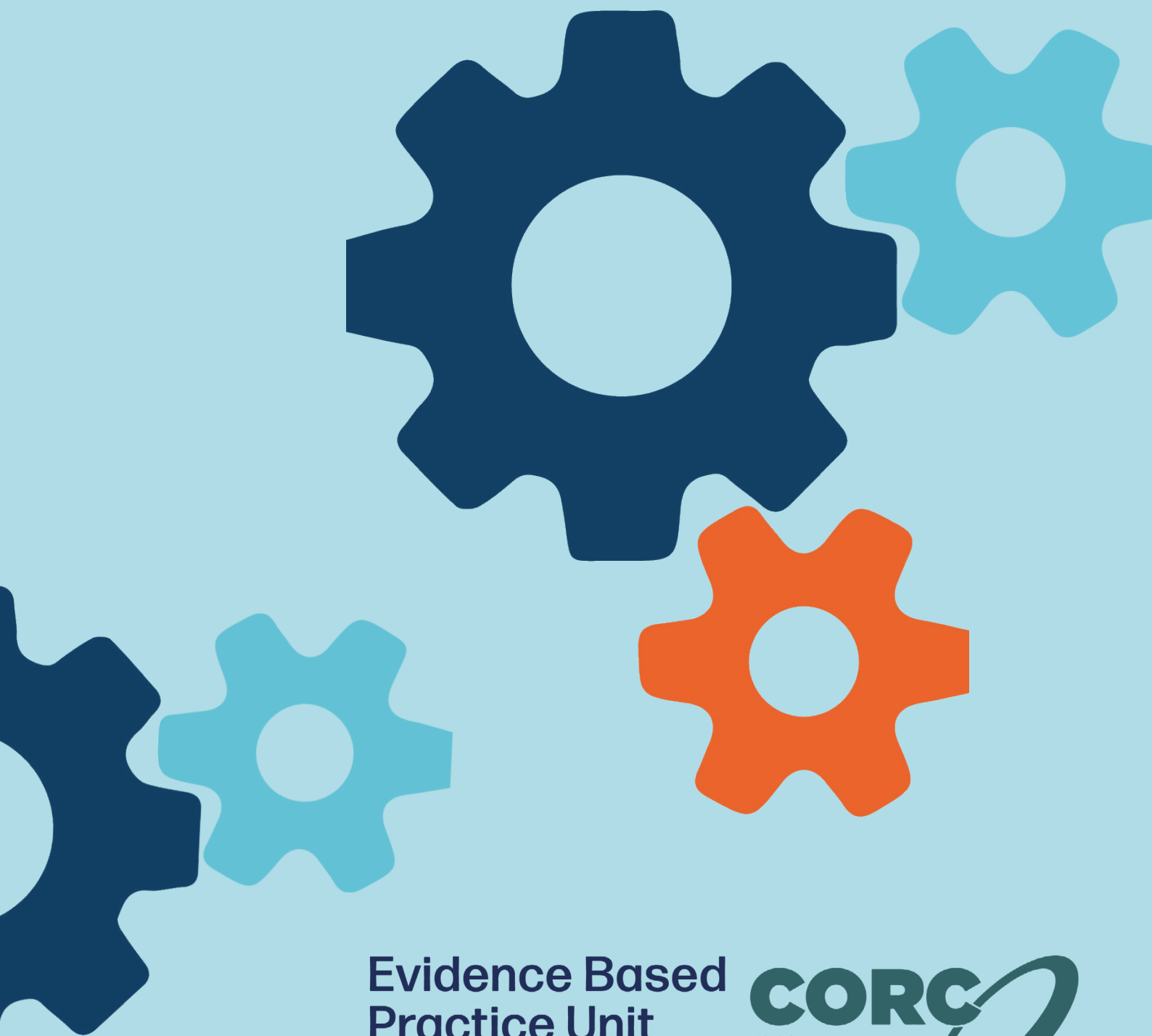


Wellbeing Measurement for Schools

Staff survey



**Evidence Based
Practice Unit**

A partnership of



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5 Steps to Mental Health and Wellbeing



Supporting staff

[Supporting staff](#) is one of our 5 Steps towards a whole-school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing. The simplest way to understand what teachers and school staff need to support their mental health is to ask them. However, too many education institutions do not regularly survey staff to establish their levels of wellbeing. At a minimum, schools and colleges should be carrying out annual wellbeing surveys in order to better understand:

- how teachers and school and college staff are feeling
- what is driving good and poor mental health (including asking staff how they feel about work practices, culture, engagement and management)
- how supported teachers and school and college staff feel
- whether staff feel equipped to support children and young people with their mental health
- any additional support they need for their mental health and wellbeing.

