



**Anna Freud**  
National Centre for  
Children and Families

# Ten steps towards school staff wellbeing

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# About Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families

## Who we are

Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families has developed and delivered pioneering mental health care for over 65 years.

**Our aim** is to transform current mental health provision in the UK by improving the quality, accessibility and effectiveness of treatment. **We believe** that every child and their family should be at the heart of the care they receive, working in partnership with professionals.

**Our vision** is a world where children and families are supported effectively to build on their strengths and to achieve their goals in life.

## What we do

We bring together leaders in neuroscience, mental health, social care and education to work together to improve understanding and practice.

**Our goal** is to develop, disseminate and deliver the best possible evidence-based treatment, through scientific innovation, research and collaboration and underpinned by the direct experience and insight of children and their families.

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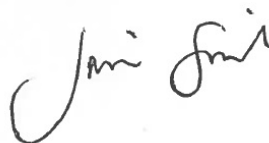
## Foreword

Concerns about the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people are currently in the public spotlight. However, any conversation about supporting our children's wellbeing must also include how we support our teachers.

We must do more to support school leaders, teachers and other school staff to ensure that their mental health and wellbeing is prioritised. If we don't recognise the importance of this we will fail not only staff, but the children and young people they support.

The huge response that we received to this consultation tells us that education professionals have much to say and share about their own wellbeing in school. We have been given the opportunity to hear about the fantastic and creative work already taking place in schools all over the country. These contributions give us a strong and encouraging foundation for exploring the best way forward to ensure that our schools are wellbeing schools, prioritising the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school community.

This resource is based on the views of school staff who participated through our [Schools in Mind](#) learning network and those who responded to our Teacher Tapp survey. I would like to thank every single one of them for their participation. I hope that this resource provides some helpful materials and encourages schools to reflect that if they want to make a success of promoting children's mental health, this can only be achieved by giving the staff wellbeing the consideration it deserves.



**Jaime Smith**

Director of Mental Health and Wellbeing in Schools,  
Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families

## Introduction

There is no question that teachers and school leaders are committed to working as hard as ever to support children and young people to flourish and reach their full potential. However, the contexts they are working in can be challenging. Schools are operating in a climate of limited resource; the hours can be long and the workload and pressure great. As well as supporting pupils to achieve academically, staff may encounter children, young people and families who are experiencing complex issues in their lives. There may be serious concerns over safeguarding, and there is some evidence to suggest an increase in the prevalence of children's behavioural and emotional problems over recent years.<sup>1,2</sup>

There are at least three reasons why it is important and timely to address this issue. The first is that the government's Green Paper on children's mental health puts schools at the heart of promoting mental health for young people.<sup>3</sup> To achieve this, schools must first identify the needs of staff and find out why some struggle with the pressures of the job. Second, there is a growing movement acknowledging the need for employers to promote the mental health of their staff. Mind's [Mental Health at Work](#) campaign, funded by The Royal Foundation, is one example of this. Finally, many schools face recruitment and retention issues, and the current interest in staff wellbeing provides an opportunity to look at how improving the experience of staff might perhaps contribute to addressing these issues.

There is also an ethical imperative to ensure teachers and their colleagues are well supported when it comes to their mental health and wellbeing. Teaching is a tough job. It can be immensely rewarding but also physically and emotionally draining. Almost a fifth (19%) of staff who responded to our consultation said that their work never has a positive impact on their mental wellbeing. This resource draws on the views and experiences of school staff from around the country to explore what makes their working lives challenging, and to suggest some practical steps schools could take to help improve staff wellbeing.



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<sup>1</sup> Deighton, J., Lereya, T., Patalay, P., Casey, P., Humphrey, N., & Wolpert, M. (2018). *Mental Health Problems in 11-14 year-olds: Results from the first HeadStart annual survey of 30,000 children*. London: CAMHS Press.

<sup>2</sup> Fink, E., Patalay, P., Sharpe, S., Holley, S., Deighton, J., Wolpert, M. (2015). Mental health difficulties in early adolescence: A comparison of two cross-sectional studies in England from 2009 to 2014. *Journal of Adolescent Health*, 56, 502-507.

<sup>3</sup> Department of Health and Department for Education (2017) Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/664855/Transforming\\_children\\_and\\_young\\_people\\_s\\_mental\\_health\\_provision.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664855/Transforming_children_and_young_people_s_mental_health_provision.pdf)



## About the consultation

This resource is based on a school staff wellbeing consultation which ran in May 2018 through our [Schools in Mind](#) learning network. Respondents were self-selecting. The consultation approach aimed to capture the views of a large number of school staff over a brief time, as part of a broader set of activities the AFNCCF is undertaking to support schools to become 'wellbeing schools'. The consultation consisted of two parts:

### 1. Working with Teacher Tapp

Teacher Tapp is a mobile app through which school staff in the UK answer three questions each day. Across three days in May 2018, we asked teachers nine closed-ended questions relating to staff wellbeing via the app. Each question received over 2,400 responses.

Quantitative data and methodological detail are included in [Appendix B](#).

### 2. Schools in Mind consultation

Through our [Schools in Mind](#) learning network we invited school staff, in any role, to respond to a set of open-ended questions. The online survey was open and publicly accessible for eight days during May 2018. We received 684 responses to the survey.

School staff were asked to provide details of approaches or initiatives that have worked well in their setting, several of which appear in this resource as case studies, together with case studies collected at regional Schools in Mind events during July 2018.

# Ten steps towards school staff wellbeing

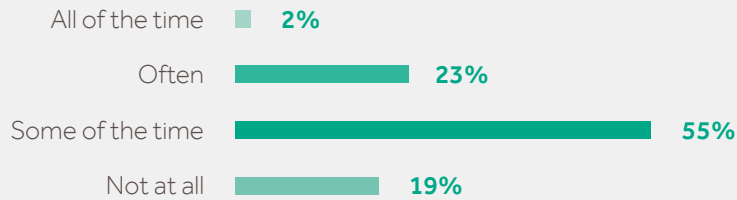
Every school is different, and when it comes to supporting staff wellbeing what works will vary according to the unique environment of each setting. Our consultation has highlighted the diversity of approaches to supporting the mental health and wellbeing of staff. We have outlined ten questions, based on the views of staff who responded, that schools may wish to bear in mind when approaching staff wellbeing. These questions are considered in greater detail in the *Thinking about* boxes throughout this resource.

- 1** Is there a staff mental health lead or champion who is responsible for coordinating the school's approach to staff mental wellbeing, and ensuring it remains on the agenda?
- 2** Is there a mental health policy that addresses the needs of staff? Is it regularly reviewed? How is the policy embedded and communicated so that all staff are aware of it?
- 3** How does the ethos of the school promote openness about mental wellbeing, and encourage staff to feel comfortable sharing concerns?
- 4** Are there opportunities for supervision to help staff feel confident they are taking the right decisions when supporting pupils experiencing complex issues (including safeguarding and mental health, for instance)?
- 5** Could supervision be offered outside of line management, for those who do not feel comfortable approaching their manager with concerns about their mental wellbeing? Do staff know how to access external sources of support?
- 6** Could measures to reduce workload or to limit hours spent working outside of the school day be trialled – for example, by reviewing marking policies and email protocols? Does the senior leadership team (SLT) lead by example when it comes to limiting emailing at evenings and weekends?
- 7** Is there a comfortable, dedicated physical space within the school where staff members can take time out if needed?
- 8** Are there opportunities for staff to participate in activities with colleagues that are not linked to their work (for example social events, exercise classes, or creative groups)?
- 9** Is it feasible to introduce a staff wellbeing survey, to help understand the key issues in your school, and the impact of any measures you are taking to support staff wellbeing?
- 10** Is the mental wellbeing of staff an agenda item at staff and governor meetings?



# How does work affect school staff wellbeing?

## My work has a positive impact on my mental health and wellbeing:



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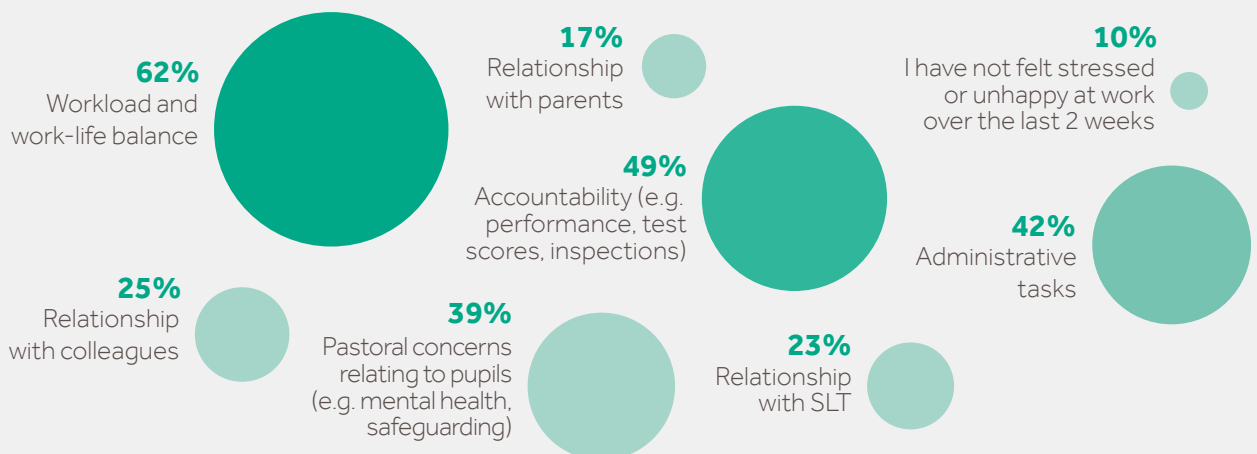
Most school staff said that their work has a positive impact on their mental health often or some of the time. This is consistent with research carried out by the Institute of Education and the National Institute of Economic and Social Research, which found that school employees in the UK express high levels of job satisfaction and are more committed to their organisations than employees elsewhere in the economy.<sup>4</sup>

However, it is a cause for serious concern that nearly a fifth (19%) say that their work has no positive effect on their mental health and wellbeing. Although this is a small-scale finding, it highlights the need to place the mental wellbeing of the whole school community, including staff, at the heart of the school's agenda, to encourage staff to come forward and speak about their concerns.

