



The Robert Burns Academy

Mental Health and Wellbeing Framework

2021/22



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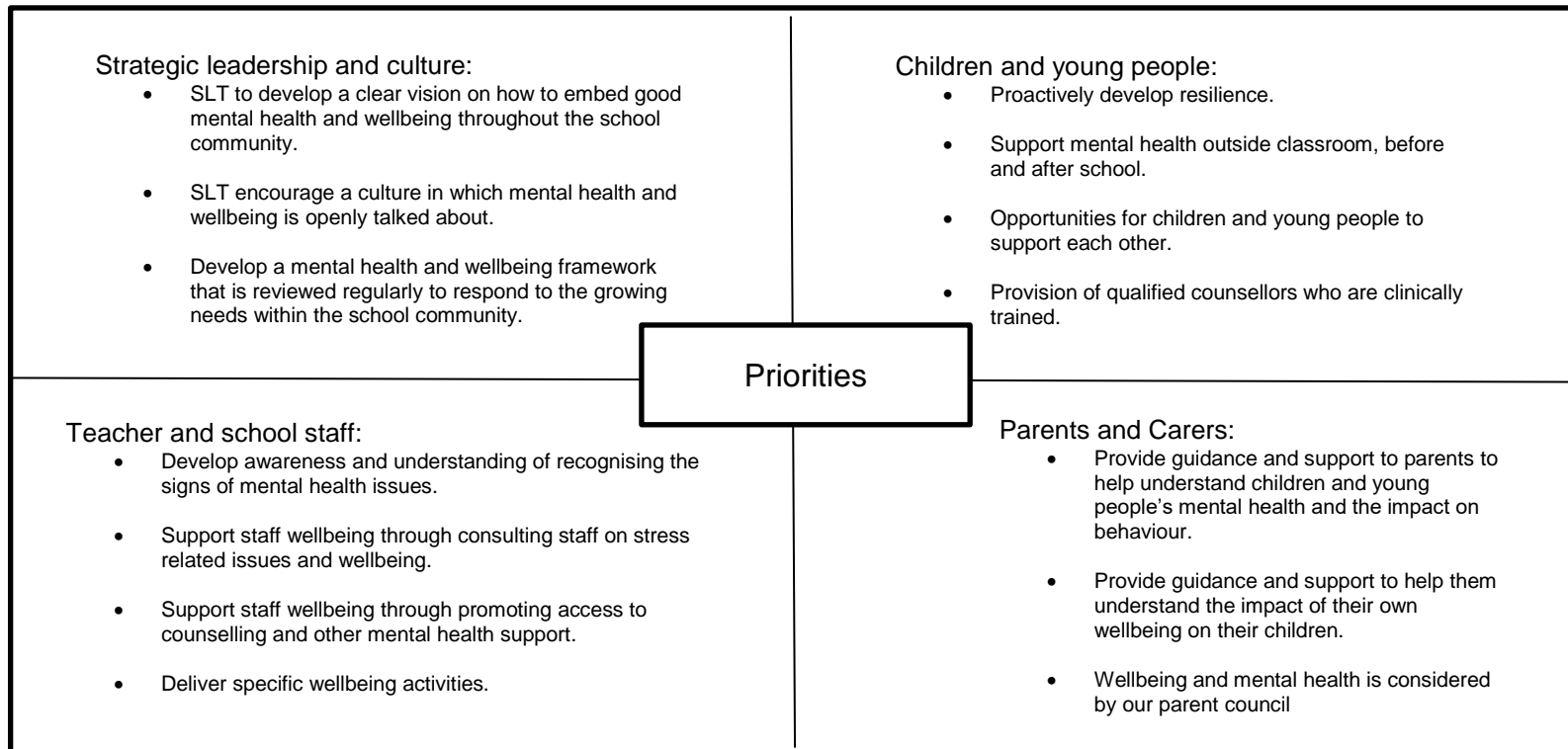
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Policy Rationale

