

Emotional Health and Wellbeing at Olchfa

September 2022

What is 'wellbeing'?





Uywodraeth Cynullad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Cymry Ifanc
Young Wales

www.cymru.gov.uk

Thinking positively

Emotional health and well-being
in schools and Early Years settings



Information

Information document No: 089/2010
Date of issue: August 2010

In 2003, what did young people say had the biggest impact on their wellbeing?

- having people to talk to
- personal achievement
- being praised
- generally feeling positive about themselves

And that the key things that make them feel stressed are:

- conflict
- confrontation with authority
- restriction of autonomy
- exclusion by their peers



Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being



Guidance

Guidance document no: 269/2021

Date of issue: March 2021

‘.... the spotlight is now firmly focused on emotional and mental well-being and, in particular, the well-being of children and young people and the role of schools in supporting and building positive well-being.’

Kirsty Williams 2021

The Framework aims:

- *to address the emotional and mental well-being needs of all children and young people, **as well as school staff as part of the whole-school community***
- *and recognises that the school alone cannot meet all the needs of what is a complex population of young people, whose needs will vary as they progress through infancy to adolescence and early adulthood*

Which relationships need strengthening?

- *teacher and learner*
- *teaching staff*
- *the school senior leadership team and wider school staff*
- *the school and parents and carers*
- *the school and other professionals working with the school*
- *the school and the wider community that surrounds the school.*

What 'ethos' does the framework encourage schools to embed?

- *values inclusion, where everybody works together, contributing their individual skills and resources to the collective good.*
- *creates a supportive environment where young people are encouraged to fulfil their personal and academic potential, where they thrive, learn and emotionally develop, **supported by teachers who operate in a culture that equally values their own well-being.***



Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families



A project of



Anna Freud
National Centre for
Children and Families



**77%**

experienced symptoms of poor
mental health due to their work

**72%**

are stressed (rising to 84% for
senior leaders)

**46%**

always go into work when unwell
(rising to 54% for senior leaders)

**42%**

think their organisation's culture has
a negative impact on their
wellbeing

**54%**

have considered leaving the sector
in the past two years due to
pressures on their mental health

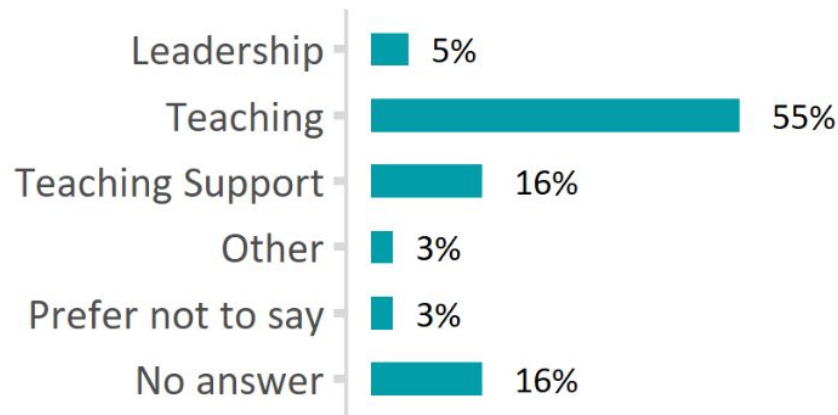


Olchfa Staff Survey

Survey participants

91

staff in your school participated in the survey.



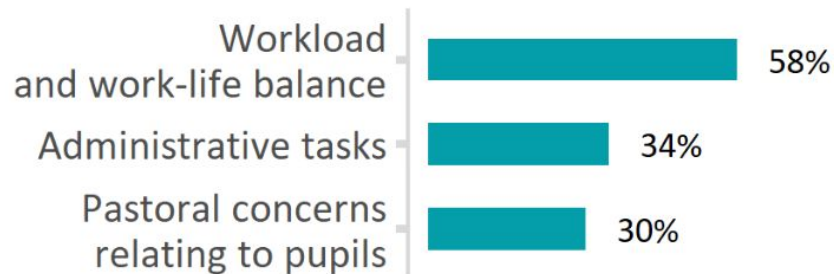
#1 Wellbeing

63%

of respondents reported 'medium' or 'high' wellbeing

#2 Stress

Three biggest causes of stress were:



#3 Knowledge

56%

of respondents say that they are knowledgeable of a wide range of mental health issues.

#4 Confidence

41%

of respondents feel confident to support children that are experiencing difficulties with their mental health and wellbeing.