## Key themes

Several aspects of the job can present challenges to the mental health and wellbeing of school staff. Key among these challenges are workload and work-life balance, and concerns about pastoral issues relating to pupils.

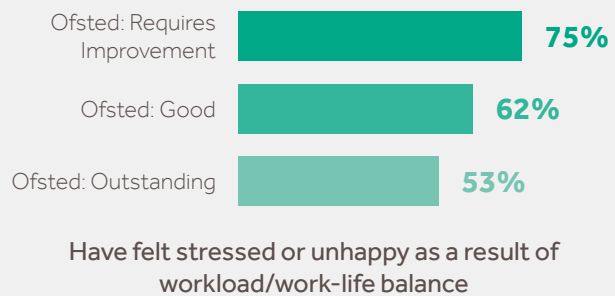
### Have any of the following caused you to feel stressed or unhappy at work over the last 2 weeks? (Select as many as apply)



<sup>4</sup> [www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/news/2018/mar/school-staff-more-satisfied-their-jobs-employees-other-workplaces-study-reveals](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/ioe/news/2018/mar/school-staff-more-satisfied-their-jobs-employees-other-workplaces-study-reveals)



Addressing some of these issues requires a systemic approach, or measures that rely on additional funding. While we are mindful of the financial pressures many schools are experiencing, respondents emphasised the impact that smaller scale changes could have on supporting staff wellbeing.



## Staff care and support

### School culture

Respondents emphasised the importance of feeling listened to, appreciated and understood, and that recognition for good work goes a long way towards making staff feel valued. Likewise, staff said that during particularly difficult times, acknowledgement that today must have been hard can be validating.

The consultation highlighted the importance of positive relationships among colleagues, and particularly the value of building a sense of staff 'togetherness'. Respondents suggested various ways schools might work toward this.

**"I believe a highly effective, organised and supportive SLT who understand their staff members and adapt to meet their needs has a massive impact on staff wellbeing and mental health. Fortunately, we are lucky enough here to have that."**

SEND role, primary school

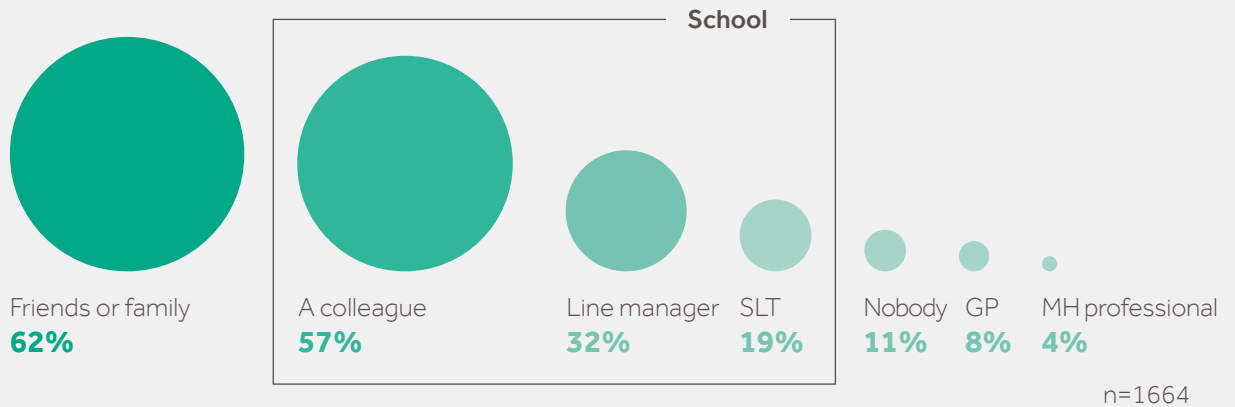
#### Thinking about culture and ethos

- » Are staff encouraged to talk about and reflect on challenging situations?
- » Do staff feel appreciated? How do you know?
- » Do staff have space and time at school to get to know one another? Could occasional team breakfasts or weekly coffee and cake be organised, to encourage staff to chat informally?
- » Are social events away from school offered, to facilitate teambuilding and help staff to feel supported by one another when back at work?
- » Is it feasible to offer free or low-cost activities in school such as yoga, mindfulness and sports clubs, to aid relaxation and to bring colleagues from across school together?

## Staff care and support

### Seeking support

**If I felt stressed or worried at work, I would be most likely to seek help from:**  
(Select as many as apply)

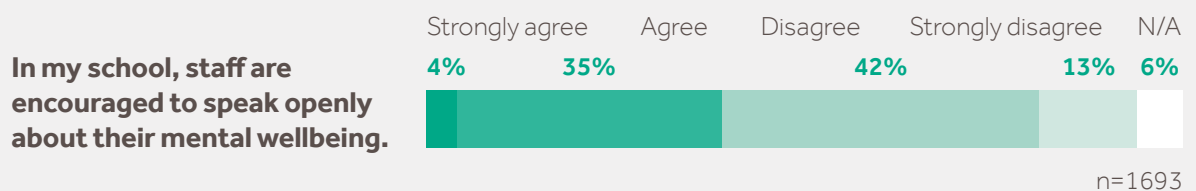


School staff draw on a range of resources when feeling stressed or worried at work. Friends and family were the source of support identified by the greatest number in our consultation. Over half would approach a colleague in a similar role, with fewer indicating that they would turn to their line manager or SLT. It is, perhaps, a cause for concern that 11% would not approach anyone with work-related stress and worry.



**11% of school staff would not approach anybody if they felt stressed or worried at work.**

Staff said that open discussion of mental wellbeing is important in encouraging individuals to come forward if they are struggling. 39% respondents agreed that open conversations about mental wellbeing are encouraged in their school. While often the issues that have an impact on staff mental wellbeing are school-related, personal life circumstances can affect staff at work (and vice versa) and respondents felt this should be actively acknowledged.



**“[For staff] to have time to talk with their colleagues without having to rush, pretend that they’re okay, or fear how others may think, feel or act.”**

Safeguarding lead, primary school

A small minority would seek help from their GP or a mental health professional if they felt worried or stressed at work. While this might suggest that some are able to manage with the support of family, friends and colleagues, it is crucial that all school staff are aware of the sources of professional support available should they need additional help. The availability of counselling services and employee assistance programmes (such as the one offered by [Education Support Partnership](#)) was identified by some as an important way to support mental wellbeing, albeit one which has resource implications for schools. Respondents felt that where mental health provision is available in-school to pupils, this should likewise be accessible to staff.

## Supervision

Respondents said that regular supervision separate from line management, and 1-1 or in small groups, might help them to manage the emotional impact of their work and to feel supported with serious concerns about the wellbeing of pupils. Complex situations relating to children's mental health and safeguarding can be stressful even for specialist staff, which is why support in the form of supervision is offered to mental health specialists. The word 'supervisor' may suggest directing a staff member's work, but most models of supervision also emphasise its supportive function. Supervision provides an opportunity to think about the needs of pupils or to consider an area of work the staff member is finding especially challenging, and it can reduce the sense of being alone in dealing with a problem.

Supervision is different from staff counselling. In staff counselling the staff member is the focus of the discussion, whereas in supervision the aim is to support the staff member with work tasks and challenges. However, it is recognised in supervision that stress may impact on the capacity of a member of staff to manage their work well. More information of supervision in schools can be found in our booklet: [Supporting staff wellbeing in schools](#).

While several respondents suggested supervision would be beneficial for all staff, the need for supervision for pastoral staff came across most strongly. Some said supervision should be led by a trained mental health practitioner who is independent of the school, while others thought peer supervision would be effective. What staff believe is crucial is feeling comfortable sharing concerns openly.

### *Thinking about* **accessing support**

- » Are staff encouraged to talk about mental health and wellbeing, both formally and informally?
- » Do staff feel supported when it comes to their mental wellbeing? How do you know?
- » Do staff know how to access professional mental health support if they need it? Does your school share details of organisations who can provide [help and support](#)?
- » Do you have the budget to buy counselling services or employee assistance programmes?
- » Are there opportunities for supervision, and could supervision outside of line management be considered?



## Case studies

### *Meadow High School, Middlesex*

#### Involving and empowering staff

A voluntary group of staff from all teams at Meadow High School identified that they wanted greater involvement in decision making processes, so working parties were set up. These include a wellbeing working party which organises regular events for staff (usually seasonal), including:

- » pancake breakfasts
- » briefings with cake
- » a summer barbeque
- » free Pilates
- » reduced price pamper evenings
- » Friday staff wellbeing box: a name is drawn from a box and that staff member chooses a small 'thank you' gift, and has a fun picture taken which is shared with staff

- » recognition awards: staff note colleagues who are going above and beyond, and at the end of the year there is a staff recognition awards evening, with bronze, silver, gold and platinum awards
- » 'thank you' treats for support staff on National Teaching Assistants' Day
- » staff can have online shopping purchases delivered to the school office

Results of the school's biannual work-life balance survey fed in to the development of the wellbeing working party. The PTA donated money to fund the various ideas.