This document focuses on how to use measurement tools to understand your staff wellbeing so that you can provide them with the support they need.



It is important to point out that an annual survey has limitations – only capturing a brief snapshot of the entire year. Introducing regular surveys, and consistently creating opportunities for two-way dialogue, can significantly increase the ability of a school or college to establish levels of wellbeing.

Why not register with our free [5 Steps framework](#) now? It will provide you with evidence-based materials and a framework for promoting wellbeing in your setting.

Wellbeing Measurement for Schools



Staff survey

Staff wellbeing is integral to promoting a whole-school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing. [Research by The Health and Safety Executive](#) reported that teaching staff and education professionals had higher rates of work-related stress, depression and anxiety. [Research](#) has also found that teacher stress has an impact on children's learning in primary schools.

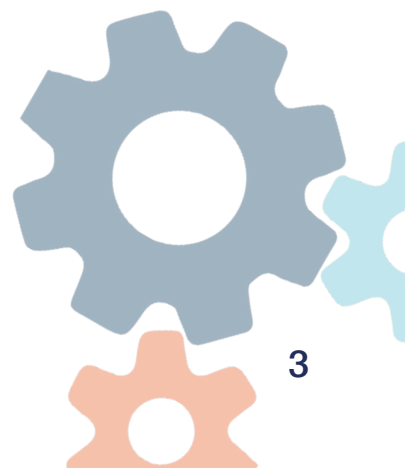
If school and college staff are to be successful, then we need to make sure that their mental health and wellbeing are effectively supported. When their wellbeing is a priority, staff feel better equipped to support the wellbeing of the children and young people they work with and build trust and motivation, which is crucial for a well-functioning school and college setting.

OFSTED'S INSPECTION FRAMEWORK requires school and college leaders to consider staff wellbeing. Under the Leadership and Management category, inspectors will look at how settings support staff and staff wellbeing when they make their judgements. Schools and colleges are expected to engage with staff, take account of the pressures they experience and to protect them from bullying and harassment.

Hint

Allocate time for staff to complete the survey, at a scheduled meeting or Inset day. This shows commitment to staff wellbeing and will help maximise response rates.

Most schools and colleges have a **SENIOR MENTAL HEALTH LEAD** who is responsible for taking a whole-school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing. Supporting staff wellbeing is key to this approach so in most cases the responsibility of a staff survey will fall to them.



This confidential staff survey helps to measure and monitor progress and enables schools and colleges to focus on the tangible and practical actions they can take to support a whole-school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing.

The questions are grouped into three sections which ask about staff wellbeing, school culture and attitudes towards wellbeing, and knowledge and confidence around supporting children and young people's mental health.

Schools and colleges may want to use the whole survey or may want to select sections from it, depending on priorities and needs:

SECTION 1 is about staff wellbeing. The questions ask about how the member of staff has been feeling recently. It uses two established questionnaires that have an evidence base that shows them to be valid (i.e. they measure what they intend to measure, avoiding bias) and reliable (they give same result each time if each characteristic is the same, avoiding inconsistency). Using an established questionnaire means you can benchmark your responses against existing research, allowing you to contextualise what you are seeing in your setting.

SECTION 2 focuses on the school or college's attitude to staff wellbeing and the culture within the setting. These questions have been used within research projects to explore the effect that work and the work environment have on staff wellbeing as well as how staff access support.

SECTION 3 asks questions about staff knowledge of children and young people's mental health and their confidence to provide support to the pupils and families they work with. These questions are taken from surveys and questionnaires that have been used in large scale studies and have been chosen to provide information to schools and colleges that they are able to respond to through training and support.



Using the survey



1. Anonymity

The survey is designed to be used anonymously to ensure staff feel able to respond honestly.

When sharing results, give thought to how you protect participants' anonymity. For example, if only a small number of respondents answer a question in a particular way, you may inadvertently identify individuals when you report this. Use a less precise indicator like 'less than 5' where numbers are small.

2. When to carry out survey

Your survey results may vary according to the time of the year. For example, you may choose to survey during exam season, when stress levels may be high.

Asking staff to complete a survey in the summer will allow them to reflect on the successes and challenges while allowing for scope for meaningful change for the next academic year.

3. Sharing survey results

Sharing survey results can be a useful starting point for discussions and action planning.

