

5 Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing

A Framework for Schools and Colleges



Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families

The Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families

The Centre has been pioneering better mental health care and support for children, young people and their families for over 65 years.

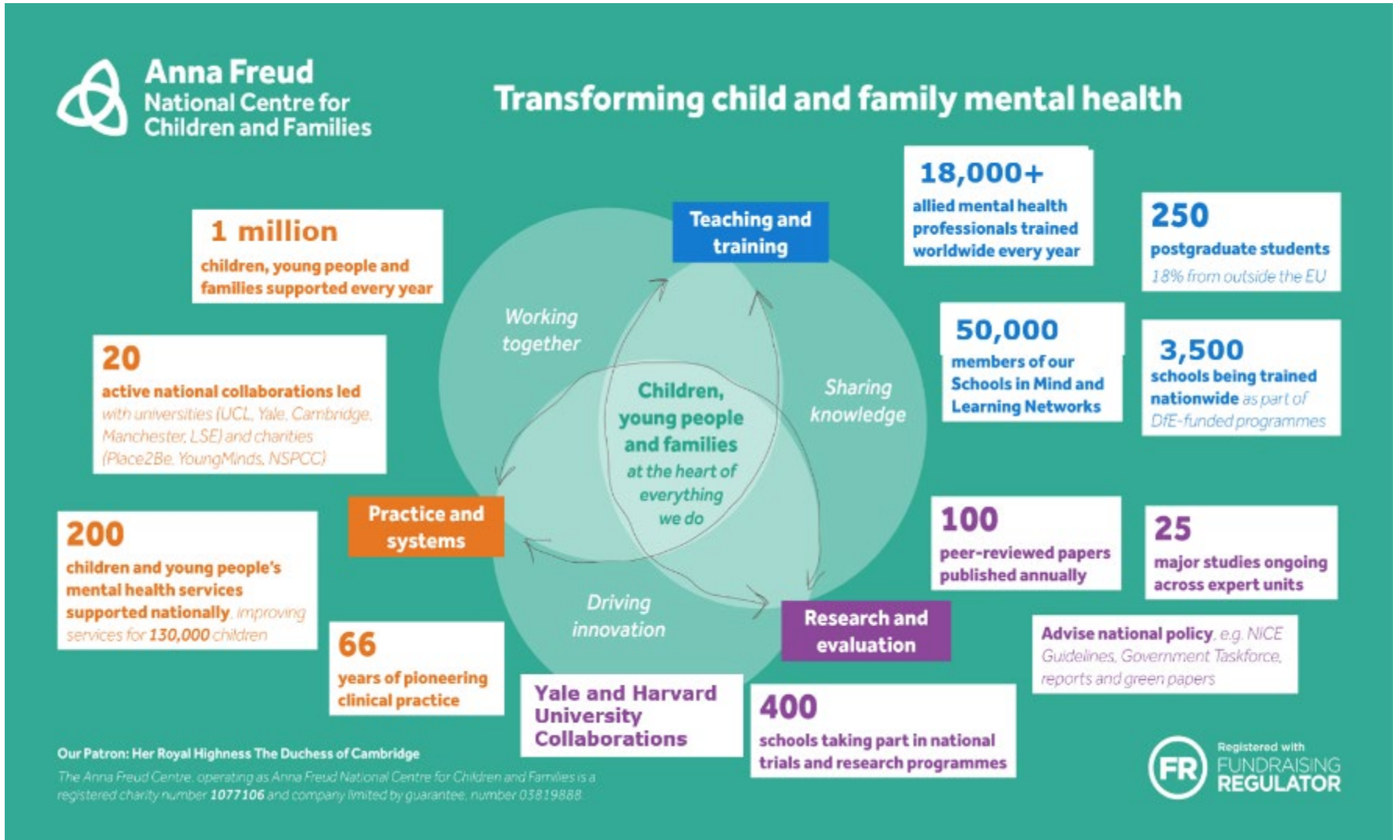
The Centre is the only children and young people's mental health charity to combine research and innovation, clinical practice, and training and dissemination.