### *Gordon Primary School, London*

#### Managing staff stress

Gordon Primary School is trying to introduce a number of small, steady, sustainable changes to embed in the school.

For example, weekly yoga classes have been set up in school with a local instructor. Due to the number attending the cost is minimal. These classes are well attended by teaching and support staff, and those who attend seem more 'connected'.

Staff have accessed workshops on managing stress and worry from a local service, Greenwich Time to Talk, and free training from the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust on anxiety and depression, to open up conversations around mental health and improve understanding of difficulties.

A Learning Mentor is planning a weekly 'open door' session after school, offering staff a place to talk. In addition, the Learning Mentor and the SENCO/ Inclusion Manager plan to start monthly peer supervision groups to help staff feel less isolated when dealing with challenging experiences.

The school designed its own staff voice questionnaire around mental health resilience with seven short questions and a box for thoughts for improvement. Staff were surveyed before Easter and the survey will be repeated at the end of the school year to see if there has been a change.

## Lessness Heath Primary School, Bexley

### School staff are valued

Lessness Heath Primary School has placed a huge focus on the wellbeing of the whole school community. Emphasis has been placed on staff wellbeing to help promote teacher retention and to create happy staff for the pupils at the school.

### Staff supervision

The school has found the introduction of supervision to be a vital strategy within its wellbeing plan. Staff in some roles have been offered access to clinical supervision, while the majority are offered supervision by colleagues in school, using a coaching approach. Senior leaders provide one-to-one reflection space for all staff. Supervision has created a space for professionals to reflect on their systems of knowledge, attitudes, and values related to teaching, whilst providing an insight into their professional development.

One teacher shared her view on the relational impact this process has had on her classroom environment:

**“These sessions have facilitated a safe space for me to explore not only the needs of myself as a professional but also the needs of my pupils; it has given me a greater insight into unconscious thoughts and feelings that may be acting as barriers to positive relationships within my classroom.”**

School leaders have noticed that staff at Lessness Heath are taking responsibility for their personal performance and are more able to use a solution-focussed approach, discussing any issues that arise within the protected supervision time. Senior Leaders report a reduction in the number of staff coming to them with personal issues. Staff of course still have concerns sometimes, however these are now often approached within the safe space supervision provides

### A new feedback policy

Lessness Heath believes that staff are its most valuable resource, as well as being its most expensive resource. The school felt that teachers' time could be used more efficiently, and therefore introduced a new feedback policy under which teachers are no longer required to mark books. The new policy is based on responsive teaching. Face to face feedback adds relational value and allows for teachers to be more responsive to pupil needs. Teachers comment that they now have more time in the evening for self-care and spending time with their family and friends, creating a better work-life-balance:

**“Our new feedback policy has given me back significant portions of my time that I can now refocus on next steps for learning as well as allowing me to spend more time with my family.”**

## Working with pupils who are experiencing difficulties

Staff said that supporting children and young people with social, emotional and mental health (SEMH) needs, or those who are experiencing complex issues in their lives, can have a significant impact on their own mental wellbeing.

**“Supporting children through difficult times can be stressful in that it’s hard to leave it all at school when I go home. Knowing that some children are enduring home situations which are not ideal is not easy to disengage from.”**

Learning mentor, primary school

When difficult situations with pupils arise, some respondents said they need a moment to process what has happened, and that going back to teach a class directly afterwards can feel challenging. Some suggested that a stronger focus on social and emotional skills and less pressure to achieve progress points, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, could benefit both staff and pupil wellbeing.

Respondents highlighted the importance of clear policies on managing challenging behaviour, which are communicated and consistently implemented across the school. Some added that these procedures should be developed with the support of parents and carers.

As well as highlighting the potential value of supervision, respondents said that easier access to external mental health services and better links with colleagues in children’s mental health and social care would help to reduce the pressure they experience. As part of the proposals laid out in the Green Paper, we expect that schools and colleges will be asked to identify a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health, whose responsibilities will include oversight of a whole school approach to mental wellbeing, and knowledge of local services and referral routes for children and young people. We expect too that the government will provide training programme help prepare these individuals for their new roles.<sup>5</sup>

### *Thinking about* working with pupils who are experiencing difficulties

- » Is there a space staff can go to if they need to take a moment after dealing with a difficult situation?

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- » Is there a designated mental health lead, who has knowledge of local mental health services and referral routes for children and young people?

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- » Are policies and strategies on challenging behaviour clear, transparent and understood by all members of staff? Did staff and parents/carers have input into these policies?

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<sup>5</sup> Department of Health and Department for Education (2017) Transforming Children and Young People’s Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/664855/Transforming\\_children\\_and\\_young\\_people\\_s\\_mental\\_health\\_provision.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664855/Transforming_children_and_young_people_s_mental_health_provision.pdf)





## *Knowledge of and training in mental health*

A smaller proportion of respondents felt that increasing the understanding of mental health across the whole school community should be a priority. As one respondent put it, it's important that there is an appreciation that:

**“Mental illness is an illness and not just a failure of the member of staff to 'keep up with the pace'.”**

Some said that staff training which looks at identifying and supporting pupils who are experiencing mental health difficulties would have a positive impact for staff, increasing their confidence in recognising and responding to issues when they arise. Specific areas for training include signs that pupils may be struggling, attachment issues, anxiety and supporting children and young people who have experienced bereavement. Respondents also suggested that training which builds resilience in staff to deal with change and with challenging circumstances would benefit wellbeing, as would better knowledge of external supports available to both staff and pupils.

Although training often has a cost, some helpful materials are freely available on the [Mentally Healthy Schools](#) website.

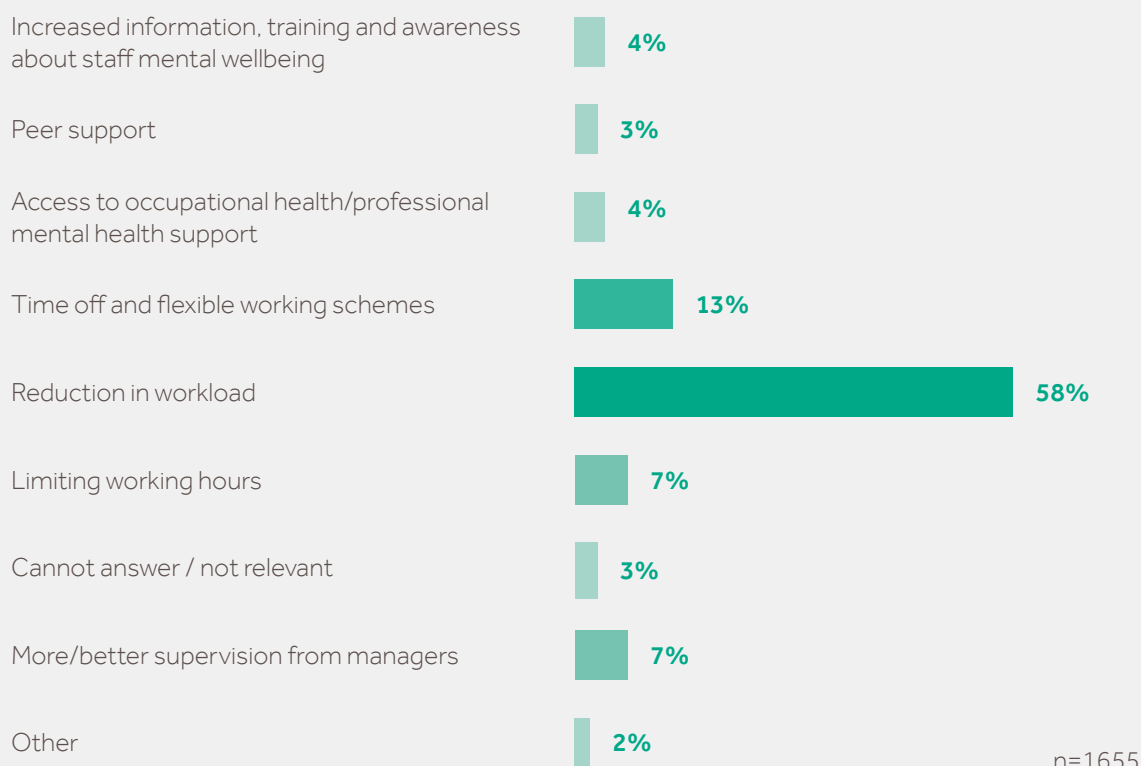
## Workload and work-life balance

**“Constantly having an endless list of jobs to do and rarely having sufficient uninterrupted time in which to complete them...it makes me feel like I’m treading water and can’t stop, which is exhausting.”**

Deputy head teacher, primary school

Our consultation reflects what many reports have identified in the past – that feeling overwhelmed by quantity of work is a major source of stress for school staff, and addressing workload would make the single biggest contribution toward improving wellbeing.

### Which single initiative among the following do you feel would be the most valuable to improving your mental wellbeing at work?



There was an overwhelming feeling that teachers were struggling with the volume of administrative tasks they are required to undertake;

**“There is so much paperwork in the role now; planning, marking, assessment ladders, action plans, monitoring notes, meeting notes - it goes on. Until the excessive workload is addressed, mental health will suffer.”**

This is an area that is difficult to tackle given the pressures schools are under. Yet even in this challenging area, respondents suggested several approaches that could go some way toward improving work-life balance and helping workload feel more manageable. For example, some schools are trying out new policies to lessen the quantity of marking staff are expected to undertake.

