emotional and mental well-being issues among other members of staff and also act as sources of advice and support. They should be given time to allow them to support learners and staff, working as part of multidisciplinary teams to provide consultation, liaison and advice where appropriate. Joint training, to foster a greater understanding of the different roles members of staff have and to build relationships should also be considered.

School senior leadership teams should ensure staff have access to refresher training, which could be run by well-being co-ordinators on a train-the-trainer basis.

6.11 The role of youth work

The important role of youth work in supporting the mental health and emotional well-being of children and young people was emphasised in the Mind Over Matter report[40] and in the inquiry[41] the Children Young People and Education Committee undertook on youth work in 2016.

Youth work provides welcoming, safe spaces in which young people are able to develop, talk about issues that may be affecting them, and build resilience. It is a vital preventive service, helping reduce the need for more acute, costly interventions further down the line. It can therefore have a substantial impact on children and young people's emotional and mental well-being. It does this by establishing trusted relationships with adults and peers, and offering young people opportunities for learning that are educative, expressive, participative, inclusive and empowering.[42]

Youth work is a universal entitlement, delivered by both voluntary and local authority youth services, and is open to all young people within the specified 11 to 25 age range. Many schools already have established links with youth workers and youth work services and should be able to access local youth work support for young people, including those with emotional and mental health issues, via their local authority and voluntary sector partners.

Youth work and youth workers need to be seen as 'part of the team'. School senior leadership teams should consider how to work effectively with their local youth work teams, both through the local authority and through the voluntary sector, to reduce duplication of services and increase the diversity of support on offer to children and young people. This includes youth work embedded within the school and based in the wider community. There are many examples of good practice citing the benefits to young people's well-being from schools and youth workers operating in partnership. These include through curriculum

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40 https://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld11522/cr-ld11522-e.pdf
41 http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld10870/cr-ld10870-e.pdf
42 https://www.wlga.wales/SharedFiles/Download.aspx?pageid=62&mid=665&fileid=568

implementation, by improving engagement, attendance, and behaviour, developing emotional resilience, the delivery of mental health support, and relationships and sexuality education.

Where schools require additional support to engage with or deliver youth work approaches with young people they can learn about what provision is available by contacting their local authority Principal Youth Officer and the Council for Wales of Voluntary Youth Services.

6.12 Whole System Roles and Responsibilities and relationships with external services

As indicated, schools are but one part of a wider system which includes the family, and friends of children and young people as well as a myriad of general and specialist support services designed to support the child and wider family. School senior leadership teams need to be an open partner with these other 'players'. In relation to the whole system, local authorities, working through the Regional Partnership Boards and/or Public Service Boards should work to hold partners to account and ensure their full engagement in the process to ensure schools are not left 'holding the baby' and are able to access appropriate support, at the appropriate time for their learners.

Building resilience and support for children and young people in schools through to community-based support is critical and will need to draw together a broad range of key stakeholders. This is all underpinned by rights based, values led, child centred, attachment and trauma informed approaches. The key ingredients to a whole system approach will need to consider:
- the link to the whole-school approach
- the point of access to a range of early intervention and intensive support options
- community embedded expertise to support trauma, self-harm and risk
- developing children, young people and family led innovation, such as through peer support, digital and social media
- the need for resilient communities' safe housing, healthy food, leisure, sports, arts

NHS providers will be one of the main sources of advice and support to schools and should operate a policy of 'no wrong door' when dealing with emotional and mental well-being needs. Work is already underway in many parts of Wales to provide a more collaborative joined-up approach, such as the work being pioneered across six local authorities by the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) school in-reach pilots. These pilots have demonstrated that developing relationships across organisational boundaries is a driver of successful delivery.

This collaborative joined-up approach should enable each school to access consultation, liaison and advice from specialist mental health services. Advice and discussion should occur prior to any referral and alternative signposting should be considered prior to referral to more specialist services. In particular, positive examples of strengthening relationships between services is seen in different areas of Wales where multi-agency panel meetings have been convened, allowing staff to present cases and gain advice from the panel of different specialists. The Wales Accord for Sharing Personal Information (WASPI) allows the sharing of necessary pertinent information between agencies to occur in a straightforward and timely manner, ensuring that children and young people experience a cohesive and joined up service when they are in distress. Such collaboration aims to

empower school staff who have become trusted adults to learners and who may be struggling to feeling confident in supporting learners.