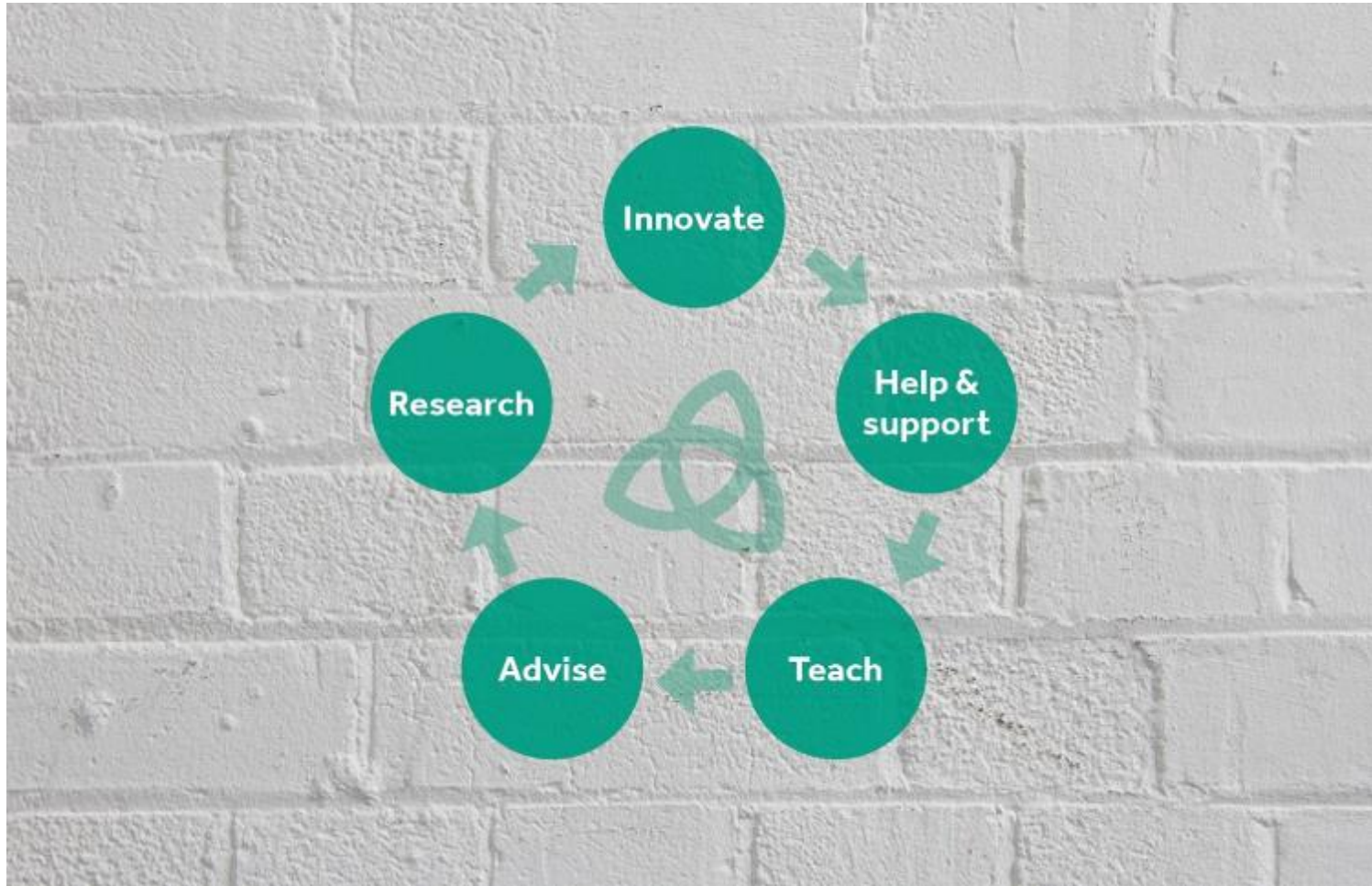
Principles

1. Children, young people and families are at the heart of everything we do.
2. We are committed to discovering and sharing the best way to help children, young people, families, carers and professionals affected by mental health problems.
3. We aim to strengthen our impact through collaboration and through partnership.