As practitioners in schools, there is the overall responsibility to support and develop the mental, emotional, social and physical wellbeing of pupils. Health and Wellbeing, as part of the Curriculum for Excellence, is 'The Responsibility of All'. The key here is to look for methods to prevent and intervene early but also promote good mental health strategies. Beginning a journey to becoming a mentally healthy school will require us to think more psychologically, to encourage self-reflection and develop our own self-awareness. This will require planning and on-going evaluation. We will need to delve deeper into relationships between pupils, staff, parents and any other agencies involved in supporting pupils and their families. It gives us the opportunity to strengthen the bonds between school, home and the wider community and take on a systemic approach. The *vision* that Robert Burns Academy is '**Where we belong; where we reach our potential**' informs of all our actions, our conversations and experiences we have in school every day. By looking at the values of the school- **Achievement, Equity and Respect**- it will be necessary to re-evaluate these in relation to mental health and how we promote mental health and wellbeing through various policies and improvement plans at a school, local and national level.



Recovery from Covid-19

Recently there has been increasing research into the impact that coronavirus is having on ourselves and our children and young people's mental health and wellbeing. It is important to recognise these when supporting pupils transitioning back to school after periods of lockdown. The National Association of Head Teachers (2021) has also outlined potential negative consequences from lockdown that can be summed up as follows:

- **Loss:** of seeing friends and family; of routines; of goals/milestones, such as exams; of rituals such as end of year activities; of school life; of normal life and activities.
- **Friendships:** lack of socialisation; loss of self-worth gained from peer groups; missing friends; difficulties maintaining friendships remotely; loss of social rewards and social identity.
- **Anxiety, fear and confusion:** fear about future uncertainty; fear of future school closures; confusion about new rules; anxiety about illness and hygiene.
- **Disrupted sleep patterns:** causing loss of concentration and affecting mood.
- **Family experiences:** abuse; conflict; stress; financial issues; coping with mental health issues of adults; increased caring responsibilities.
- **School:** worries about missing learning and falling behind; loss of routines; academic worries due to school closures or exam cancellations; lack of access to trusted adults.
- **Bereavement and illness:** coping with the illness or death of family, friends and loved ones.

Therefore, it is essential that we, as a school community adopt a whole school approach to support ourselves, our pupils and their families and the wider community during and after these challenging times.

Promoting Positive Mental Health

Looking after your mental health and wellbeing is just as important as taking care of your physical health. If you break your leg, you would go to the hospital, if your tooth hurt you would visit your dentist, if you wanted to get fit you may join a gym. So why is it that when people start to feel down, stressed, confused, unhappy, the majority of us still feel a sense of shame admitting when times get tough? At Robert Burns Academy we aim to break down barriers to create a safe, open and non-judgmental environment where everyone can access the right support they need at the right time.

Curriculum	Sign Posting	Raising Awareness
PLP	Displays	Mental Health Calendar
PSE	Posters	Assemblies
Subject Courses	Wellbeing Boards	Wellbeing groups- Staff and Pupil
IDL opportunities	Bespoke Wellbeing packs	Leaflets
		Wellbeing Champions

Warning Signs

Early warning signs of low mental wellbeing/ 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

Roles and Responsibilities

- Staff – *See Appendix 1.*
 - According to research conducted by Education Support (2020) compared to 60% of other UK jobs, 76% people working in education reported behavioural, psychological or physical symptoms. They need to be able to express how they are feeling in appropriate ways, problem solve and model positive mental health and wellbeing. This will allow staff to develop good relationships with their peers and pupils through empathy, becoming self-aware, co-regulate strong feelings and ultimately demonstrate resilience.
- Pupils- *See Appendix 2.*
 - Within the East Ayrshire's Children and Young People's Service Plan 2020-2023 it highlights the need for us to look closely at barriers that prevent our children and young people reaching their full potential. As a rural setting school, this could be a contributing factor to mental health and wellbeing. Other barriers such as poverty, unemployment and alcohol and drug abuse are also factors experienced within the community and can have severe consequences on mental health. Essentially to 'build better brains' (Mental Health Champions Programme), we need to look closely at protective and risk factors to measure a child's

vulnerability. We must view mental health as being just as important as physical health. The Mental Health Delivery Plan 2019-22 for East Ayrshire has shown that:

- *44% of young people stated they were unsure how to access mental health support.*
 - *26.5% of children live in poverty (after housing cost).*
 - *637 CAMHS referrals were accepted in East Ayrshire.*
- Parents- See Appendix 3.
 - Research has shown that working in tandem with parents/carers from a range of social and economic backgrounds has benefits on the overall wellbeing, attendance, behaviour, sense of belonging and attainment of children and young people (Anna Freud Centre, 2020). As the primary caregivers to our pupils there should be attention given to ensure parents/carers feel supported by the school. It is important that they know it is ok not to be ok and identify when it is necessary to reach out for support when they are struggling.
 - The mental health of a parent can impact on a child's mental health, as children are quick to pick up on any anxiety, low mood etc. We should be encouraging parents/carers to talk about their feelings and reinforce to children and young people that it is not the fault of the child they feel this way, however explain to them that adults can seek out help from other adults for support. This will help to reduce stigma around the issue of mental health and wellbeing by creating a culture of openness and trust.

Lead Members of Staff

Role	Name	Department
Child Protection Officer	Peter Gilchrist	Head of Campus, HT of RBA
HWB Lead	Amanda McPheator	Depute Head Teacher
Mental Health Coordinator	Aimee Burgoyne	Principal Teacher of Pupil Support
Wellbeing Champion (staff)	Janice McGill Leigh Cumming Amanda McPheator Aimee Burgoyne Lynsey Brook Caitlin McIlvaney Darren Donnelly Samia Carmichael Rebecca McGinn Dale Beattie Evelyn Mullen	Librarian Inclusion Teacher Depute Head Teacher Principal Teacher of Pupil Support Principal Teacher of Music and Drama Science Teacher Support for Learning Teacher Social Subjects PE Teacher Principal Teacher of Pupil Support Transition Teacher

Wellbeing Champions Network (see appendix 4)

What is a Wellbeing Champion?

The main role of the Champions is to raise awareness of wellbeing and provide staff, pupils and parents with information about contacts/helplines/websites.

What do they do?

The aims of the network is to support staff and pupil wellbeing champions in our educational establishments to:-

- Raising awareness of wellbeing.
- Provide a listening ear to their peers / colleagues.
- Sign post to self-help / support services.
- Set up a school wellbeing network with links to the authority network.
- Where appropriate the champions will set up general interest clubs / events.

Supporting Parents and Carers to support their children

It is important as a school we work closely with our parents/carers to ensure that they feel supported in supporting their own child/children to promote positive mental health at home and where necessary recognise the warning signs and have the confidence to know where to access the right support at the right time. Research has shown that positive parental engagement has a favourable impact on overall wellbeing, attendance, behaviour, a sense of belonging to the school and attainment of children.

We recognise and appreciate that all parents/carers are different and will want to engage with the school in a variety of ways. We will actively seek out views of the parent/carer body and reinforce the message that RBA is not simply, 'my child's school', rather that it is, 'our school'. Events, activities, meetings, workshops will be put on at times and in places that suit a broad range of parents.

Managing Disclosures

If a pupil or member of staff disclose any information regarding issues with mental health it is important we all know how to address this appropriately. The Wellbeing Champions training programme has offered pupils and staff the opportunity to develop the skills in order to open up dialogue about mental health and provide a listening to ear to anyone that needs it. With any disclosure this should be approached in a calm, supportive and non- judgemental manner and acquire the consent of the person/pupil to share information and explain the importance of doing so.

Safeguarding

Staff

You can never promise confidentiality as a colleague may disclose something that is a safeguarding concern – such as disclosures around risk or harm to self or another. Always start conversations by explaining that there may be some disclosures that you would need to refer on and be very clear why that would be the case and what you would do.

Pupils

In regards to pupils, after consent is given, it is advisable to pass on this information to the relevant Pupil Support Teacher (PTG) as this will help to safeguard your own wellbeing as you will not feel solely responsible for that pupil and ensure consistency in support in your absence. The PTG or the pupil will inform the parent/carer of this and the appropriate supports will be accessed. If a pupil discloses a potential child protection concerns please follow the correct procedure in reporting this. The Child Protection Officer is Peter Gilchrist.

Links to other Campus Policies and Frameworks:

- Inclusion Framework
- Relationships Framework
- Child Protection Policy

Further Training and Review

Staff and pupils will be offered regular training opportunities in regards to mental health and wellbeing. Responding to the needs of our learning community will determine how this training is offered for example, e-learning modules, twilight sessions, group training sessions. They will also receive annual Child Protection training. Suggestions for CLPL opportunities should be discussed with the Mental Health Coordinator who will liaise with the HWB lead.