The third sector also has a significant role to play in supporting a whole-school approach to health and well-being and is a valuable source of expertise on working with schools and with young people. There are many third sector organisations whose missions align with the goals of this guidance and who can offer schools invaluable support, particularly in relation to the provision of information, interventions, training and helplines.

Case study 1

The Aneurin Bevan University Health Board, as part of their whole systems approach to child and adolescent mental health and well-being transformation, have developed Single Points of Access for Children's Emotional Well-being Panels (SPACE Panels) in each of their Local Authority areas. These forums meet on a weekly basis and co-ordinate all requests for support around issues to do with behaviour, mental health and emotional well-being. Representatives from each service that offers input in this area attend, including Specialist CAMHS, Primary Care Mental Health Support Services, Families First, Educational Psychology services, Youth services and third sector providers.

The forum works on the principal that a child, young person and family's need can be matched to the service that best fits at that point in time, and operates on a 'no wrong door' basis. This prevents families and referrers having their requests rejected because they don't meet the criteria, for example; and feeling like they are starting from scratch in working out where to turn next.

These forums have proved invaluable in matching demand with available resources and in time, it is hoped, they will be a vital vehicle for highlighting gaps in provision and highlighting the direction Partnership Boards need to take to address these gaps through future service development.

The added advantage is that each representative develops positive relationships with, and a deeper understanding of, the whole range of services in their area.

Case Study2

Hywel Dda School in-reach pilot have developed and maintained collaborative working relationships with third sector agencies – e.g. Amethyst Project, Area 43 (counselling), sharing information appropriately resulting in timely and effective outcomes for children and young people. Strong links are maintained with colleagues in specialist CAMHS where information gathered from school meetings is fed back. Whilst also sharing information (following consent) from specialist CAMHS professionals regarding children on their caseload. Networking has been a beneficial opportunity to share good practice for example attending/participating in conferences. Whilst the establishment of steering groups have been helpful in moving the pilot forward.

Regular contact with schools for example structured consultations with training opportunities to reach the wider workforce have taken place, whilst the development of a newsletter promotes upcoming events along with supportive information. The service has begun offering reflective sessions to school staff, having identified through consultations the need. Protected time is offered to discuss staff well-being along with their individual concerns. To date five Well-being Drop-in Sessions between two secondary schools with 12 staff taking up the opportunity.

7. Evaluation and co-production

School senior leadership teams should evaluate the effectiveness of their plan as part of wider school improvement to ensure it is meeting their requirements, involving all parts of the school population in the evaluation. Evaluation will be informed by the data and intelligence sources identified at 'Step 1' and this should then become a process of continuous improvement, with schools updating their plan as new and emerging priorities are identified.

Coproduction with both learners and parents/carers should be central to all aspects of this work and in particular evaluation. At its heart are reciprocal relationships built on trust, respect and mutuality. Opportunities to input into the plan and to be a part of monitoring and accountability processes can be facilitated through groups such as the school council or parent teacher associations, but should also allow for individual learners and parents/carers not in such a group to participate. School senior leadership teams should consider how learners will hold them 'to account' for adhering to the plan. In particular, emphasis is best placed on the views of those children and young people who are 'expert by experience'.

School senior leadership teams should consider a range of methods for co-production with both learners and parents/carers. Questionnaires and focus groups, which gather views on aspects of school life, including values, ethos and relationships can be useful in informing the evaluation.

Case Study[43]
Cantref Primary School empowers learners by giving them a range of suitable leadership roles and responsibilities, and enabling groups of learners to develop the school's work on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. As a result, learners have a very strong voice in the school, show respect to everyone in the school community and feel equally valued. The culture in the school allows learners to carry out 'learning walks' where they observe learning activities and then provide helpful and respectful feedback to relevant staff.

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[43] From Estyn Healthy and Happy Report 2019

8. Governance and accountability

Well-being is of core importance to the functioning of all schools and should make up a part of routine leadership discussions. The senior leadership team and the governing body must take 'ownership' of the plan, ensuring it is kept under continuous review as a part of school development planning, ensuring barriers and challenges to implementation are addressed. Progress needs to be reported to the governors on a regular basis taking into account the school's context and the particular needs of its population.

In order to effectively meet well-being needs there is a need for joint working across education, health and social care sectors (together with other partners such as the third sector). This requires a culture of collaboration and strong relationships across organisations. This can often be difficult given different organisational cultures but there are benefits not only for young people, who will find they have access to appropriate support in a timely fashion, but also to organisations. These benefits can include the cost-effective delivery of services; improved effectiveness and efficiency (as appropriate interventions can prevent more serious issues developing in the longer-term); and promoting a whole systems approach and shared responsibility among services.