We transform child mental health in five main ways:



Disruption, uncertainty and mental health

- **Significant life changes** – including world events – can bring up lots of different feelings for children, young people and adults.
- These feelings can include **anger, frustration, loss, anxiety** or feeling **out of control**.
- This can **affect children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing** – and, over time, their **academic attainment**.



The coronavirus pandemic has been a significant, unexpected and life-changing event for people around the world – including children and young people.

The evolving mental health challenge in the UK

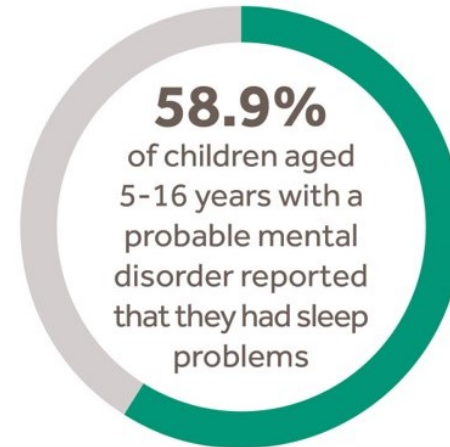


1 in 6

5-16 year olds in 2020 were identified as having a probable mental disorder compared to 1 in 9 in 2017



Among children aged 5-16 years with a probable mental disorder the increase was evident with boys and girls



58.9%

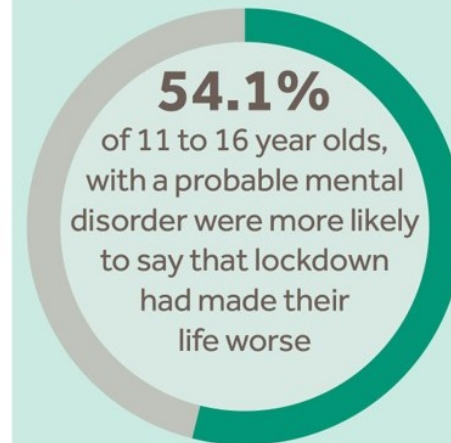
of children aged 5-16 years with a probable mental disorder reported that they had sleep problems



62.6%

of 5-16 years olds with a probable mental disorder had regular support from their school or college, compared to 76.4% who didn't have a mental disorder

Impact of lockdown



54.1%

of 11 to 16 year olds, with a probable mental disorder were more likely to say that lockdown had made their life worse



59.0%

of 17 to 22 year olds said the same

The importance of the school or FE college community

- **The school/FE college community can become even more important** at times when home life may be chaotic or different.
- **Routine, structure and secure relationships** in the school/ FE college community can play a significant role in helping a child or young person to negotiate a turbulent period in their lives.
- **How we respond to loss and unexpected change is determined by our own experience** – both as a child and as an adult.



With robust pastoral systems and an ethos that has mental health and wellbeing at its core, schools and FE colleges will be better prepared to manage the effects of uncertainty and disruption.

Report: Key facts (England)

- **Rates of probable mental disorders have increased since 2017.** In 2020, one in six children aged 5-16 years were identified as having a probable mental disorder, increasing from one in nine in 2017 (evident in boys and girls).
- **The likelihood of a probable mental disorder increased with age,** with a noticeable difference in gender for young people aged 17–22 years (27% of young women and 13% of young men were identified as having a probable mental disorder).
- Among 11-16 year-old girls, 64% with a probable mental disorder had **seen or heard an argument between adults in their household,** compared with 47% of those unlikely to have a mental disorder.
- **Children with a probable mental disorder were less likely to have received regular support** from their school or FE college than children who were unlikely to have a mental disorder (63% vs 76% received support).