Sharing and discussing findings openly with staff and providing a safe space for reflection can encourage staff contributions in both exploring issues and identifying solutions.

4. Embedding your findings

Once you've shared results you may wish to think how to embed the findings in your planning process. For example, you could dedicate a half-term meeting cycle to the findings and include mental health and wellbeing as a standing item at meetings or use CPD sessions for deeper discussions.

Action that you identify from the survey can also be embedded in your planning cycle and your Education Improvement Plan.



5. Repeating the survey

Repeating the survey on a regular basis can help schools and colleges to see change. You may want to repeat the whole survey or just one or two of the sections. By comparing the results at different time points, schools and colleges can monitor whether actions are having the intended impact. You may also be able to spot emerging issues.

6. Comparing your results

Comparing your results with other results can provide context for the responses from your staff team. The established questionnaires used in Section 1 mean that these results can be compared with other studies and research. If you know other schools or colleges who are using this survey, you could share your results and work together to identify strengths and challenges.

Need support?

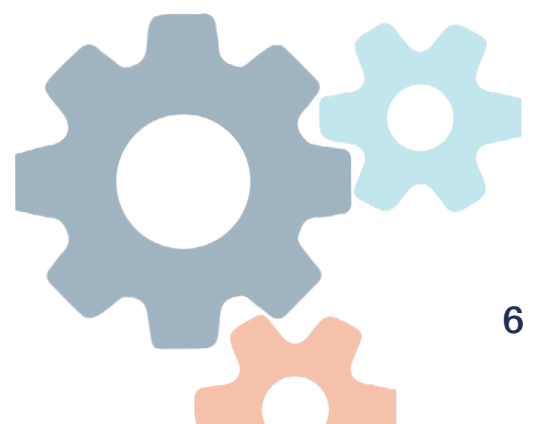
This survey was developed by the Child Outcomes Research Consortium (CORC) and the Evidence Based Practice Unit (EBPU), both based at Anna Freud.



Should you need some support in carrying out the survey we can provide this. We are able to set up your online survey and analyse your data into an easy-to-understand report. To cover our costs, there is a charge for this service. To find out more about the costs and how to get started, please visit our [website](#).

Or email us at:

measuringwellbeing@annafreud.org



WMfS staff survey: section 1(a)

Staff wellbeing and perception of stress

Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks.



Statement	None of the time	Rarely	Some of the time	Often	All of the time
I've been feeling optimistic about the future	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I've been feeling useful	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I've been feeling relaxed	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I've been dealing with problems well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I've been thinking clearly	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I've been feeling close to other people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I've been able to make up my mind about things	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Using the results



Using an established questionnaire means existing research can be used as a benchmark to contextualise the results.

By repeating the survey schools and colleges can see whether staff wellbeing is improving and whether feelings of stress are reducing.



Scoring of section 1(a)



Section 1(a) is using a validated measure - Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS). Please see page 12 for terms of use.

Each response is given a score from 1 (none of the time) to 5 (all of the time). These are added together to give a 'raw score'. The lowest possible raw score is 7. The highest possible raw score is 35. Higher scores indicate higher wellbeing.

Converting the raw score into a 'metric score' means you can compare your results with results from research using these questions. For example, [a study](#) of adults in 2017 showed a mean SWEMWBS score of 23.7 for men and 23.2 for women in the a general adult population in England.

[Use the table here](#) to convert your raw scores into metric scores. [Visit this page](#) for more information on the SWEMWBS.

WMfS staff survey: section 1(b)

Staff wellbeing and perception of stress

The questions in this scale ask you about your feelings and thoughts during the last month. In each case, you will be asked to indicate how often you felt or thought a certain way. Although some of the questions are similar, there are differences between them and you should treat each one as a separate question. The best approach is to answer fairly quickly. That is, don't try to count up the number of times you felt a particular way, but rather indicate the alternative that seems like a reasonable estimate.



Statement	Never	Almost never	Some of the time	Fairly often	Very often
1. In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and "stressed"?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9. In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Using the results



Using an established questionnaire means existing research can be used as a benchmark to contextualise the results.

By repeating the survey schools and colleges can see whether staff wellbeing is improving and whether feelings of stress are reducing.

Scoring of section 1(b)



Section 1(b) is using a validated measure - the Perceived Stress Scale. Please see Page 12 for Terms of Use.