HWB Calendar for CLPL is available on GLOW. However during this time many courses are face to face and cannot run during COVID-19.

Ultimately, school policy focusing on mental health will be put together with the help of the HT, SLT, staff, pupils, parents/carers and other agencies involved in supporting mental health at the Robert Burns Academy. The HIGIOS framework, Section 3.1 focuses on wellbeing that we can use to evaluate and reflect on policy and practice. The following documents will provide information to help support the development of school policy:

1. Building the Curriculum
2. Developing a positive whole school ethos and culture: relationships, learning and behaviour
3. Getting it right for every child
4. Health and Wellbeing Benchmarks
5. Health and Wellbeing Experiences and Outcomes
6. How Good is our School - HGIOS4
7. Wellbeing Indicators - SHANARRI

8. Included Engaged and Involved Part 2
9. Included, Engaged and Involved Part 1

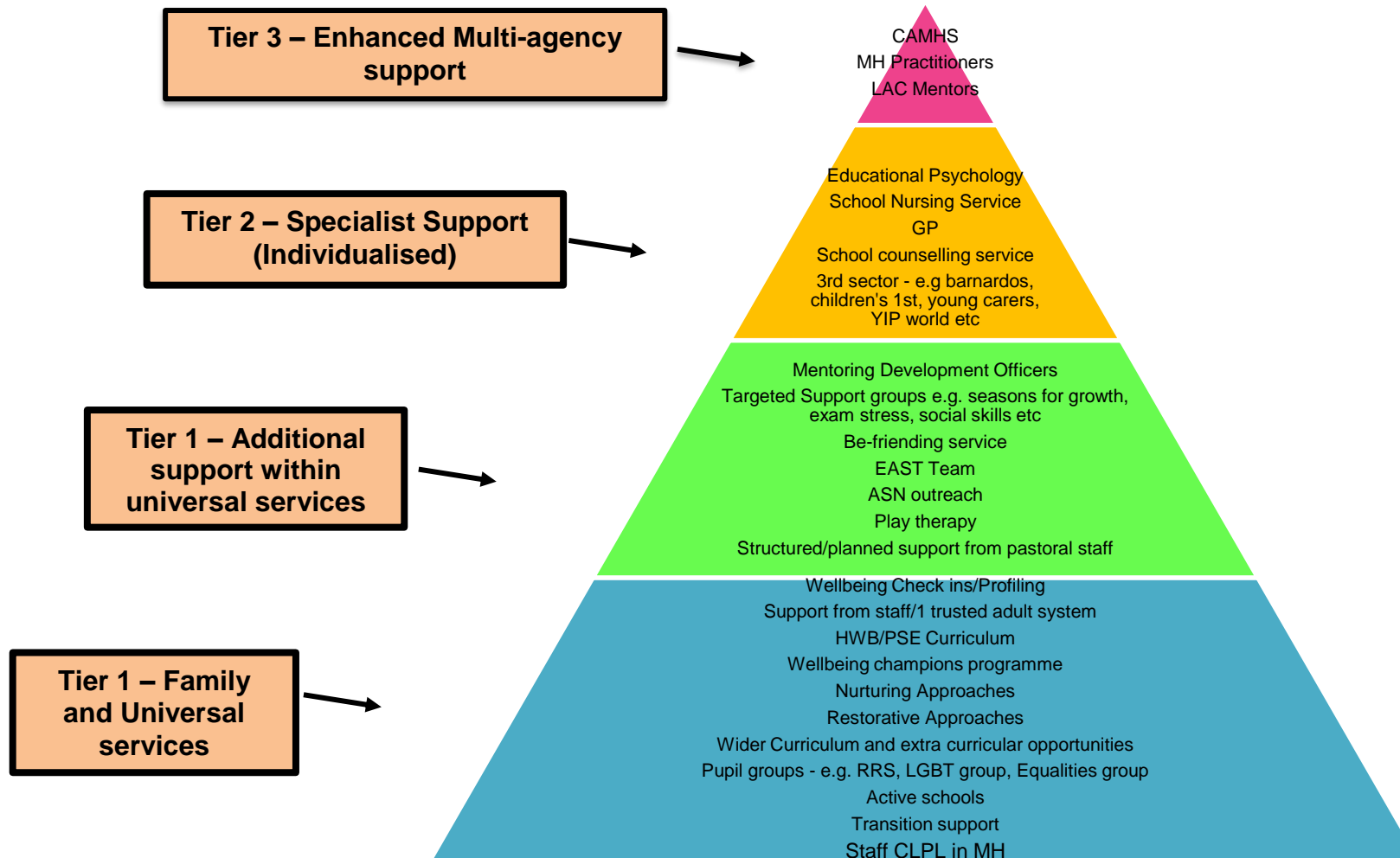
Self-Evaluation Review

Self-evaluation will take place in relation to specified quality indicators expressed on the Mentally Healthy Schools website (<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/scotland/preparing-for-school-inspections/>) and challenge questions set by the authority, again specifically looking at Q.I's 1.4, 2.1, and 3.1