At the macro level, local authorities/regional education consortia working with partners should seek to periodically review progress against implementation of this guidance, through Regional Partnership Board / Public Service Board arrangements. This will support and inform a strategic review of the effectiveness of arrangements. Local authorities should ensure that arrangements for supporting and developing learners' emotional and mental well-being and related outcomes are scrutinised by elected members. Schools are encouraged to use cluster arrangements to maximise the use of resources, to share practice and secure economies of scale.

Locally, in smaller schools, the small school population will mean that the senior leadership team can effectively oversee activity, though for larger schools it may be beneficial to appoint a named person who leads and acts as co-ordinator, a source of advice and an advocate for well-being. School pastoral, WNHSS coordinators and other well-being leads exist and could fulfil such a role, this should therefore not place any further undue burden on staff. Staff should have access to appropriate training, support, supervision and communication, they will work closely with the schools wider pastoral team and act as the link officer for external partners and agencies.

Named individuals should act as plan co-ordinators, and sources of advice and support to others within the school and externally. They should advocate and champion well-being. Larger schools may find that this is too much work for any one individual and may choose to share the workload across a number of staff. This would also have the advantage that institutional knowledge and experience is maintained during times of staff 'churn'.

Annex 1 – The strategic and legislative framework

Legislation, Strategy and guidance which supports the whole-school approach include:

The **Equality Act 2010**[44] places a due regard duty on public authorities, to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- Advance equality of opportunity; and
- Foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

This may include removing or minimising disadvantage and taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different to other people.

The Welsh Government's **Strategic Equality Plan**[45], reiterates the objective to put the needs, rights and contributions of people with protected characteristics at the heart of the design and delivery of public services.

The **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act (2015)**[46] came into force in April 2016 and seeks to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales. It makes public bodies think more about the long-term; work better with people and communities and each other; look to prevent problems and take a more joined-up approach. The Act has 7 well-being goals, shown in figure 1, creating a vision to, amongst other things; make Wales healthier, more equal, globally responsible and more resilient.
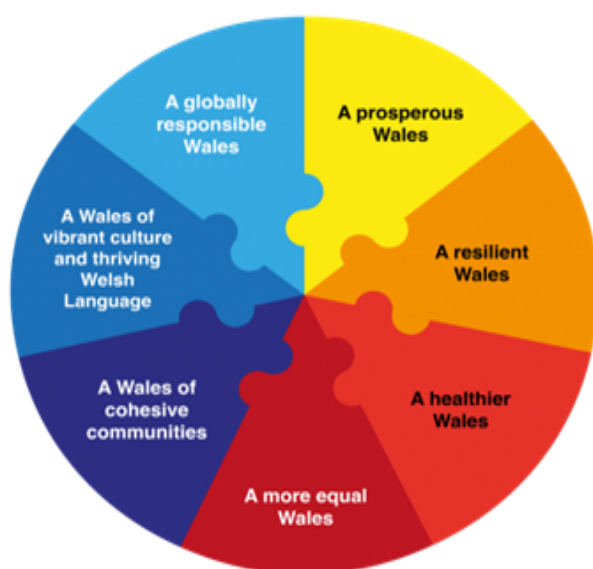

Figure 1: 7 well-being goals of the Act

The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)**[47] is the most complete statement of children's rights ever produced and is the most widely-ratified

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[44] https://www.gov.uk/guidance/equality-act-2010-guidance
[45] http://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/equality/161214-strategic-equality-plan-en.pdf
[46] http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/future-generations-act/?lang=en
[47] http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/rights/uncrc/?lang=en

international human rights treaty in history. In 2011 Wales became the first country in the UK to make the UNCRC part of its domestic law. Under the UNCRC 'a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.'

Building on the UNCRC, the **'Rights of Children and Young Persons (Wales) Measure' 2011**[48], was passed at the National Assembly for Wales in January 2011. The Measure strengthened and built on the rights based approach of the Welsh Government to making policy for children and young people in Wales. It placed a duty on all Welsh Ministers to have due regard to the substantive rights and obligations within the UNCRC and its optional protocols.

Prosperity for all – the national strategy[49] was published in September 2017. It contains the Welsh Government's twelve strategic objectives for 2017-2021 and the steps it proposes to take to meet them. It includes improving mental health as one of its six priority areas for action.