Report: Key facts (England) cont'd

- 59% of children and young people (aged 5–22 years) with a probable mental disorder reported having **sleep problems**. Of these, young people aged 17–22 years were more likely to report sleep problems (70%), than those aged 11–16 years (51%) and 5–10 years (53%).
- Children aged 5–16 years with a probable mental disorder were **more than twice as likely to live in a household that had fallen behind on payments** (16%) than children unlikely to have a mental disorder (6%).
- Children and young people with a probable mental disorder were **more likely to say that lockdown had made their life worse** (54% of 11–16 year olds and 59% of 17–22 year olds) than those who were unlikely to have a mental disorder (39% and 37%, respectively).

What is a Whole School Approach:

We define a 'whole school approach' as working at a number of levels across a school to enact change, in relation to:

1. leadership and management;
2. school ethos and environment;
3. curriculum, teaching and learning;
4. student voice;
5. staff development, health and wellbeing;
6. identifying need and monitoring impact;
7. targeted support; and,
8. working with parents/carers.²

Why a Whole School Approach?

A Whole School Approach moves beyond learning and teaching to pervade all aspects of the life of a school and has been found to be effective in bringing about and sustaining health benefits. 3

The Department for Education (DfE) recognises that: “in order to help their pupils succeed; schools have a role to play in supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy”. There is good evidence to support this assertion and Ofsted has highlighted that children and young people themselves say that they want to learn more about how to keep themselves emotionally healthy. Moreover, schools have a duty to promote the wellbeing of students. 4

The report of the Children and Young People’s Mental Health and Wellbeing Taskforce (2015) identifies a national commitment to “encouraging schools to continue to develop whole school approaches to promoting mental health and wellbeing” 5

What does the evidence tell us?

1. Whole school approaches to promoting mental health are not a panacea, and so expectation management is required in relation to a. outcomes (how much change, and for whom); b. how long it will take to achieve change; c. what is needed to achieve change.
2. With appropriate training and support, school staff can be effective implementers.
3. Given that truly whole school approaches are complex to implement in practice, a staged approach to delivery is advisable (as opposed to 'trying to do everything at once').
4. There is no single gold standard intervention; rather, interventions should be selected based on local need and context.
5. While there are manifold programmes with a strong evidence base, there are also a large number for which there is weak or limited empirical support. Schools should adopt a critical approach, and always ask to what extent there is rigorous evidence to support a given intervention.

Demkowicz, O. & Humphrey, N. (2019). Whole school approaches to promoting mental health: what does the evidence say? London: EBPU.

Five Steps to Mental Health and wellbeing

Developed by the Anna Freud Centre to help schools and colleges to integrate practical actions, within their current resources, which prioritise mental health and wellbeing alongside teaching a school and college curriculum

The overall goal is to reduce the potential stigma associated with mental health issues and to build a mentally healthy education community including pupils, parents/carers and staff.



5 Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework: A whole-school or college approach



What do we mean when we say 'whole school'?

Commonly used terms to describe some school-based interventions:

- Whole school
- Universal and/or school-wide
- Multi-component

Use of 'whole school' mainly in UK (and Europe) :

8 principles (PHE/CYPMHC, 2015): (1) leadership and management, (2) school ethos and environment, (3) curriculum, teaching and learning, (4) student voice, (5) staff development, health and wellbeing, (6) identifying need and monitoring impact, (7) targeted support, and (8) working with parents/carers

'**Universal**' and/or '**school wide**' mainly in the USA: For everyone, regardless of need

'**Multi-component**' often used by researchers: Curriculum, ethos/environment, working with families and/or wider community (Langford et al, 2014)

What are the effects of whole school mental health programmes?

No shortage of evidence! Some relevant literature reviews and meta-analyses:

1. Wigelsworth et al (2016)
2. Durlak et al (2011)
3. Sklad et al (2012)
4. Wilson & Lipsey (2007)
5. Diekstra & Gravesteyn (2008)
6. Weare & Nind (2011)
7. Farahmand et al (2011)
8. Paulus et al (2016)
9. Adi et al (2007)
10. Blank et al (2009)
11. Banerjee et al (2016)
12. Langford et al (2014)

What are the effects of whole school mental health programmes?

