

SEMH SPOTLIGHT – Supporting the wellbeing of School Staff

This spotlight accompanies the Warwickshire Educational Psychology Service short webinar on Supporting Staff Wellbeing. The webinar can be accessed through the website: <https://www.warwickshire.gov.uk/educational-psychology-service-eps/useful-educational-psychology-resources>

Focusing on staff wellbeing and resilience:

The content and ideas within our network session and spotlight recording were inspired by the [Mentally Health Schools](#) initiative, led by the [Anna Freud Centre](#).

As Anna Freud cover: ‘The term “wellbeing” can be used to describe our holistic health, including our physical, mental and emotional health. When we have good levels of wellbeing we feel that life is in balance and that we can generally cope well. We feel motivated and engaged, and that we can ‘bounce back’ from life’s challenges.

School and college staff often juggle multiple tasks and demands, so a focus on staff wellbeing has become increasingly important. Taking good care of staff both emotionally and practically helps them to perform to the best of their ability and ensures that they are better able to support pupils. Workloads, deadlines and challenging behaviours can all impact negatively on the wellbeing of school staff.

Poor mental wellbeing may impact on their ability to manage during key moments of stress in the classroom or at school. Staff who have good mental wellbeing are more likely to have the necessary resources to be able to manage and plan during or after stressful episodes whether with a pupil, a class, a colleague, an inspector or a parent.’ ([Page 4](#)).

We introduced the idea of a ‘graduated approach’ for supporting staff wellbeing, by thinking about both universal support ideas (which may benefit all staff) and targeted and specialist support ideas for colleagues who may need or value more individualised support:

Specialist Support
Employee Assistance Programmes
Crisis support
Referrals to occupational health
Education Support Partnership
Targeted Support
Supervision
Training around mental health
Regular mandatory wellbeing check-in meetings for all staff using a personal or peer support model
Wellbeing events for staff
Universal Support
Staff wellbeing policy
Dedicated staff rooms
Drop-in sessions for any concerns
Staff wellbeing team established and supported to offer regular events
Staff education on child and family mental health
Culture of no blame and stigma for mental health needs of school community

Feedback boxes where staff can share (anonymously) ideas for improvement of school ethos and model good working practices

The Anna Freud Centre have provided the following guidance '[Supporting Staff Wellbeing in Schools](#)'. This aims to give school staff and Senior Leadership Teams some simple guidance and good practical examples where schools have successfully implemented wellbeing strategies.

Their Mentally Healthy Schools initiative has also developed guidance and support for providing a [whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing](#).

This approach focuses on **5 key steps**:

1. [Preparing for change](#) - How to prepare for a whole-school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing.
2. [Working together](#) – Including all members of the school or college community in planning for change, including collaboration with professional services.
3. [Understanding need](#) – understanding the needs of your school community, in order to plan support accordingly.
4. [Promoting wellbeing](#) – Integrating mental health and wellbeing across your curriculum and the culture of your school or setting.
5. [Supporting staff](#) – Including ideas for measuring, monitoring and supporting staff wellbeing.

We recommended their [resource hub](#), which provides classroom resources for a range of mental health topics (for pupils, students and staff).

As a quick guide for managing stress and difficult emotions, we recommend: '[How to handle stress: teachers & education staff](#)'. This [interactive stress container tool](#) may also be helpful to explore with your staff team.

Finally, we recommend the [Ten Ways to Support Staff Wellbeing](#) resource. This looks at how to best support staff wellbeing in schools. It focuses on self-care and support, balancing workloads, and provides advice on how to measure and monitor wellbeing in schools. The [action planning guide](#) is designed to help school and college leadership teams plan and implement effective staff wellbeing support. The template can be used to record agreed actions, alongside any deadlines and success measures.

Local and national organisations:

Local organisations:

- Mind Coventry and Warwickshire Wellbeing Advisors: <https://cwmind.org.uk/wellbeing-advisers/>
- CW Mind: <https://cwmind.org.uk/>
- Warwickshire School Health and Wellbeing Service: <https://www.compass-uk.org/introduction-to-wshwbs/>



National organisations:

- Anna Freud <https://www.annafreud.org/on-my-mind/> and Ten Steps to Support School Staff Wellbeing: <https://www.annafreud.org/resources/schools-and-colleges/ten-ways-to-support-school-staff-wellbeing/>
- Education Support: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>
- Education Support Teacher Wellbeing Index: <https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-organisations/research/teacher-wellbeing-index/>
- Mentally Health Schools: <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/supporting-staff-wellbeing/>
- NASUWT: <https://www.nasuwt.org.uk/advice/wellbeing-tools-for-teachers.html>
- TES Wellbeing Hub: <https://www.tes.com/en-gb/advice-hub/wellbeing>

Charity helplines:

- Samaritans: <https://www.samaritans.org/> 116 123
- Shout: <https://giveusashout.org/> 85258

Please note that information is subject to change and the authors cannot take responsibility for any advice obtained from third parties. Information collated April 2025.