Taking Wales Forward (2016-2021)[50] is the Welsh Government's five -year plan to drive improvement in the Welsh economy and public services, delivering a Wales which is prosperous and secure, healthy and active, ambitious and learning, united and connected. It includes a commitment to work with schools, employers and other partners to improve well-being and promote better emotional health.

Education in Wales (Our National Mission)[51] published in September 2017 sets out how we intend to improve the school system by developing transformational curriculum and assessment arrangements which place well-being at the heart of education. Enabling Objective 3 (Strong and inclusive schools, committed to excellence, equity and well-being) further states our intention to embed emotional well-being, ensuring it has the same status as physical well-being.

Curriculum for Wales Framework[52] **Includes the Curriculum for Wales guidance and curriculum requirements set out in legislation.** One of the four purposes of the new curriculum is to support children and young people to become healthy confident individuals, building their mental and emotional well-being by developing confidence, resilience and empathy. The four purposes are at the heart of the new curriculum and schools will be required to develop a curriculum which enables learners to make progress towards these. Mental and emotional well-being forms one of the statements of What Matters in the Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience. It is intended that these statements will be mandatory within a school's curriculum.

The Health and Well-being Area of Learning and Experience draws on subjects and themes from mental, physical and emotional well-being. To inform and support the curriculum development process Descriptions of Learning seek to articulate what it means for learners to progress in understanding and supporting their physical, mental and emotional well-being. The 'Designing your Curriculum' section provides schools and practitioners with

[48] http://gov.wales/topics/people-and-communities/people/children-and-young-people/rights/uncrc/?lang=en
[49] http://gov.wales/docs/strategies/170919-prosperity-for-all-en.pdf
[50] http://gov.wales/docs/strategies/160920-taking-wales-forward-en.pdf
[51] https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-03/education-in-wales-our-national-mission.pdf
[52] https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales

further detailed guidance on designing a curriculum to support learners' health and well-being.

The **Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes**[53] (WNHSS) was launched in 1999 to encourage the development of local healthy school schemes within a national framework. Each local scheme is responsible for supporting the development of health promoting schools within their area. The WNHSS describes a health promoting school as one which 'actively promotes, protects and embeds the physical, mental and social health and well-being of its community through positive action'. This can be achieved through policy, strategic planning, staff development, curriculum, ethos, physical environment and community relations. Within the scheme, there are seven different health topics that schools need to address, one of which is mental and emotional health and well-being.

Together for Mental Health[54] a strategy for mental health and well-being in Wales (October 2012) sets out our priorities to improve the mental health of the nation, tackle stigma and discrimination. It places improving the well-being of children and young people at its heart, recognising that by addressing issues early we can ameliorate more serious issues developing later in life.

Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014[55]   Brings together local authorities' duties and functions in relation to improving the well-being of people who need care and support, and carers who need support, into a single Act. It provides the statutory framework to deliver the Welsh Government's commitment to focus on well-being, rights and responsibilities.
The Welsh Government has issued **Connected Communities: a strategy for tackling loneliness and social isolation and building stronger social connections**[56], whichrecognises the impact that being lonely and/or socially isolated can have on our physical and mental well-being. It also deals with he importance of the relationships we have with friends, family, colleagues and neighbours in giving us our sense of belonging and well-being.

A Healthier Wales[57] sets out the Welsh Government's plan for a long term future vision of a 'whole system approach to health and social care', which is focussed on health and well-being, and on preventing illness.

Children Act 2004[58] builds on and strengthens the framework set out in the Children Act 1989, with provisions which relate directly or indirectly to agencies' responsibilities to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
Additional Learning Needs and Educational Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018[59] makes provision for a new statutory framework for supporting children and young people with additional learning needs (ALN).

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[53] https://www.publichealthnetwork.cymru/en/social-determinants/education/welsh-network-of-healthy-school-schemes-wnhss/
[54] https://gweddill.gov.wales/docs/dhss/publications/121031tmhfinalen.pdf
[55] https://gov.wales/social-services-and-well-being-wales-act-2014-childrens-rights-impact-assessments
[56] https://gov.wales/loneliness-and-social-isolation-connected-communities
[57] https://gov.wales/healthier-wales-long-term-plan-health-and-social-care
[58] https://law.gov.wales/publicservices/social-care/Local-authority-responsibilities/Safeguarding/safeguarding-children/responsibilities-under-children-act-1989-and-children-act-2004/?lang=en#/publicservices/social-care/Local-authority-responsibilities/Safeguarding/safeguarding-children/responsibilities-under-children-act-1989-and-children-act-2004/?tab=overview&lang=en
[59] https://gov.wales/additional-learning-needs-and-education-tribunal-wales-act

Youth Work Strategy for Wales[60] **and Implementation of the Youth Work Strategy for Wales**[61] sets out an ambitious programme of collaborative action intended to both improve youth work provision and our offer to young people.