- **At-risk groups:** usually greater effects for children and young people identified as at risk (however, may be due to ceiling effects or peers' limited room for improvement)
- **Age:** evidence remains limited and mixed, with some reviews indicating that younger children benefit more and others indicating that adolescence can be an effective time for intervention
- **Other:** Limited discussion of differential gains for children from socio-economically deprived and ethnic minority backgrounds as they are typically included in "at-risk" groups, but where analysed individually, these groups experience greater effects than their peers

Wellbeing – A more holistic view

Wellbeing can be understood as how people feel and how they function, both on a personal and a social level, and how they evaluate their lives as a whole.

It is more than considering an individual's mental health in isolation. It includes happiness, life satisfaction and coping.



Wellbeing – a balance point

Dodge, Daly, Huyton and Sanders (2012, p. 230) propose a definition of wellbeing as “the balance point between an individual’s resource pool and the challenges faced. When individuals have more challenges than resources, the see-saw dips, along with their wellbeing” (p. 230).



When individuals have more challenges than resources, the see-saw dips, along with their wellbeing, and vice-versa” (p. 230).

Mental Health Spectrum

- Like physical health, mental health is something we all have
- It can range across a spectrum from healthy to unwell
- It can fluctuate on a daily basis and change over time



Adapted from Centre for Mental Health



Continuum of Mental Health ↔ Mental Illness

How to support students? (Nash, 2016)

Information distributed around school e.g. displays	School assemblies	Workshops/ training	Discussion forums	Group interventions	Pastoral 1:1	Treatment intervention e.g. school Counselling
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Mental Health
UNIVERSAL

Mental Illness
TARGETED

Proactive

Responsive

5 steps - what is it?

- A **free** e-framework for schools and colleges
- Self-rated
- Consists of guidance, evidence-based resources and case studies from schools and colleges
- Interactive and printable action planning tool that allows you to review your school or college's progress and add notes
- Made up 5 key areas:
 1. Leading Change
 2. Working Together
 3. Understanding Need
 4. Promoting Wellbeing
 5. Supporting Staff
- <https://www.annafreud.org/5steps/>

Background

- Started developing in 2017
- Based on existing whole-school approaches e.g. PHE's 8 principles for Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing
- Refined and developed by MHWiS Team, mental health experts and teachers
- Piloted with our Pioneer Schools and Education Quality Assurance Panel:

"Easy to use; easy structure to follow; useful resources"

"Stepped approach helps to scaffold strategy and focus group activities."

5 Steps Platform – www.annafreud.org/5steps

5 STEPS TO MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING
A Framework for Schools and Colleges

Mental health is everyone's responsibility.

The question is, how do you create a school or college-wide approach to mental health and wellbeing?

We've created an evidence-based framework so that you can decide on your own approach to mental health and wellbeing in 5 simple steps. Our 5 Steps Framework is developed by mental health experts and teachers, for teachers.

It's interactive, it's simple and it's free. It will help you to support staff, lead change, and engage with parents, carers and the community so that you can meet your pupils' and students' needs.

By [registering](#), you can move through the steps at your own pace and update a personalised action planning tool that can be regularly reviewed.

Read our [user guide](#) for more information on how to use the framework.

5 Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing: A Framework...

MENTAL HEALTH STEPS

LEADING CHANGE

WORKING TOGETHER

UNDERSTANDING NEED



PROMOTING WELLBEING

SUPPORTING STAFF

WORKING TOGETHER

How to bring everyone in the school or college community together

[BACK TO 5 STEPS TO MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING](#)

-  **Establish a Mental Health Action Group**
who can advise Senior Management on strategies to improve and support mental health and wellbeing across the school community. [DETAILS AND RESOURCES](#)
-  **Improve working and collaboration with mental health services**
By improving working and collaboration with mental health services, children and young people are more likely to get the support they need when they need it. [DETAILS AND RESOURCES](#)
-  **Include pupils, staff, parents and carers in decision making**
If schools and colleges wish to truly integrate mental health and wellbeing across the whole school community then it is important the views of all members of the community are represented. [DETAILS AND RESOURCES](#)
-  **Engage with all parents and carers**
Research tells us that if parents and carers are actively involved in their children's learning and activities at school, they will be more likely to thrive both in terms of academic performance and also in their general wellbeing. [DETAILS AND RESOURCES](#)