## Work-life balance

Respondents to our consultation made several suggestions to restore a healthier work-life balance. These included leaving laptops at work, and the introduction of protocols outlining the times at which staff are advised not to check or reply to emails. One respondent asked for greater clarity about:

**“Which parts of our job we are expected to do in school and what is meant to be done in our own time.”**

## Protected breaks

Respondents said that finding time for a break during the school day can feel difficult, but that protected breaks (which do not involve supervising pupils) are important in looking after their own wellbeing. Physical space should be considered – respondents value staff rooms that are quiet and comfortable, and some suggested an outdoor area specifically for staff would be welcomed.

**“More time to reflect and breathe in the busy school day. Somewhere to go where staff/students are not able to grab you for a quick chat about a student or school related matter.”**

Teacher, secondary school

### *Thinking about workload and work-life balance*

- » Are marking policies regularly reviewed, with input from staff?
- » Does the school have a guidance or protocols on working and emailing outside of school hours? Does SLT lead by example when it comes to limiting emails outside of working hours?
- » Have staff been asked whether they think they staff room is comfortable, and what could be improved?

## Assessments and accountability

When respondents were asked what had caused them to feel stressed or unhappy at work in recent weeks, nearly half referred to the pressure of performance, test scores and inspections. Some reflected that a strong focus on academic outcomes can mean that the broad range of supports staff provide to pupils are not always recognised. Some feel under pressure to move pupils on and worry about leaving less able pupils behind. One respondent acknowledged the potential to pass the stress they experience as a school leader on to other members of staff:

**“I think there is a lot of pressure on leadership with regards to children attaining the expected standard or making expected progress. Although I try not to transfer this onto staff, it is not always possible. I think reducing the high stakes accountability measures on schools would go some way to reducing stress.”**



## Case studies

### *Rickley Park Primary School, Milton Keynes*

#### **Prioritising staff wellbeing**

Staff wellbeing is a priority at Rickley Park. The school has developed a staff wellbeing action plan, wellbeing is a termly agenda item at the Governing Body meeting and a Staff Wellbeing Lead is in place.

Making staff feel valued is essential to Rickley Park's approach, with gestures from the head teacher (such as making cakes, or soups for lunches) to acknowledge the hard work of all staff. For the head teacher, knowing her team and having an interest in their lives outside of school is important. She follows the mantra of: 'look after your staff and they will look after the children'.

Free staff breakfasts and lunches are organised, as well as social events with other local schools. A recent Sports Relief challenge saw 45 members of staff in 3 teams competing in a step challenge. Subsequently, a whole school social chat was established with a 'no work talk' rule. A 'staff shout out' board in the staffroom is a space where anyone can thank a colleague for their work or support. Staff can also be nominated for the monthly 'Awesome Award' that comes with a trophy and a photo in the staffroom!

#### **Workload reduction**

As a focus for the school, workload is regularly mentioned in emails and at meetings and training. For the head teacher, leading by example is key, with a clear message at the bottom of her emails stating that no one is expected to respond outside of working hours, and she models this by not sending emails in the evenings or at weekends.

The leadership team were asked to review the marking policy last autumn with a view to reducing workload, providing the changes

were firmly rooted in evidence of impact on children's learning. SLT drafted a proposal before presenting it to staff for feedback. The policy has removed double and triple marking and allows for professionalism and judgment as to when in-depth marking is required.

Next, the school looked at assessment, reviewing the number of hours spent imputing data into tracking programmes and for what purpose.

A child-friendly stepping stones assessment system was devised; this has the core purpose of informing next stage learning and does not involve resubmitting data or analysis of points.

Rickley Park reviewed its homework policy in consultation with staff and parents, resulting in a no marking agreement for homework tasks. The school changed its approach to annual reports too, buying into an assessment tracker that prints annual reports, saving teachers considerable time. The requirement of written preparation for parents' evenings has also been removed.

Three hours planning, preparation and assessment time is allocated to all full-time teachers, and planning time is given to those who cover classes. Teaching assistants are also allowed time to prepare resources, particularly those who work with children with additional needs. After school meetings are avoided where possible.

All staff were asked to take part in a 'stop, start and continue' task held during the school day. Staff reflected on what they would 'stop' doing as it has little impact on children's development, what they would 'start' doing to assist with workload and child development and what they would 'continue' doing. The school believes that gathering feedback from staff is essential to workload change.

## *Tapton School, Sheffield*

### **Achieving balance**

#### **Work-life balance**

Reporting requirements and departmental meetings were reduced at Tapton School to support staff mental health and show that the school takes staff wellbeing seriously. The school also changed its email protocol: the server is now switched off between 7pm and 6am Monday to Friday, and at weekends. Cutting out work-related emails at evenings and weekends has helped staff to plan and manage their time better, so they are more relaxed and prepared for school.

#### **Mental health, wellbeing and happiness**

The leadership at Tapton School believes that positive mental health and wellbeing belongs at the very heart of a school, a key part of its practice. The impact of everyday decisions and new policies on staff mental wellbeing is always considered. A staff wellbeing and happiness group regularly meet. Activities organised in school to support staff wellbeing and happiness range from a coffee and cake get together at break to walking clubs and circuit training.

At the start of the academic year, staff were asked to share a photo and brief sentence explaining how they look after their mental health and wellbeing. These are now part of a corridor display and have provided a great talking point among staff and students. The school mental health and wellbeing and resilience worker, as well as supporting students, offers confidential drop in sessions for staff as well. The school also has a mental health and wellbeing statement, which is included as an appendix to this resource.

#### **Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and upskilling staff**

As a National Teaching School, Tapton School leads Fields of Learning alliance. This has provided a fantastic opportunity to upskill staff in supporting student mental health and wellbeing. It is also important to provide training for all staff to help support their own mental health and wellbeing. SLT believe that it is important that staff look after their own mental health and wellbeing, supported by the school, to be able to care for students.



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## Supporting mental health in a struggling school: view from a head teacher

As an experienced headteacher of secondary schools and having worked in different types of schools as a senior leader, I am aware that there is no "one size fits all" model for staff wellbeing.

My most challenging experience with staff wellbeing was leading a school judged Inadequate by Ofsted. Initially, staff faced an inordinate amount of pressure from inspections by both the Department for Education and Ofsted, as well as a great deal of media and political interference. There was a huge financial deficit to sort out, with an accompanying staff restructure.

In an atmosphere of such high accountability and pressure, it was unrealistic to expect staff to speak freely about their mental health to line managers. In this context, as a senior team we took the decision to invest in a Staff Welfare Officer who was not a member of the accountability structure but who was given the same pay and resourcing as a subject leader. Members of staff were able to speak confidentially to the Staff Welfare Officer, who could signpost to other resources if necessary.

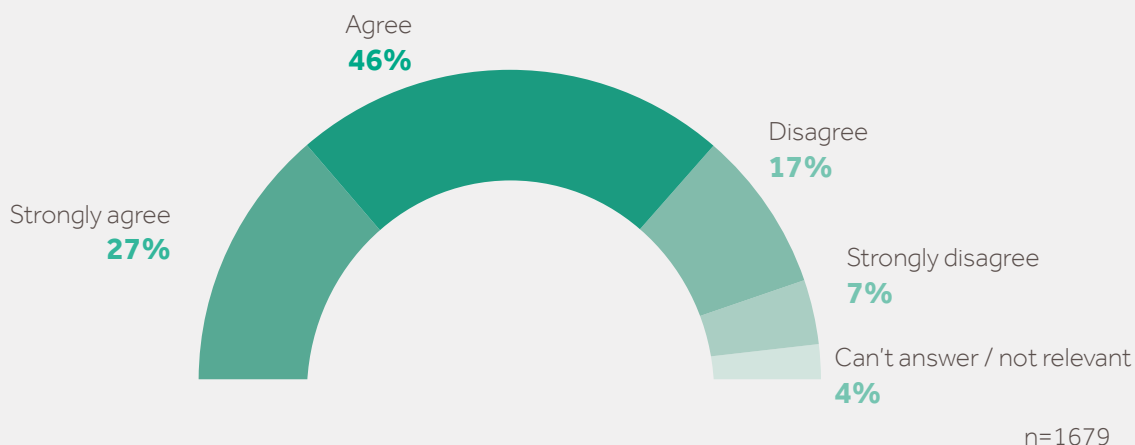
One such resource involved a further investment. We commissioned Worklife Support (now Education Support Partnership). This service provided staff with a confidential helpline, and although I received a report telling me how many times the service had been used, staff using the service remained anonymous. Five days of free face-to-face counselling per staff member was included, as well as support with family life, finances, health and work-life balance. A representative from Worklife Support attended every INSET Day to remind staff of the services on offer.

Finally, another effective offer to teaching staff was the opportunity for their lessons to be covered by a member of the senior team so they could work from home; this helped significantly with planning and marking. The school was eventually judged Outstanding by Ofsted by which time there was a much greater distribution of leadership throughout the organisation; staff themselves came up with solutions for staff wellbeing, either as individuals or within their teams, and they were less wary about speaking to their line managers about mental health.