Mind Over Matter[62] a report by the Children, Young People and Education Committee of the National Assembly for Wales on the step change needed in emotional and mental health support for children and young people. The report made a number of recommendations, including several relating to the provision of support in education and on the development of the whole-school approach.

The approach also fits with the **Children's Commissioner's five Principles for a Children's Rights Approach**[63] as follows:

1. Embedding: Through this guidance schools and public services are encouraged to link their policies and services to children's rights under the UNCRC. All activities within a whole-school approach play a part in enabling children and young people to experience and take up their human rights.
2. Equality and non-discrimination: This guidance enables schools to combat discrimination and stigma through universal and targeted provision and the requirement to pay attention to specific issues.
3. Empowerment: through learning about mental health and well-being and experiencing an environment where they are supported, learners experience greater opportunities to support their own health and those of others.
4. Participation: this guidance encourages learners to be involved in developing, delivering and evaluating the whole-school approach through co-production principles.
5. Accountability: the guidance expects a transparent governance structure to the whole-school approach and accountability to learners.

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[60] https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-06/youth-work-strategy-for-wales.pdf
[61] https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-10/implementation-of-the-youth-work-strategy.pdf
[62] https://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld11522/cr-ld11522-e.pdf
[63] https://www.childcomwales.org.uk/resources/childrens-rights-approach/childrens-rights-approach-education-wales/

Annex 2 – Draft Mental Well-being Criteria for the Welsh Network of Healthy Schools Schemes National Quality Award

Definition

The World Health Organisation (2016) defines mental health 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." The term 'mental well-being' is used throughout this document to refer to a state of positive mental health as defined by the World Health Organisation.

Background

Evidence shows that poor quality family or school relationships place children at risk of poor mental health. For children and young people with poor mental health there is an increased likelihood of poor social and economic outcomes, in both the short and long term (NICE, 2013). School is an important setting, as half of lifetime mental health problems start by the age of 14 and many problems remain undetected and untreated unless agencies such as schools take an active role (Hagell et al., 2013). There is growing awareness of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and their impact on well-being and the need to build resilience in children to mitigate ACEs. The literature shows that a whole school approach is essential to improving mental well-being in the school setting. The criteria reflect this by covering multiple aspects of school life.

A healthy school is one in which:

- The environment, partnerships and policies support good mental well-being for all pupils and staff
- Pupils, staff and the wider school community understand the importance of good mental wellbeing for good health
- Practical and emotional support is proactively provided to pupils and staff to promote their mental well-being
- Safe environments are provided which support all staff in managing well-being issues however they present (e.g. challenging behaviour, being withdrawn) and encourage pupils to participate in school life
- Pupils and staff feel confident in raising issues that affect their mental well-being, are assured that they will be listened to without judgement, and that appropriate action will be taken
- The school has established systems and processes for working with outside agencies to facilitate timely and appropriate support for mental health and wellbeing problems and facilitate the ongoing participation in school life of pupils with more serious mental health problems