Checklist

[ACTION PLANNING TOOL](#)

Resources and case studies



Talking Mental Health (animation that comes with accompanying resources for ages 9-11)

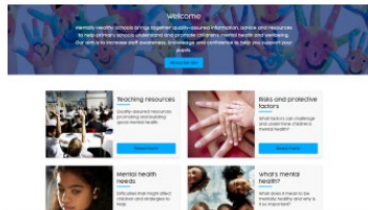


We All Have Mental Health (animation that comes with accompanying resources for ages 11-11)



Schools in Mind

A free network for school staff and allied professionals which shares practical, academic and clinical expertise regarding the wellbeing and mental health issues that affect schools.



Mentally Healthy Schools

This website brings together quality-assured information, advice and resources to help primary schools understand and promote children's mental health and wellbeing.



On My Mind

On My Mind aims to empower young people to make informed choices about their mental health and wellbeing. Pupils and college students can access free resources and information about a range of topics including self-care, loss and bereavement, and shared decision making.



Mental health and wellbeing calendar - Autumn term 2020

A calendar of curriculum themes and occasions linked to mental health for the 2020 autumn term, with activity ideas and suggestions for each theme.

MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY FOR THE WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Beth Selman - Sandringham Primary School

Our school is very keen on adopting a whole school approach to mental health and developing a shared language around mental health and wellbeing.



Mental health literacy for the whole school community

A few of us created a staff study group and decided to review our PSHE Curriculum. We decided to re-write it based upon PSHE Guidance and the outcomes of our pupil survey, which was carried out previously. The curriculum was quite outdated and there wasn't much in there that relating to mental health, SEN and autism.

From our pupil survey we had found that children in Key Stage 1 can't always articulate their emotions very well and so we created an emotional thesaurus to help with this. The thesaurus also helps with their vocabulary and creative writing. We have used the "Talking Mental Health" animation and lesson/assembly plans by Anna Freud Centre which are excellent and encouraged the use of the phrases 'big feelings' and 'small feelings' across the school.

There is also an emphasis on self-regulation, which is covered in our behaviour and self-regulation policy. We have

Action planning tool



ANNA FREUD CENTRE
SCHOOL YEAR
2020/21

Printing notes:

We recommend printing in full colour at A3 size.

Print

1 Leading Change

Action	Status	Notes
Prepare for change	✔ Achieved	
Ensure there is a robust mental health and wellbeing policy	✔ Achieved	We set up a mental health and wellbeing policy for staff and pupils in September 2020.
Demonstrate commitment in your development or improvement plan	✔ Working towards	We are reviewing how we will include mental health and wellbeing. We should have it in our plans by the next Governor's meeting in November.
Signpost information for governors, staff, pupils, parents and carers	✔ Working towards	We have signposted some information, but it needs to be reviewed. Review happening mid-November.

2 Working Together

Action	Status	Notes
Establish a Mental Health Action Group	✘ Not yet in place	We don't yet have a mental health action group. We have said that we will aim to set one up for January 2021.
Improve working and collaboration with mental health services	✔ Working towards	We are working on strengthening our relationships with mental health services and other local organisations.
Include pupils, staff, parents and carers in decision making	✔ Achieved	We work very closely with our PTA group. We have a pupil council who we consult with regularly. We have multiple staff forums.
Engage with all parents and carers	✔ Working towards	We work closely with parents and carers but would like to have a more robust process for how we do this. Plan to review at next all staff meeting in November.

Other AFC resources for schools and FE colleges

- [Mentally Healthy Schools](#) – A digital hub bringing together quality-assured information, advice and over 700 free resources to help primary, secondary and FE settings understand and promote children's mental health and wellbeing.
- [Schools in Mind](#) - A free network of education staff which shares practical, academic and clinical expertise mental health and wellbeing in schools and FE colleges.
- [Training](#) – Providing exceptional evidence-based training and interactive workshops online to develop the key skills needed to support children's and young people's mental health and emotional wellbeing. Contact: school.training@annafreud.org