## Embedding staff wellbeing from the top

**If I approached my manager with concerns about my mental wellbeing, I am confident that I would be well supported.**

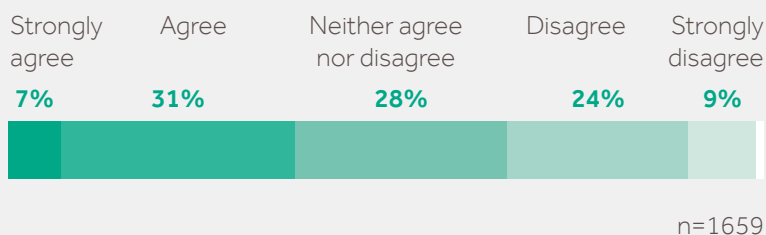


Most respondents (72%) feel confident about getting managerial support when it comes to their mental wellbeing, although some (23%) disagree. Causes of frustration include inconsistent messaging, poor forward planning, and the length and frequency of staff meetings. Some said that strong leadership from an SLT could have a "massive" impact on staff wellbeing.

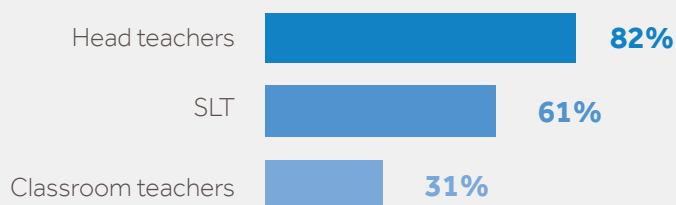
**"A senior leadership team who understand mental health and wellbeing and how it impacts on pupils, parents and staff; who are able and willing to think strategically about practical steps that can be put in place to meet the identified need."**

While mental wellbeing is everyone's responsibility, respondents said that it is crucial for SLT to actively lead staff in modelling and embedding wellbeing practices across the school. A key challenge for leadership teams is feeling confident in their approach and communicating it clearly.

**My school leadership team takes active steps to support the mental wellbeing of all staff.**

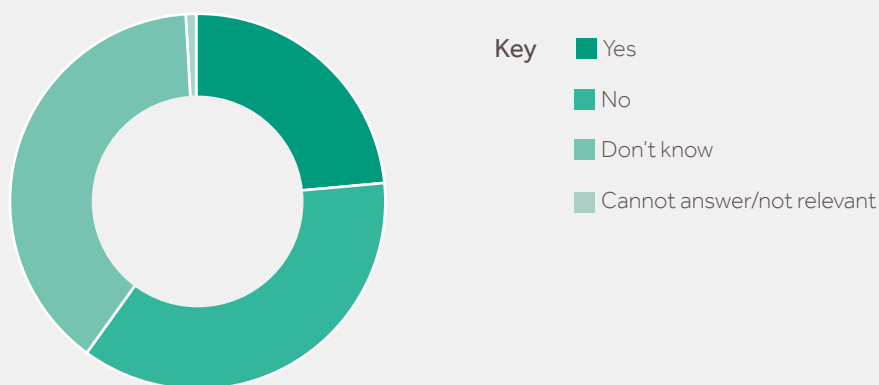


Agree or strongly agree that SLT takes active steps to support the mental wellbeing of all staff.



Overall, 38% of respondents in our survey believe that their SLT takes active measures to support staff mental wellbeing. This figure rises to 61% for SLT and 81% for head teachers. While the reason for this difference is unclear, it emphasises the importance of communicating and engaging all staff around mental wellbeing. It may be that in some schools, approaches to promoting staff wellbeing have been developed, but have not been communicated effectively. Where this is the case, it is important for leadership teams to consider what would help ensure messages about staff wellbeing are received – for instance including staff wellbeing as a standing item on the agenda for staff and governor meetings.

### **In my school we have a mental health/wellbeing policy in place, which includes the mental wellbeing of staff.**



A key way to ensure that the mental health and wellbeing of staff is embedded in schools is having an up-to-date mental wellbeing policy that addresses staff wellbeing. Less than a quarter of staff in our survey said that such a policy is in place in their school. Interestingly, the largest group of respondents did not know whether their school has a mental wellbeing policy which covers staff, and this highlights the importance of communication about policies where they are in place.

Respondents reflected that clear and consistent messages from SLT and a culture of transparency are important in ensuring all staff feel 'in the loop' about changes and events, such as new policies and exam timetables. Communication among staff when things are going well is important too, to develop an ethos of encouragement, validation and gratitude.

Clear lines of management were also identified as important in supporting staff wellbeing. So too was the opportunity for staff to say when they are struggling with workload and pressures of the job, and to discuss any problems with managers before they escalate.

#### *Thinking about embedding staff wellbeing*

- » Does your school have a mental wellbeing policy, which is regularly reviewed and which covers staff wellbeing? Are staff aware of the policy? Have they had input into its development? \_\_\_\_\_
- » Are changes and important messages communicated to staff in a clear and timely way? \_\_\_\_\_
- » How are governors engaged in promoting staff wellbeing? \_\_\_\_\_
- » Is the wellbeing of staff a standing item at staff and governor meetings? \_\_\_\_\_

## Case studies

### *St Joseph and St Bede RC Primary School, Bury*

#### **Bringing head teachers together**

The head teacher at St Joseph and St Bede RC Primary School has been involved in a group called the 'Do It Yourself Conference', set up to reduce the feeling of being alone as a head teacher, and the feeling of being alone in making difficult decisions.

The group meets at least twice a year. Each session is chaired by two members of the group. Members have taught themselves co-coaching (an approach based on active listening in a supportive relationship that focuses on finding solutions to a specific problem and planning the next action), and an unresolved problem or concern is shared at each conference. Together, members of the group discuss the issue with those who have the experience and expertise to guide a plan of action.

For example, one head teacher felt worried that a school they had recently moved to was ill-prepared for an imminent Ofsted. Co-coaching enabled them to seek clarity and acceptance. Members of the group suggested some ways she might think about this situation: "Would it be so bad if the school went into a category? It may be the right thing for the school and you would get help". This gave the head teacher some respite from the mental exhaustion of taking

their school through huge changes. Other sensitive issues shared include dealing with conflict and budget cuts.

Through co-coaching one head teacher made the decision to seek a new post and move her family to the Lake District to find a better balance between her home and work life. Group members have visited each other's schools for inspiration and undertook informal but honest reviews. They have a good understanding of each other with trust being a vital ingredient.

Members of the 'Do It Yourself Conference' spend half a day co-coaching one another on difficult situations and the second part of the day sharing good practice. All members are expected to share a new initiative or an area of improvement.

The head at St Joseph & St Bede felt restored and revived by attending the group, and would return to school with renewed vigour. For those considering setting up a similar group, she advises starting with a group of six to nine like-minded head teachers, if possible from different areas, to promote a wider view of what is happening in education, and holding the session away from the school setting to allow some distance from everyday work.

## Cherbourg Primary School, Hampshire

### Developing a dialogue between governors, SLT and staff

At a Governing Body meeting in 2017, one of Cherbourg Primary School's governors asked "what is our role in supporting staff wellbeing and what can we do to help?". This sparked a discussion about what governors should do in relation to staff wellbeing. The head teacher felt that the school's existing approach to staff wellbeing was strong and innovative, with good relationships among staff, family friendly policies and the ability to earn days off in lieu of running activities out of school hours. The initial conclusion was that the day-to-day strategies and responses should be managed by SLT, and that monitoring the effectiveness of those procedures was the role of governors.

It was anticipated that staff would be pleased that governors had considered their wellbeing. The head teacher passed the message on to staff, explaining that they felt staff wellbeing was something the school was good at, but inviting staff to share if there was anything more they felt governors could do.

After a couple of weeks, the staff governor reported that some colleagues thought the subject had been passed over too quickly, and that the school could do more to support wellbeing. Staff felt communication was good but could be improved, and staff who had no

management role felt they didn't always have a voice. At first the head teacher found this difficult to hear, but upon reflection realised that they had been pre-emptive in believing everything was fine.

The head teacher apologised to staff for listening and not hearing on this subject and asked for ideas on what was working and what could be improved. The school then began to put together a wellbeing policy that would incorporate the views of staff, ensuring that it reflected the school's practice and hopes for improvement. The draft policy was shared with staff and governors and feedback and further suggestions were sought. Alongside the staff wellbeing policy, the school developed a positive mental health policy that would cover the whole school community.

The conversation on wellbeing is ongoing at Cherbourg Primary School. The school learned that rather than ticking the wellbeing box, it is more valuable to regularly hold up a mirror to their practice, addressing the blemishes as they occur and celebrating the successes!

*Cherbourg Primary School's wellbeing policy is included as [an appendix](#) to this resource.*





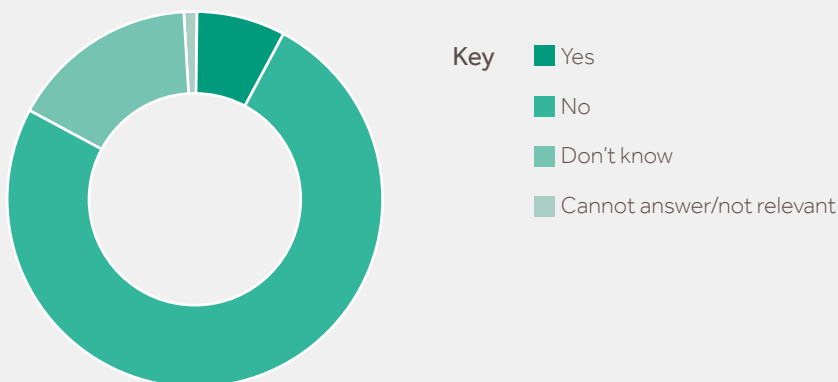
## *Relationships with parents and carers*

A small but vocal group of staff addressed the issue of relationships with parents and carers and its impact on wellbeing. Two respondents shared worries about damage caused to teachers' reputations by parents using social media. Others highlighted the value of proactive parenting support, without which there is a risk of pupil mental health being "left to schools".

