

A Summary of Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing

A whole school and college approach

This guidance has been prepared by Vanessa Nice, Head of Halton Behaviour Support Service. It is intended as a summary of the joint Public Health England and DfE advice published in March 2015. The full document can be read [here](#). This is non-statutory information that sets out key actions that school and college leaders can take to embed a whole school approach to promoting emotional health and wellbeing.

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

- Three could have a mental disorder;
- Ten are likely to have witnessed their parents separate;
- One could have experienced the death of a parent;
- Seven are likely to have been bullied;
- Six may be self-harming.

Schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy. Ofsted has highlighted that CYP want to learn more about how to keep themselves emotionally healthy and schools have a duty to promote the wellbeing of their students. Schools are encouraged to have a whole-school approach to promoting good mental health as a protective factor for CYP mental health. This should be considered as part of a wider multi-agency approach.

There are 8 principles to promote emotional wellbeing in schools and colleges.

Leadership & Management

- Support from SLT is essential to ensure the efforts are accepted and embedded;
- Having a governors with an understanding of this area is highly desirable;
- Reference to social & emotional wellbeing in improvement plans, policies and curriculum is beneficial;
- Involvement of all community members in developing these policies increases the likelihood of successful adoption;
- There are benefits to having a mental health champion in schools (**this has now been superseded by the need to have a Mental Health First Aider in school/college from 2020**)

School ethos & environment

- The physical, social and emotional environment has an impact of the mental health and wellbeing of staff and pupils and can impact on attainment;
- Relationships are critical to promoting student wellbeing and help to engender a sense of belonging;
- Ofsted look for a positive ethos, promotion of safe practices and a culture of safety when judging personal development, behaviour and welfare;
- Inspectors see records and analysis of incidents including bullying. The school is judged on the effectiveness of its actions to prevent and tackle all forms of bullying and harassment;

Curriculum, teaching and learning

- School-based programmes of social and emotional learning have the potential to help CYP acquire the skills needed to make good academic progress and well as benefit their health and wellbeing;
- The PSHE curriculum and wider curriculum provide opportunity to promote social and emotional skills;
- CYP are more likely to engage in lessons that are of practical application and relevant to them;
- Different points in the academic year provide opportunities for specific curricular foci such as transition skills or study skills;
- Ofsted judgement on the quality of teaching and learning focuses on the acquisition of knowledge and the promotion of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development;
- NICE recommends the development of problem-solving, coping, conflict resolution and resilience skills in the curriculum in primary schools
- NICE recommends the development of self-awareness, self-motivation, collaborative working, managing feelings and relationships in secondary schools – building on the skills developed in primary.

Student voice

- Involving students in decisions that impact on them allows them to feel in control over their lives and has a positive impact on their emotional health and wellbeing. The ability to influence decisions is a powerful motivating skill. It develops self-belief and independence;
- Ofsted consider the effectiveness of pupil voice in the school;
- NICE recommends that schools recommend that schools introduce a variety of mechanisms to ensure that CYP have the opportunity to contribute to decisions that may impact on their social and emotional wellbeing.

Staff development, health and wellbeing

- Access to training to increase knowledge of emotional wellbeing and to equip them to be able to identify mental health difficulties in the CYP is crucial;
- Having someone who is able to refer CYP to relevant support internally or from external services is important;
- **From 2020 all schools need to have a Mental Health First Aider (MHFA)**
- Promoting staff health and wellbeing is also integral to the whole school approach to emotional health and wellbeing;
- In Ofsted, The quality of teaching and learning refers to the importance of CPD
- The Ofsted judgement on leadership and management is affected by the quality of school's appraisal processes as well as the effectiveness of strategies for improving the quality of teaching and learning;
- NICE recommend that staff are given training to enable them to have the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to develop CYPs social and emotional wellbeing and how to build effective relationships;
- NICE recommend that staff should be enabled to assess whether a specialist should be involved and in the processes to make an appropriate request.

Identifying need and monitoring impact

- Schools can use a variety of methods (both formal and informal) to assess need and to monitor impact;
- Defining need on a more formal basis can be put into place using validated tools if required;
- Ofsted consider the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation when considering leadership and management;
- Ofsted consider how well the school meets the needs of all vulnerable groups of pupils;
- When considering all areas of the Ofsted framework, Ofsted will consider the mitigating steps to have an impact on the CYPs capacity to learn;
- NICE recommends that schools systematically measure and assess CYPs social and emotional wellbeing and use these outcomes as the basis for planning activities and evaluating their impact.

Working with parents/carers

- There is strong evidence that well implemented universal and targeted interventions supporting parenting and family life that offer a combination of emotional, parenting and practical life circumstances have the potential to yield social as well as economic benefits;
- Schools should publish key information about their approach to supporting social and emotional wellbeing on their website;
- Ofsted expects schools to be engaging with parents/carers in all areas of school life;
- Ofsted have a regard for the views of parents. They also take into account the results of surveys commissioned by the school;
- NICE recommend that school support all CYP and, where appropriate, the parents or carers;
- NICE recommend that schools offer support to help parents/carers to develop their parenting skills (including facilitating the possibility of them attending such course by providing help with transport/childcare and working with local supportive agencies).

Targeted support

- Some CYP are at greater risk of experiencing poorer mental health (CiCoLA, previous CAMS, parents with mental illness, experiencing domestic violence);
- Delays in identifying and meeting emotional wellbeing and mental health needs can have far-reaching effects, including their chances of leading happy, healthy lives as adults;
- There is DfE advice on providing targeted support and specialist provision;
- School nurses have an important role to play in supporting the emotional and mental health needs of CYP and are equipped to work at community, family and individual levels. They are well-placed to provide early intervention to prevent issues escalating;
- The Youth Wellbeing Directory helps service user and funders to find high-quality services to improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health of CYP directly and their families;
- Schools can work towards accreditation for emotional health and wellbeing support could work towards AcSEED Award;
- Ofsted are interested in how monitoring ensures that children with identified needs are targeted and have their needs met, including through effective partnerships with external agencies.

NICE recommends

- schools should provide specific help for CYP most at risk;

- Schools and LAs should have close links with CAMHS and agree a ‘stepped care’ approach to preventing and managing mental health problems;
- Use the Common Assessment Framework to assess CYP who are showing early signs of anxiety, emotional distress or behavioural problems;
- Provide older CYP with clear and consistent information about the opportunities available for them to discuss personal issues and emotional concerns, taking account of policies and protocols with regard to confidentiality;
- Provide CYP with opportunities to build relationships, particularly for those who might find it difficult to seek support when they need it. This could include developing a peer approach.