

# What is mental wellbeing, and why should schools measure it?



Mental wellbeing is not simply the absence of mental illness; it is a broader indicator of social, emotional and physical wellness. It is influenced by a range of factors, including a child or young person's family, their community and school environment, their physical health and their social and emotional skills.

Mental wellbeing can be defined as feeling good, feeling that life is going well, and feeling able to get on with daily life.

Schools are important settings for supporting children and young people's wellbeing. Schools may decide to measure mental wellbeing to:

- Get a **snapshot** of pupil mental wellbeing across the school population.
- **Identify** individuals who might benefit from targeted support.
- **Evaluate** the impact of the whole-school approach, as well as targeted approaches, to supporting mental wellbeing, finding out what has worked well and what has worked less well.

## What should school staff do to measure and monitor wellbeing?

- 1. Choose the right measure.** Measures are tools (such as questionnaires) that can be used to collect information about wellbeing across a range of areas. Choosing the right measure to collect the information you need will help you to meet the objectives of your measuring/monitoring exercise.
- 2. Introduce the measures to your pupils,** explaining why they are being asked to complete the measure, who is being asked to complete it and who will see the information.
- 3.** Think about **where** the measure will be completed, ensuring that pupils feel comfortable and have privacy.
- 4.** Think about **how you will respond to risky issues** such as self-harm or suicidal thoughts.
- 5.** Have a plan in place for **recording and using the data.**