One respondent suggested that a guidebook setting out the expectations of a parent and teacher relationship might help to reduce or address tensions arising between school staff and parents. Another said that complex referral processes should be replaced by effective support and advice to children, teachers and parents, with face-to-face sessions. Some school staff wanted better support to manage difficult relationships with parents, and some felt that parents themselves needed greater access to support.

## Measuring and monitoring mental wellbeing

**In my school the mental wellbeing of staff is measured and monitored.**



n=1659

Three quarters of respondents in our survey reported that the mental wellbeing of staff is not monitored in their school. This is perhaps unsurprising, given that measuring wellbeing in schools has only come to the fore in recent years. Wellbeing surveys can carry costs, but where they are possible they can help schools to understand what the key issues are for their staff, and therefore which areas for improvement should be prioritised. Staff surveys can also provide insight into the impact of any steps taken to improve wellbeing. As highlighted by staff in our consultation, it is crucial that staff feel listened to, and wellbeing surveys are one tool that help to promote staff voice.

The [Education Support Partnership](#) provides a staff survey service for schools.

### *Thinking about* **monitoring staff wellbeing**

- » Is it feasible to introduce a periodic staff survey in your school, to explore what the key issues are when it comes to staff wellbeing, and to keep track of any change over time?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- » How might you understand the impact of any the steps you are taking to support staff wellbeing? Are staff asked which measures they feel are having a positive impact?  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Case studies

### *The Family School, London, and Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families*

#### Engaging with parents and carers

Research shows that if parents and carers are actively involved in their children's learning at school, pupils are more likely to thrive – both in terms of academic performance and general wellbeing. However, when a child presents with worrying or challenging behaviour, relationships between school staff and parents can sometimes become strained.

In some circumstances, an approach from the school to parents regarding their child's difficulties may not be received well. Parents may be experiencing difficulties in their own lives and might feel overwhelmed and unable to meet the request for help with their child in a constructive way. In this scenario, relationships between home and school can break down. Staff can become disheartened as they witness the pupil continuing to struggle, and parents and carers might express frustration that their child is failing, but that no one from the school understands or is willing to help.

The Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families (AFNCCF) has pioneered two ground-breaking ways of helping staff, children and young people and families to overcome their difficulties at school. The Family School London is an Alternative Provision school which helps children presenting with complex emotional, behavioural and mental health difficulties at school. Its vision is to create a learning context for all, with integrated mental health delivery provided by frontline staff throughout the school day.

Parents and other significant family members are involved in The Family School at all times in relation to their child's attendance and difficulties. The weekly Parent Learning Programme is attended by approximately 60% of the school's parent population, and the remainder meet regularly in school at other times, around work or family commitments.

A crucial component of The Family School's practice is to work with groups of parents together. This helps to reduce the sense of isolation, stigma and blame that is common following an exclusion. Once parents know that they are not alone and that others are experiencing similar difficulties they report a huge sense of relief and can make progress, with the support of their peers.

Staff at the AFNCCF have also developed the highly successful Multi-Family Groups in schools model, designed as a way of intervening early with pupils who are struggling to manage. School staff are trained in how to run a weekly group where parents are invited to join in a programme of help for their children. Parents become closer to the school and collaborate in thinking about practical ways of supporting each other and their children with emerging problems and difficulties. The groups operate in close conjunction with teachers across the school so that changes originating in the family group are transferred into the classroom.

Staff have reported a greater sense of professional fulfilment by leading a programme that works with families who are experiencing difficulties. Changes can be dramatic, which benefits the individual child and their family, and which also has a positive impact on the wider school community.

The AFNCCF has produced an [online training programme](#) and training manual for how to set up and run family groups in schools.

## Peterhouse School, Southport

### A wellbeing action plan informed by a staff survey

Peterhouse is a specialist school for children and young people on the autism spectrum. All pupils have special educational needs and many present with challenging behaviours. A significant proportion of pupils have mental health issues. Supporting these complex pupils can result in a challenging work environment for staff.

The school prides itself on its support of each pupil's individual needs. Pupils can access a school counsellor and there is an emphasis on confidence and self-esteem. However, many staff felt their needs were being overlooked and morale seemed low. To address this, the school

ran a Wellbeing Project, forming a Wellbeing Team and developing an action plan, guided by 'Time to Change'. Peterhouse made a 'Time to Change' employers pledge in January 2017 to demonstrate its commitment to staff wellbeing.

Staff at all levels supported the initiative. An initial staff survey in November 2016 informed the action plan, and a follow-up survey in March 2017 monitored progress. The surveys were based on Mind's advice on 'taking stock of mental health in the workplace'. Some of the results are included in the table below.

		Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
There is an awareness of mental health and this is talked about openly	Initial staff survey	10%	47%	27%	13%
	Follow-up survey	34%	57%	9%	0%
I feel confident that I can open up about mental health issues	Initial staff survey	3%	63%	18%	13%
	Follow-up survey	31%	59%	10%	0%
I am aware of the support available to me in work with regards to mental health	Initial staff survey	10%	47%	27%	10%
	Follow-up survey	31%	62%	7%	0%
<b>For Line Managers:</b> I know how to respond if a member of staff approaches me with a mental health problem, and feel confident to support them	Initial staff survey	8%	46%	31%	15%
	Follow-up survey	42%	50%	8%	0%

**Table 1:** Results from Peterhouse School's staff survey on mental health in the workplace.

The actions the school has taken in order to support staff wellbeing include:

- » Extending school counsellor services to staff
- » A comprehensive training programme, with an Inset day on mental health for all staff and further training for selected staff, for example in Mental Health First Aid
- » Two staff acting as Employee Champions
- » Awareness raising initiatives such as noticeboards and Time to Talk Day
- » Making staff aware of the support available, including the Employee Assistance Programme
- » Regular meetings of the Wellbeing Team to monitor progress and plan further actions

Peterhouse feels that its work on wellbeing has had a big impact, with improved staff morale and a greater willingness to come forward with issues and seek help when needed, as well as positive comments from Ofsted about retention and the support staff receive.

To build in on this work, Peterhouse has applied for the 'Wellbeing Award for Schools'. Toward this, the school carried out another staff wellbeing survey in July 2018 which showed further improvement. Its current development focus is on more advanced training for selected staff, improving parental engagement and support, and reviewing pupil voice mechanisms. The school is also looking to strengthen links to other schools and networks, to share ideas and good practice.



## Discussion

We were overwhelmed by the number of responses to our school staff wellbeing consultation. The level of engagement alone indicates that this is an issue that many of those working in schools feel strongly about. Of course, those who participated in this consultation make up only a small proportion of school staff nationally, and further research is needed to identify exactly what the issues staff experience are, what support should look like, as well as its cost and value to the school community.

Although the sample size was small, it is concerning that nearly one in five respondents reported that their work never has a positive impact on their mental health and wellbeing. Not only is it worrying that this proportion of staff should feel unhappy at work, but it is unlikely too that these staff are reaching their full potential in offering pupils the support they need to learn and thrive. Moreover, if school staff are expected to take on more work in identifying and supporting children and young people with mental health issues, it is essential that they are supported with regard to their own mental health, both to help them deal with the complex issues that others present to them and to manage their own mental wellbeing.

Despite the challenges discussed, the consultation highlighted a real appetite among staff to share what has worked well in their schools when it comes to supporting staff wellbeing. Approaches range from trying out new marking policies to reduce workload, introducing staff questionnaires to measure and monitor mental wellbeing, and training, support and supervision to help staff manage when working with pupils who are experiencing complex difficulties. Some of these approaches can be introduced for free while others require resources and, given the financial pressures many schools are experiencing, careful thought

and consultation is needed to establish priorities for the staff at a particular school and what is likely to have a positive impact.

Schools are on a learning curve. Although many have been promoting pupil mental health for some time, they have only been asked explicitly to do so in recent years and there has been little to suggest that staff wellbeing should be equally high on the agenda. With the publication of the Green Paper it may be that we are in a transition period, where the importance of staff wellbeing has been registered in many schools, and it is now time to be open about staff wellbeing and put it at the heart of school practice.

We hope this report helps to extend the dialogue about this important issue, and suggests some ways forward for school leaders and teachers who are looking for ways to support mental wellbeing in their setting.

This resource was co-produced by the AFNCCF, the 684 school staff who contributed their thoughts through our Schools in Mind survey, the 2,400 Teacher Tapp respondents, the hundreds of attendees at our regional workshops and the 7,800 members of our Schools in Mind network who regularly use our resources and contribute their own thoughts. We thank you for making this resource possible. If you are not a member of our free Schools in Mind learning network please [join us here](#). We are grateful to Teacher Tapp for supporting the delivery of the survey, and to the National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) and the head teachers' Quality Assurance Panel at the AFNCCF for providing feedback on the draft of this resource.

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<sup>5</sup> Department of Health and Department for Education (2017) Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision: a Green Paper [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/664855/Transforming\\_children\\_and\\_young\\_people\\_s\\_mental\\_health\\_provision.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664855/Transforming_children_and_young_people_s_mental_health_provision.pdf)



## Support and guidance

**Schools in Mind** is a free network for school staff and allied professionals hosted by the AFNCCF. We provide a trusted source of accessible information and resources that teachers and school leaders can use to support the mental health and wellbeing of their whole school community. Recent resources include a booklet: *Supporting Staff Wellbeing in Schools*.

[annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/](https://annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/)

**Mentally Healthy Schools** is a site providing quality assured resources on children's mental health for primary schools. Funded by the Royal Foundation it is a legacy project of the Heads Together campaign and is run by the AFNCCF, Place2Be and Young Minds with expert guidance from the Centre for Mental Health and NAHT.

[mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk](https://mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk)

**Mental Health at Work** is an online gateway to resources, training and information aimed at transforming mental health in the workplace in the UK. Mental health at Work has been developed by Mind and is supported by The Royal

Foundation with Heads Together.

[mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/](https://mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/)

**Mindful Teachers** is an international community of educators and helping professionals committed to mindfulness and compassion.

[mindfulteachers.org](https://mindfulteachers.org)

### NHS Five Steps to Mental Wellbeing

[nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/](https://nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/improve-mental-wellbeing/)

**Education Support Partnership** is a charity dedicated to improving the health and wellbeing of teachers and the entire education workforce. It offers a free, confidential helpline to all those working in education in the UK.

[educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/helping-you/telephone-support-counselling](https://educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/helping-you/telephone-support-counselling)

# Appendix A

## Example staff wellbeing policy

### Cherbourg Primary School



### Wellbeing Policy

<b>Created by</b>	Whole Governing Body	<b>Monitored by</b>	Whole Governing Body
<b>Date adopted</b>	July 2018	<b>Last reviewed</b>	
<b>Review cycle</b>	Annual	<b>Next review</b>	July 2019

**Mental health is 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.**

**(World Health Organization)**

**The biggest asset our school has is its staff; the biggest asset they have is their health and wellbeing. This policy is intended to outline the ways in which we can work together to make sure our school is a safe, caring and happy place to work, which, if we get it right, can help to enhance individual wellbeing, through personal fulfilment and professional identity. This in turn will benefit our pupils and our community.**

We spend more daylight hours in school than at home, so it is important that we can have ownership of many of the decisions that affect us and that we have agency in our working lives. We can do this, even in areas where we have no choices about what we do (e.g. SATs, or deadlines for assessments), by taking responsibility for these actions and approaching the tasks in our own way.

All our work should be healthy, safe and supportive and governors have a responsibility to ensure our practices contribute to staff wellbeing. This includes monitoring staff absence and regularly requesting feedback from staff governors about wellbeing. Governors recognise the importance of the wellbeing of staff in our school.

We advocate a holistic, proactive approach to managing health and rehabilitation issues at work, with everyone working together, staff, leadership team, governors, HCC human resource, occupational health and health and safety professionals, to:

- tackle the causes of workplace injury and ill health, including stress and anxiety
- address the impact of health on employees' capacity to work, providing support for those with disabilities and health conditions and rehabilitation
- promote healthier lifestyles and wellbeing to help improve the general health of the workforce

Where requested, confidentiality can be important in establishing trusting relationships and rehabilitation, providing the safety of the person, or others is not compromised. However, where possible, staff are encouraged to share their mental and/or physical needs in an open way with colleagues, to maximise support networks available. This practice also helps to de-stigmatise issues related to health conditions in the workplace.

## Mental Health Champion

All staff should be mental health champions, but it is important for the staff to have a named person to maintain the importance of mental health issues and to champion their interest. A member of staff will be agreed each two years by self-nomination and an interview process by the Inclusion Team. This role will be to champion mental health for the school community, not to be directly responsible for it. The role will include promotion of well-being materials; being a 'listening ear'; acting as a signpost for other services or professionals, relaying ideas and information to senior staff that could further improve wellbeing in school; having oversight of school improvement plans to ensure that mental health promotion has a key place; help to reduce barriers to mental health in school by promoting positive language in relation to mental health.

To support the well-being of our staff our priorities are:

**Language** – to be mindful of the language we use to talk mental health at all times

**Communication** – to encourage individuals to communicate their needs and concerns

**Relationships** – to promote good relationships between staff through training, time and tea (other drinks are available!)

**Kindness** – to promote the importance of treating people as we would want to be treated ourselves

**Tolerance** – for different ways people think and act, providing our goal of ensuring good outcomes for pupils is not affected.

**Respect** – for how a staff member may want to manage their own mental health or health, providing this doesn't impact on the safeguarding of our pupils.

**Harmony** – to promote ways of being with each other, including times when opinions differ, or when a person becomes upset with another.

**Equality** – to ensure all staff having an equal right to well being in the workplace

**Trust** – to develop a supportive process in which staff can trust, for the continued wellbeing of staff

**Empowerment** – to ensure staff members feel a part of the decisions which affect them. This includes consultation on key decisions which affect individual staff, including policies and a genuine right to reply and appeal on decisions which may have an adverse affect.

**Balance** – to recognise the demands of workload on staff and to find ways to ensure a good balance over a school year, between work that is necessary for good outcomes for pupils and time to enjoy when not at work.

## What works well at Cherbourg Primary?

- We all talk to each other and are very good at being 'aware' of each other.
- Club Days! Being able to go to our own children's assemblies and sports' days.
- If someone notices someone isn't 'quite right' but they don't feel they can approach them they'll flag it to a parallel teacher or colleague who is closer to them.
- Learning support staff and class teachers know when colleague's 'snowed under time' is here (testing, data, reports etc) and release them or enable dedicated time out of class.
- Inset Days offer a variety of time for pupil progress meetings and time to learn.
- Staff offered time and/or financial support towards professional development.
- We laugh a lot.
- We share a philosophy of education.
- Diverse characters and personalities with a shared dedication and commitment.
- Staff ideas for change listened to.

## Appendix A *continued*

- Staff can communicate concerns in person, email or text.
- Staff supported to debrief incidents of violent or aggressive behaviour from pupils with social, emotional and mental health needs.
- We work together towards a school improvement plan, which staff contribute to the formation and the evaluation.
- Regular briefings and communication accessible to all staff
- Shared events, such as end of year parties and occasional trips to the theatre.
- Guardian Angels, run every few years.
- A significant number of staff express interest in mental health and wellbeing issues and promote this through emails and posters for example.

### **How do we know?**

- Low sickness rate amongst staff for minor illness.
- Children offered a good range of clubs throughout the year, ensuring staff receive club days in return.
- Changes implemented through governing body include, learning support payments for taking class for whole or half days; learning support staff offered additional time or payment for residential trips to offset disparity with teaching staff paid hours.
- Occupational Health offered to support our staff to return to work, or manage health conditions.
- Three staff undertaken foundation degrees in the last year and two achieved Masters qualifications in the last two years.
- Many individuals are able to talk openly about their mental health/and or personal situations and find solutions to aid their wellbeing.
- Staff are able to be honest when they are finding a professional situation difficult, knowing colleagues will offer solutions.
- Good staff retention
- Staff generally feel valued, as reported in Ofsted staff survey.
- Staff and governors are 'very ambitious for the pupils in your care and passionate about improving the quality of provision for all pupils, particularly the most vulnerable' Ofsted 2018.
- Posters up around school to support wellbeing of pupils and staff.

### **What would we want to happen to further improve staff wellbeing?**

- Reintroduce Friday tea club.
- Offer better furniture for those with back issues.
- Set up a 'wellbeing team' with staff and governors.
- Build trust and safe areas for communication that are accessible for all staff.
- Agree a work email free time zone at weekends.
- Revisit our understanding of free speech; i.e. it is okay to disagree without it being deemed as negative.
- Develop our debrief procedures for staff where there has been an incident or altercation with another adult (e.g. a parent or neighbour).
- Further improve induction for new staff
- Gather views of all staff to ensure all staff feel they have equal voice.
- Improve access to professional supervision for staff managing child protection



### Where can I go for support and guidance?

- **Hampshire County Council** confidential counselling service on 023 8062 6606 is highlighted on each page of this document and is an excellent support service.
- **Health Assured** is a free confidential service for employees and can offer counselling within two weeks of first contact for employees and family members. People can self-refer by phoning 0844 892 2493 or go to [www.healthassured.org/](http://www.healthassured.org/)
- To see what **Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT)** are available in your area, go to [www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Psychological%20therapies%20%28IAPT%29/LocationSearch/10008](http://www.nhs.uk/Service-Search/Psychological%20therapies%20%28IAPT%29/LocationSearch/10008). By putting in your postcode you can see what services are available, including iTalk, and which services have self-referral.
- Eastleigh Wellbeing Centre is one of six centres in Hampshire, as part of Solent Mind. They can be contacted at:

#### **Eastleigh Wellbeing Centre**

111 Leigh Road,  
Eastleigh, SO50 9DS  
Phone: 023 8061 1458  
Email: [eastleighwellbeing@solentmind.org.uk](mailto:eastleighwellbeing@solentmind.org.uk)

If you are concerned a colleague is suffering from poor mental health and needs support beyond that of their usual health professional, you can contact the Eastleigh & Romsey Mental Health & Substance Misuse Social Care Team for anonymised advice, or gain permission of the adult to phone for specific advice on referrals. The team can be contacted at:

#### **Hampshire House**

84-98 Southampton Road, Eastleigh SO50 5PA  
Phone: 01794 526050

#### **Other useful websites are:**

[www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/](http://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/)

[www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk](http://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk)

[www.Mindfulteachers.org](http://www.Mindfulteachers.org)

[www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxietydepression/improve-mental-wellbeing/](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxietydepression/improve-mental-wellbeing/)

[www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/helping-you/telephone-support-counselling](http://www.educationsupportpartnership.org.uk/helping-you/telephone-support-counselling)

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk/](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/)

[www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/how-to-manage-and-reduce-stress.pdf](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/how-to-manage-and-reduce-stress.pdf)

[www3.hants.gov.uk/hampshirecountycouncil/portal-help/school-services/schoolstaffresilience/resiliencestafftools.htm](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/hampshirecountycouncil/portal-help/school-services/schoolstaffresilience/resiliencestafftools.htm)

### Look after your own wellbeing

## Appendix B

The quantitative data emerged from the Teacher Tapp responses, and were prepared by Education Intelligence Ltd. They relate to school staff in state-funded primary and secondary schools in England. While we recognise that the issues discussed are relevant to all those working in schools, quantitative data relates to staff occupying the following roles: classroom teacher, classroom teacher with significant middle leadership responsibilities, senior leadership team (excluding head teacher), and head teacher.