Review of the policy will take place every 3 years. The **next review is April 2024**. It will be updated immediately to reflect changes.

Appendix 1. Supports for Staff

What will we do?
Highlight sources of information and supports about common mental health issues on our wellbeing boards.
Wellbeing Champions programme is set up to provide peer support for all staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raise awareness of wellbeing• Provide a 'listening ear' to peers• Sign post to self-help/ support services• Set up a school wellbeing network with authority network.
Counselling service available for staff to access provided by the authority.
Health Check opportunities (1x a term) via the CHIP van.
Staff wellbeing group set up. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regular meetings to organise wellbeing activities.• Exercise classes• Walking/Running Clubs• Baking clubs• Quiz nights
Staff wellbeing questionnaires to be sent out regularly- 3x across the academic year.
HWB on the agenda of departmental meetings with a focus on Mental Health <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Check in with staff• Pledge to try

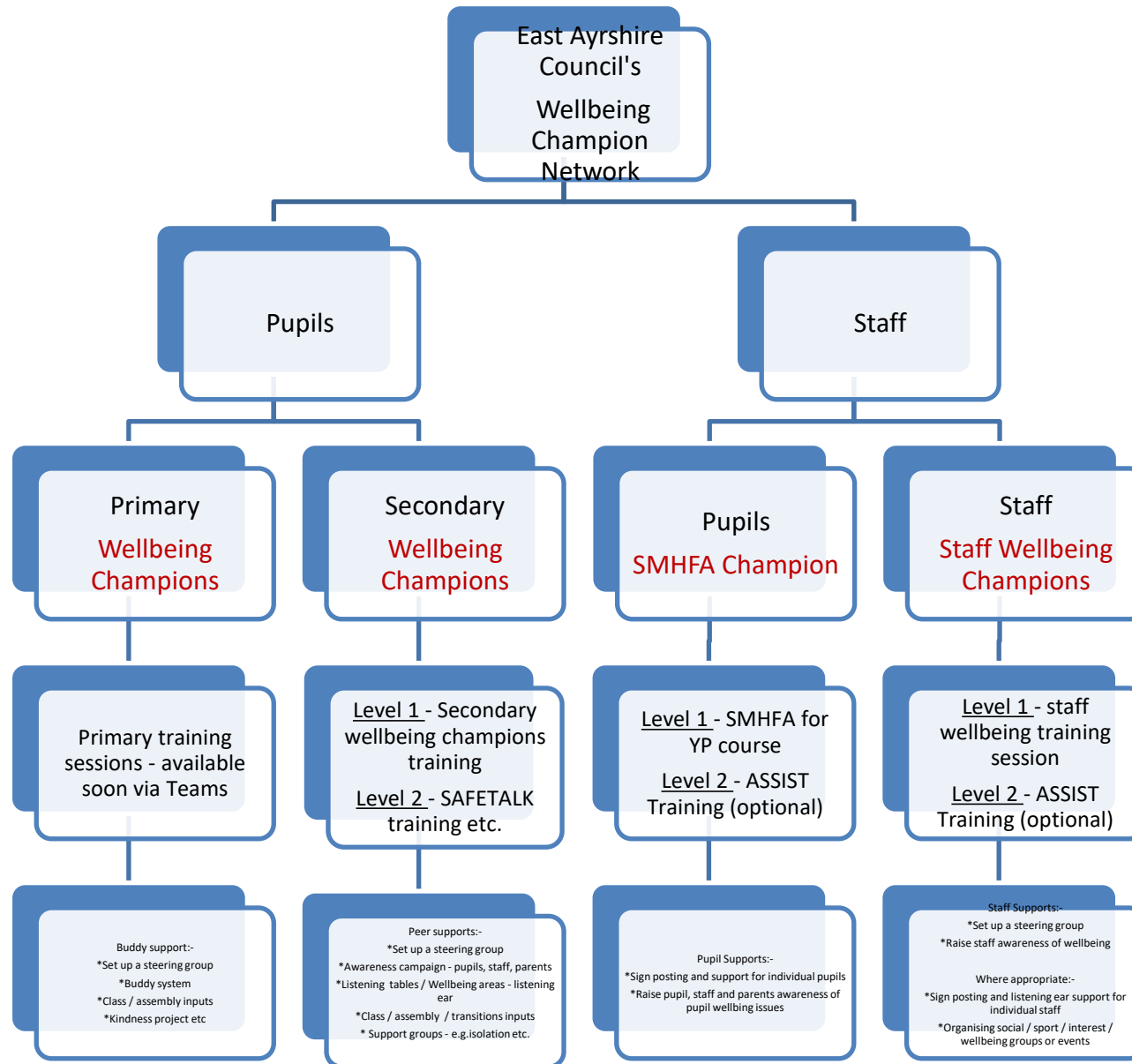
Appendix 2: Tier Level of Support for Pupils