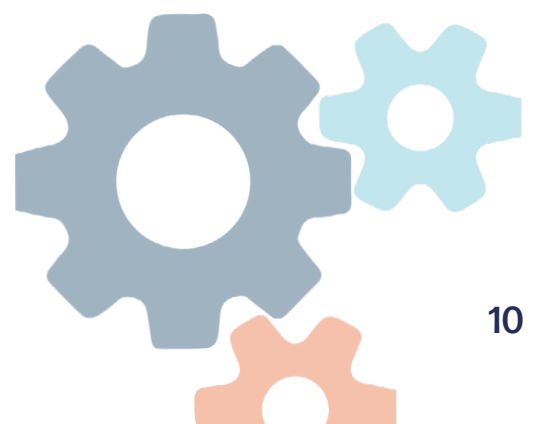
Each response to the questions of the Perceived Stress Scale are given a score. Questions 1, 2, 3, 6, 9 and 10 are scores 0 (almost never) to 4 (very often). And questions 4, 5, 7, & 8 are scored in reverse from 4 (almost never) to 0 (very often). You get a total by adding up the scores for each item.

Individual scores on the PSS can range from 0 to 40 with higher scores indicating higher perceived stress.

Scores ranging from **0-13** would be considered **low stress**.

Scores ranging from **14-26** would be considered **moderate stress**.

Scores ranging from **27-40** would be considered **high perceived stress**.



WMfS staff survey: section 2


Staff wellbeing at your school or college

Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last 2 weeks.



Statement	Answers <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
My work has a positive impact on my mental health and wellbeing.	<input type="radio"/> All of the time <input type="radio"/> Often <input type="radio"/> Some of the time <input type="radio"/> Not at all
In my school / college, staff are encouraged to speak openly about their mental wellbeing.	<input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree
In my school / college, we have a mental health / wellbeing policy in place, which includes the mental wellbeing of staff.	<input type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No <input type="radio"/> Don't know
Have any of the following caused you to feel stressed or unhappy at work over the last 2 weeks (select as many as apply)?	<input type="radio"/> Accountability (including performance, test scores, inspections) <input type="radio"/> Workload and work-life balance <input type="radio"/> Administrative tasks <input type="radio"/> Relationship with parents <input type="radio"/> Relationship with colleagues <input type="radio"/> Relationship with senior leadership team <input type="radio"/> Pastoral concerns relating to pupils (e.g. mental health, safeguarding and behaviour) <input type="radio"/> Other <input type="radio"/> I have not felt stressed or unhappy at work over the last 2 weeks

Statements to continue on next page.

Statement	Answers 
<p>If I felt stressed or worried at work, I would be most likely to seek help from (select as many as apply):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Line manager <input type="radio"/> Senior leadership team <input type="radio"/> A colleague in a similar role to myself <input type="radio"/> My GP <input type="radio"/> A mental health professional (e.g. a counsellor, over the phone or face-to-face) <input type="radio"/> A friend or family member who does not work at my school/college <input type="radio"/> Nobody <input type="radio"/> Other <input type="radio"/> I have not felt stressed or unhappy at work over the last 2 weeks
<p>If I approached my manager with concerns about my mental wellbeing, I am confident that I would be well supported.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree
<p>My school / college senior leadership team takes active steps to support the mental wellbeing of all staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Strongly agree <input type="radio"/> Agree <input type="radio"/> Disagree <input type="radio"/> Strongly disagree
<p>Which of the following types of initiative do you feel would be most valuable to improving your mental wellbeing at work?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Increased information, training and awareness about staff mental wellbeing <input type="radio"/> Peer support <input type="radio"/> Access to occupational health/professional mental health support <input type="radio"/> Time off and flexible working schemes <input type="radio"/> Reduction in workload <input type="radio"/> Limiting working hours <input type="radio"/> More/better supervision from managers <input type="radio"/> Other



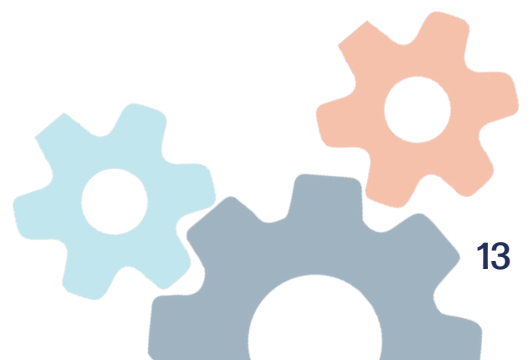
Using the results



The results from this section could be used to identify improvement targets and develop an action plan. The responses could help identify specific steps that could be taken that could improve staff wellbeing or reduce stress.