Percentages presented in this resource have been calculated from a weighted base to make the pool of respondents more representative of the teacher population in state-funded schools in England. For example, the Teacher Tapp panel has too few middle-aged primary teachers from Yorkshire and West Midlands so these respondents were given a higher than average weighting. Population characteristics are drawn from the School Workforce Census and re-weighted by gender, age, role seniority, region and school phase.

	Base	All	Government official region										Ofsted rating		
			East Midlands	East of England	London	North East	North West	South East	South West	West Midlands	Yorkshire and the Humber	Outstanding	Good	Requires improvement	
Q1 Have any of the following caused you to feel stressed or unhappy at work over the last 2 weeks?	Weighted	1677	141	188	260	48	136	219	149	182	176	354	910	222	
	Unweighted	2446	176	257	392	68	240	392	195	182	183	482	1217	276	
Q2 If I approached my manager with concerns about my mental wellbeing, I am confident that I would be well supported.	Weighted	1679	141	188	260	48	136	219	149	182	176	354	910	222	
	Unweighted	2449	176	257	393	68	240	392	195	182	183	482	1218	276	
Q3 If I felt stressed or worried at work I would be most likely to seek help from:	Weighted	1664	140	186	260	48	135	218	149	179	173	353	904	218	
	Unweighted	2435	175	256	393	68	238	391	192	181	182	481	1211	274	
Q4 In my school the mental wellbeing of staff is measured and monitored.	Weighted	1659	132	188	260	44	140	225	144	186	171	363	892	217	
	Unweighted	2432	175	255	372	64	236	407	186	180	177	475	1207	264	
Q5 In my school, staff are encouraged to speak openly about their mental wellbeing.	Weighted	1693	141	192	256	48	133	230	148	199	177	368	913	226	
	Unweighted	2464	173	264	380	72	235	415	187	187	368	492	1224	284	
Q6 In my school, we have a mental health/wellbeing policy in place, which includes the mental wellbeing of staff.	Weighted	1693	141	192	256	48	133	230	148	199	177	368	913	226	
	Unweighted	2464	173	264	380	72	235	415	187	187	368	492	1224	284	
Q7 My school senior leadership team takes active steps to support the mental wellbeing of all staff.	Weighted	1659	132	188	260	44	140	225	144	186	171	363	892	217	
	Unweighted	2432	175	255	372	64	236	407	186	180	177	475	1207	264	
Q8 My work has a positive impact on my mental health and wellbeing.	Weighted	1693	141	192	256	48	133	230	148	199	177	368	913	226	
	Unweighted	2464	173	264	380	72	235	415	187	187	368	492	1224	284	
Q9 Which single initiative among the following do you feel would be most valuable to improving your mental wellbeing at work?	Weighted	1655	132	187	259	44	140	225	144	185	171	362	889	217	
	Unweighted	2425	175	253	370	64	235	406	186	179	177	473	1202	264	

**Table 1:** This table shows the number of respondents to each question of the Teacher Tapp survey, including the weighted and unweighted base, and respondents' region and the Ofsted rating of their school where known.

	Base	All	Phase		Gender		Family		Job seniority			
			Primary	Secondary	Female	Male	Has children	No children	Classroom teacher	Classroom teacher with significant leadership responsibilities	Senior leadership team (exc. head)	Headteacher
Q1 Have any of the following caused you to feel stressed or unhappy at work over the last 2 weeks?	Weighted	1677	667	765	1165	415	665	938	657	686	159	59
	Unweighted	2446	743	1209	1479	707	1012	1162	574	669	341	104
Q2 If I approached my manager with concerns about my mental wellbeing, I am confident that I would be well supported.	Weighted	1679	667	765	1166	415	665	939	658	686	159	59
	Unweighted	2449	744	1209	1481	708	1012	1163	575	669	341	104
Q3 If I felt stressed or worried at work I would be most likely to seek help from:	Weighted	1664	658	763	1154	414	656	934	650	686	159	56
	Unweighted	2435	738	1205	1471	705	1003	1158	569	667	340	103
Q4 In my school the mental wellbeing of staff is measured and monitored.	Weighted	1659	657	782	1148	421	644	945	44	697	149	65
	Unweighted	2432	718	1205	1478	694	981	1171	569	679	328	108
Q5 In my school, staff are encouraged to speak openly about their mental wellbeing.	Weighted	1693	662	782	1170	441	657	948	663	683	158	72
	Unweighted	2464	749	1212	1459	725	1010	1168	577	675	341	115
Q6 In my school, we have a mental health/ wellbeing policy in place, which includes the mental wellbeing of staff.	Weighted	1693	662	782	1170	441	657	948	663	683	158	72
	Unweighted	2464	749	1212	1459	725	1010	1168	577	675	341	115
Q7 My school senior leadership team takes active steps to support the mental wellbeing of all staff.	Weighted	1659	657	782	1148	421	644	945	644	697	149	65
	Unweighted	2432	718	1205	1478	694	981	1171	569	679	328	108
Q8 My work has a positive impact on my mental health and wellbeing.	Weighted	1693	662	782	1170	441	657	948	663	683	158	72
	Unweighted	2464	749	1212	1459	725	1010	1168	577	675	341	115
Q9 Which single initiative among the following do you feel would be most valuable to improving your mental wellbeing at work?	Weighted	1655	654	780	1146	419	644	941	643	693	148	65
	Unweighted	2425	713	1203	1473	693	978	1167	568	676	327	108

**Table 2:** This table shows the number of respondents to each question of the Teacher Tapp survey, including the weighted and unweighted base, and respondents' gender, family status, job seniority and school phase where known.

## Our work with schools

**As a leading evidence-based children's mental health charity, the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families is committed to helping schools to support the wellbeing of their pupils, parents and staff.**

Through our [Schools in Mind](#) learning network we share academic and clinical expertise, disseminate best practice and translate research findings into practical, accessible tools for schools. By joining online, school staff can access a range of events, training, consultation and resources to support the mental health and wellbeing of the whole school community. This is a guide to some of our work.

### **Department for Education (DfE) Mental Health and Schools Link Programme**

We are delivering the DfE Mental Health and Schools Link Programme, working with 1,200 schools and colleges across 22 sites. This brings together mental health leads in schools and colleges with Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (CYPMHS) to embed long term collaboration and integrated working.

### **DfE Peer Support for Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Programme**

We are working with over 100 schools, colleges and children and young people's community organisations across England to develop and establish peer mentoring programmes, to support the mental health and emotional wellbeing of children and young people. The programme started in September 2017 and will continue to June 2019.

### **DfE Children and Young People's Mental Health Research and Evaluation Programme: Education for Wellbeing**

Education for Wellbeing is a programme implementing and evaluating five different mental health interventions across 400

mainstream primary and secondary schools. The schools team at the AFNCCF is delivering the interventions as part of the trial, either directly to children and young people or by training teachers and other school staff. The Evidence Based Practice Unit (a collaboration between the AFNCCF and UCL) is evaluating the trial. Results will be published in March 2020.

### **Big Lottery Fund HeadStart Evaluation**

The EBPU is also evaluating HeadStart, a five-year, £56 million National Lottery funded programme set-up by the Big Lottery Fund, the largest funder of community activity in the UK. It aims to explore and test new ways to improve the mental health and wellbeing of young people aged 10 to 16 and prevent serious mental-health issues from developing. We are collecting data from over 30,000 young people in 144 schools over a period of five years to evaluate evidence about what does and doesn't work locally to benefit young people now and in the future.

### **Wellbeing Measurement for Schools**

Wellbeing Measurement for Schools is an approach developed by Child Outcomes Research Consortium (CORC) and the Evidence Based Practice Unit (EBPU) that allows you to measure wellbeing across a whole year group, using a set of validated questionnaires. The online survey assesses the emotional wellbeing, mental health and resilience of pupils. The Wellbeing Measurement Report analyses responses for your school to provide evidence of strengths and challenges, and help you plan support. For more information, visit the CORC website.

### **Schools Outreach**

Our Schools Outreach Service is for children, young people and families who are struggling with complex difficulties which have an impact on behaviour in the classroom and beyond. The service is delivered in schools so families



do not need to travel to off-site clinics. All therapists in the team have expertise in delivering highly specialist and innovative therapeutic interventions in primary, secondary and special school settings.

### **The Family School, London**

The AFNCCF collaborates with and supports The Family School, an alternative provision (AP) school for children who have been excluded or are at risk of exclusion from mainstream school. The school works with families and their children in school and has, so far, successfully reintegrated 65% of pupils within four terms. Of these placements, 95% are sustained.

The generosity of our incredible supporters ensures our work with schools is possible. Find out how you can support us at:

[www.annafreud.org/support-us](http://www.annafreud.org/support-us)





**Anna Freud**  
**National Centre for**  
**Children and Families**

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