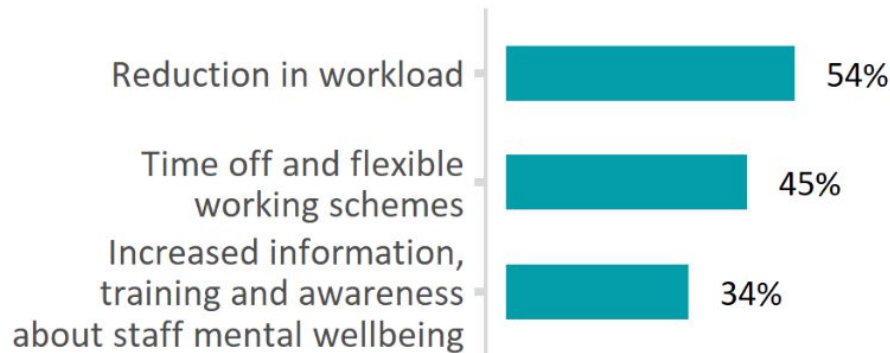
#5 Talking mental health

54%

of respondents feel confident to talk to children about their mental health and wellbeing.

#6 Support

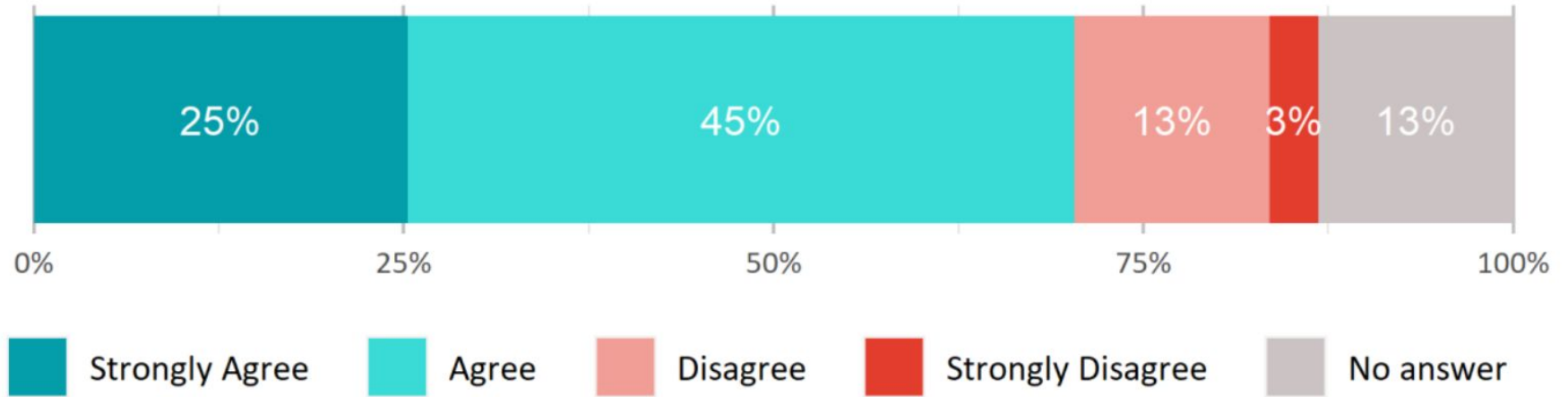
Three of the most frequently suggested initiatives by staff that would improve wellbeing were:



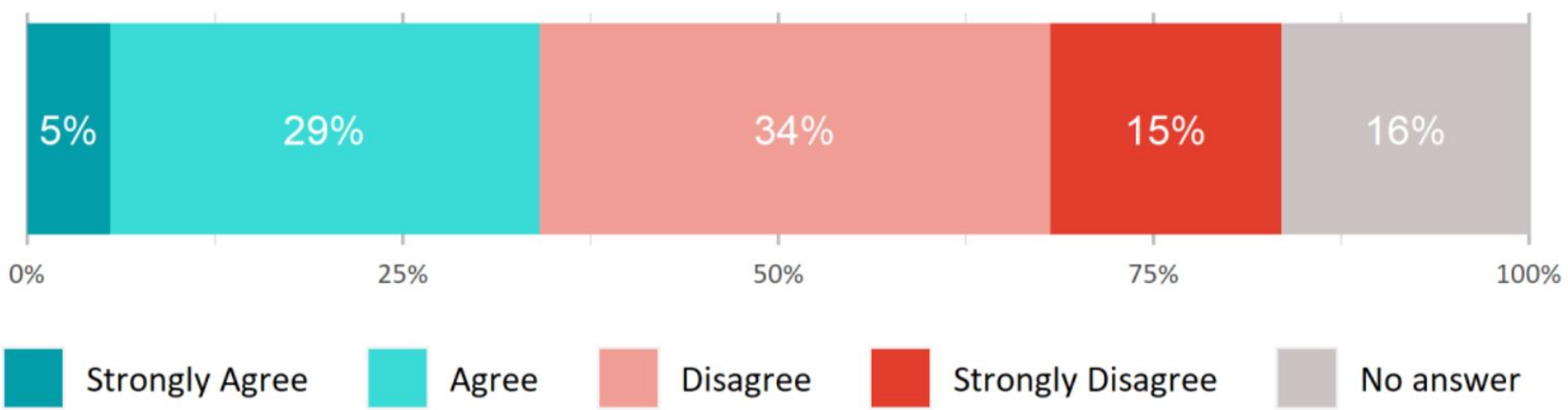
#6 Support

Staff were asked about the support from school leaders and managers for staff mental wellbeing.

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



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



Emotional Health and Wellbeing at Olchfa - what did we do last year to learn more about pupil and staff experiences?

- Pupil wellbeing designated person - Andrew Charles
- Staff wellbeing designated person - Matt Salmon
- CORC survey (pupils Y7-11)
- CORC survey (staff)
- SHRN survey (pupils Y7-13)
- Pupil focus groups
- Staff focus groups
- EHW statement
- EHW staff policy
- EHW action plan
- School website

What are some of the symptoms of poor mental health?

- poor concentration
- being easily distracted
- worrying more
- finding it hard to make decisions
- feeling less interested in day-to-day activities
- low mood
- feeling overwhelmed by things
- tearfulness
- tiredness and lack of energy
- sleeping more or less
- talking less and avoiding social activities
- talking more or talking very fast, jumping between topics and ideas
- finding it difficult to control your emotions
- drinking more
- irritability and short temper
- aggression

Workplace culture and environment

- Innovation
- Professional development
- Continued learning
- Shared responsibility
- Openness and honesty including when things are not going well
- Creative problem solving
- Agility
- Values-driven leadership at every level.

What is psychological safety?

Psychological safety at work means creating an environment where people:

- Are trusted and feel safe
- Can be honest with managers and colleagues
- Are able to speak up when they need to
- Have the freedom and security to try new things and make mistakes
- Feel safe enough to be creative and take risks.

What is psychological safety?

It's about people being able to be themselves, in order to perform at their best without any risk to their mental wellbeing.

People want to work for employers who treat them like adults. They also recognise their shared responsibility to keep learning, striving and getting things done.

Environments which enable this are psychologically safe.

To further grow a psychologically safe environment in schools, the following tools, approaches and provisions can be used:

Have a mental health and wellbeing policy – often seen as an essential first step which states what your school wants to achieve in terms of wellbeing.

Get people's opinions and views e.g. through staff surveys, invitations to shape policy and practice within schools. Once you've asked for a staff point of view, it is important to then take visible action based on the responses.

Work with staff to look for practical ways to reduce workload and working 'out of hours' e.g. ensuring as few meetings as possible, and increasing planning time within the school day.

Provide targeted, high quality professional development that supports staff to look up toward their purpose, rather than down into technical details.

Establish mentor / co-worker support schemes.

Introduce supervision as a safe space to discuss issues.

Have a well implemented student behaviour policy.

Offer flexibility wherever possible – introduce flexible working hours and arrangements (see flexible working resource).

Get governing bodies involved in promoting messages on mental health.

Set up an online space for blogs, tips, and planned wellbeing activities for staff to access, as well as info on stress reduction and when to seek help.

Communicate and signpost to the different support available in ways that staff will be able to pick up this information.

Ensure managers are well trained (including in managing for good mental health) and that the school's performance management approach includes wellbeing in the mix of considerations.

Prioritise activities, messages and initiatives which talk about staff mental health and wellbeing

Make mental health awareness and wellbeing activities part of CPD sessions.

Provide access to employee assistance programmes and counselling services.

Encourage staff to speak to their managers, HR or union members if they feel they need to.

Offer 'time to talk' sessions / days / slots with tea, cake and space for a conversation between colleagues.

Offer exercise, relaxation, stress management and mindfulness programmes, groups or classes, potentially as part of a wider wellbeing programme.

Upskill the whole school on mental health awareness, resilience and personal wellbeing, and effective communications in a team including feedback sharing – use agile and efficient training methods.

Invest in high quality streamlined administrative and data processes.

Incentivise teams and departments to model good wellbeing practice.

What can we all do at Olchfa?

- Speak up
- Value self-care - it's not selfish
- Take up the offers of support that do exist, if you need to
- Show leadership with a small 'I'



Sanctuary
Group