Participant responses may also suggest how well supported staff are feeling and identify where support could be improved.

Repeating the questions in this section could provide evidence of progress towards targets.



WMfS staff survey: section 3


Staff knowledge and confidence in relation to children and young people's mental health and wellbeing issues

To what extent would you agree/disagree with the following statements about your knowledge of children and young people's mental health and wellbeing?



Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Agree	Strongly disagree
I feel equipped to identify signs and symptoms that may be linked to a mental health issue.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appropriate support to identify mental health issues in children and young people is available in my school or college for all classroom teachers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know how to help children and young people with mental health issues access appropriate support.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am knowledgeable about a wide range of mental health issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am aware of risk factors and causes of mental health issues in children and young people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know the things I can do as a member of school or college staff to promote and support emotional wellbeing of children and young people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I know the procedure to follow in my school or college when a child or young person presents with a mental health issue.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Statements to continue on next page.

Statement	Answers 
How often do you talk to children and young people in your school or college about their mental health and wellbeing?	<input type="radio"/> Daily <input type="radio"/> Weekly <input type="radio"/> Monthly <input type="radio"/> Less than monthly <input type="radio"/> Never
How confident do you feel about talking to children and young people about their mental health and wellbeing?	<input type="radio"/> Very confident <input type="radio"/> Quite confident <input type="radio"/> Not very confident <input type="radio"/> Not at all confident
How confident do you feel about supporting children and young people that are experiencing difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing?	<input type="radio"/> Very confident <input type="radio"/> Quite confident <input type="radio"/> Not very confident <input type="radio"/> Not at all confident
How often do you talk to parents and carers about the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in your school or college?	<input type="radio"/> Daily <input type="radio"/> Weekly <input type="radio"/> Monthly <input type="radio"/> Less than monthly <input type="radio"/> Never
How confident do you feel about talking to parents and carers about the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people in your school or college?	<input type="radio"/> Very confident <input type="radio"/> Quite confident <input type="radio"/> Not very confident <input type="radio"/> Not at all confident

Using the results



These results could be used to evaluate the professional development needs of the staff team and identify priorities for support and training.

Asking these questions regularly can show the impact of professional development.

Terms of use

Short Warwick Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS)



The SWEMWBS is free to use but you need to ask for permission before you begin using SWEMWBS, by completing a registration form on [the SWEMWBS website](#).

SWEMWBS is protected by copyright, the Reproduction copyrights for SWEMWBS are as follows and must be presented on any copy of SWEMWBS used:

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If you produce any documents outlining your SWEMWBS results (e.g. reports, presentations) you need to reference SWEMWBS as above.

FURTHER READING:

Stewart-Brown, S., Tennant, A., Tennant, R., Platt, S., Parkinson, J., & Weich, S. (2009). Internal construct validity of the Warwick-Edinburgh mental wellbeing scale (WEMWBS): A Rasch analysis using data from the Scottish health education population survey. *Health and Quality of Life Outcomes*, 7(1), 15–22.

The Perceived Stress Scale



Permission for the use of the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) “is not necessary when use is for nonprofit academic research or nonprofit educational purposes”.

FURTHER READING:

Cohen, S., Kamarck, T., Mermelstein, R. (1983). A global measure of perceived stress. *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 24, 385–396.

Cohen, S., & Williamson, G. (1988). Perceived stress in a probability sample of the United States. In S. Spacapan & S. Oskamp (Eds.), *The social psychology of health: Claremont symposium on applied social psychology*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

About Anna Freud

For over 70 years, Anna Freud as an organisation has championed research and channelled it into action. Our founder, Anna Freud, was committed to helping the most vulnerable children and she was not afraid to challenge the status quo. This approach defined her legacy, which we build on today as we remain a world-leading, evidence-led mental wellbeing charity, here to benefit children, young people and families.

annafreud.org

About CORC

The Child Outcomes Research Consortium (CORC) is the UK's leading membership organisation that collects and uses evidence to improve children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. Founded in 2002 by a group of mental health professionals determined to understand the impact of their work, today our members include mental health service providers, schools, professional bodies and research institutions from across Europe and beyond.

corc.uk.net

About EBPU

The Evidence Based Practice Unit (EBPU) is a child and youth mental health research and innovation unit based at UCL Faculty of Brain Sciences and Anna Freud. EBPU bridges cutting-edge research and innovative practice in children's mental health and wellbeing. EBPU are committed to finding the best ways to use measurement of wellbeing to enhance support for children and families.

ucl.ac.uk/evidence-based-practice-unit