Area and No.	Indicator	What does Success Look Like?	Possible Evidence Sources Written (W)/ Observation (O)/ Testimony (T)
1. Assessing and understanding need	The school understands the mental well-being needs of the pupils and staff in the school, acknowledges that these needs change over time and has a regularly updated plan to address the identified needs	The mental well-being needs of the pupils and staff are regularly assessed and appropriate actions are planned to meet the identified needs	• Evidence that the school has a clear process for identifying the mental well-being needs of the pupils and staff in the school e.g. School Health Research Network (SHRN) survey; Pupil survey; Structured consultations with pupils and staff; Local Well-being Needs Assessment; Staff Survey; Pupil Sickness Absence Data; Staff Sickness Absence Data; Numbers of children attending counselling etc. **(W)** • Evidence that the school uses the information above to plan activities that meet the needs of their pupils and staff **(W)** • Evidence that pupil health and wellbeing is monitored within the school and that appropriate improvement actions are identified **(W)** • Evidence of consideration of all pupil groups **(W/O/T)** • Monitoring and active management of pupil absence **(W)**
2. Policies and Environment	The school has a range of policies based on best practice to create a positive ethos and culture which is supportive of mental wellbeing	The school promotes positive approaches to behaviour, actively challenges discrimination and values all members of the school community equally. Individuals experiencing poor wellbeing are encouraged to seek help, provided with appropriate support which seeks to understand and address underlying causes of problems e.g. trauma	• The school has policies based on best practice which have been recently reviewed (within the last 2 years) on issues which effect mental well-being such as bullying, behaviour management and discrimination **(W)** • The whole school community has contributed to the development and review of policies **(W/O/T)** • There is evidence of the policy influencing the day to day life of the school; the whole school community is aware of the policy and understand what they can expect **(W/O/T)** • Anonymised case studies and examples of how the policy has been applied within the school **(T)** • Staff report being confident in retaining calm conditions, handling disruption and feel supported by school policies, culture and procedures to do so **(T)**
	The school works to ensure pupils, staff and the wider school community feel	Pupils report high levels of satisfaction in school, believe that they are treated fairly, and	• Evidence that children feel adequately supported at school e.g. Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) survey question on children being treated fairly; or local pupil survey, Health Behaviour in School Aged Children (HBSC) survey question on feeling supported in

Area and No.	Indicator	What does Success Look Like?	Possible Evidence Sources Written (W)/ Observation (O)/ Testimony (T)
	connected to the school and have a sense of belonging	feel a sense of belonging at school	school, SHRN survey, written description in last ESTYN inspection report or via observation **(W/O/T)** • Pupils support other pupils including in managing their mental well-being e.g. friendship buddies, peer led support groups **(W/O/T)** • When pupils raise issues regarding their well-being e.g. anxiety or depression they are confident that they will be listened to without judgement and appropriate action is taken to address the issue **(O/T)**
3. Accessing help and support	The school provides easy access to a range of support services appropriate to individual needs both within and outside the school	Pupils and staff can easily access support when they need help; this varies according to need	• The appropriate level of practical and emotional support is provided to pupils who demonstrate a need **(W/O/T)** • Schools can demonstrate that they understand the impact of trauma on children and act appropriately when dealing with this e.g. through trauma informed schools /ACEs training or similar **(O/T)** • Pupils are supported to build their own emotional literacy and understand each other, offering peer support where appropriate **(O/T)** • Evidence of availability of pupil and staff support services to meet differing needs **(W/O)** • Schools are proactive in identifying individual or shared circumstances that may put children at risk of poor wellbeing e.g. family breakdown; death or a pupil; examination and inspection **(O/T)** • Evidence the school has good relationships with local services that can offer pupils and staff support when appropriate **(W/O/T)** • Staff in school know the boundaries of their role and who to engage with for additional support for their pupils and at what point this is appropriate including evidence of clear procedure and referral routes to other services **(W/T)**
4. Environment and Facilities	The school has a range of physical spaces and environments that supports the mental	There is a good understanding of how the physical environment (indoors and outdoors) impacts on mental well-being and a range of spaces are provided	• Schools should understand how the indoor and outdoor environment can influence mental well-being of pupils and staff and demonstrate that this has been considered e.g. provision of a variety of different spaces indoors and outdoors to suit pupils' different needs e.g. space for active play, space for quiet refection, gardens, buddy benches etc. **(W/T)**

Area and No.	Indicator	What does Success Look Like?	Possible Evidence Sources Written (W)/ Observation (O)/ Testimony (T)
	well-being of pupils and staff		• Schools should offer pupils safe spaces which can provide respite when children feel overwhelmed, with procedures in place to support their appropriate use e.g. nurture rooms or similar **(O)**
5. Curriculum – teaching and learning	The school curriculum provides age appropriate learning and development in relation to emotional literacy, positive psychological development and problem solving skills to support resilience in line with Welsh Government Curriculum Guidance	Pupils develop self-confidence and resilience, are able to recognise how they are feeling, the reasons for this and how to moderate their emotions and seek help when appropriate	• Schemes of work or programmes of learning which build building self-esteem; self-confidence; stress management and resilience to develop psychologically aware and informed pupils using appropriate teaching and learning strategies**(W)** • Evidence that pupils practice key emotional literacy skills, gaining the knowledge and skills necessary to understand and control their own emotions and understand the emotions of others **(O/T)** • The school helps all pupils cope with predictable life changes and transitions, based on a sound understanding of child and adolescent development **(W/T)**