Appendix 3: Working with Parents/Carers to support children

What will we do?
Highlight sources of information and supports about common mental health issues on our school website and app.
Ensure all parents/carers are aware of who to talk to in school if they are concerned about their child/ friend of a child.
Make our mental health policy accessible for parents.
Share our ideas with parents how they can support and promote positive mental health at home. <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Parent's evening○ HWB events○ Questionnaires
Keep parents informed of mental health topics their child is learning about in school and share ideas and thoughts about exploring this at home.

Appendix 4:



Appendix 5: Further Reading

Websites

East Ayrshire Mental Health Delivery Plan 2019-22

<https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/E/East-Ayrshire-Mental-Health-Delivery-Plan.pdf> accessed 01/12/20.

EAST AYRSHIRE CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE'S SERVICES PLAN 2020:2023

<https://www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk/Resources/PDF/C/Children-and-Young-Peoples-Cabinet/Children-and-Young-Peoples-Services-Plan.pdf> 01/12/20.

Education Support

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/helping-your-staff/employee-assistance-programme> accessed 01/12/20.

Good Mental Health for All

<http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/1805/good-mental-health-for-all-feb-2016.pdf> accessed on 30/11/20.

Mental Health Continuum

<http://health.nzdf.mil.nz/mind/about-mental-health/the-mental-health-continuum/> accessed 17/12/20.

Mentally Healthy Schools

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk> accessed 26/11/20.

Mental Health in Schools Working Group

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/mental-health-in-schools-working-group-terms-of-reference/> accessed 28/11/20.

Mental Health Task Force

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/children-young-peoples-mental-health-task-force-recommendations/pages/4/> accessed 17/12/20.

Mental Health of Teachers

<http://www.healthscotland.scot/media/2951/supporting-teachers-mental-health-and-wellbeing-english-feb2020.pdf> accessed 01/12/20.

National Association of Head Teachers <https://www.naht.org.uk/advice-and-support/coronavirus-information-and-resources/coronavirus-supporting-pupils-mental-health-and-well-being/#an-impact> accessed on 12/01/2021.

National Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027

<https://www.gov.scot/binaries/content/documents/govscot/publications/strategy-plan/2017/03/mental-health-strategy-2017-2027/documents/00516047-pdf/00516047-pdf/govscot%3Adocument/00516047.pdf> accessed 30/11/20.

National Rural Mental Health Forum.

<https://ruralwellbeing.org/> accessed on 30/11/20.

NSPCC

www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/support-for-parents/mental-health-parenting/ accessed 17/12/20.

Stirling, S., and Emery, H Dr., (2016) *A whole school framework for emotional wellbeing and mental health: A self assessment and improvement tool for school leaders*, www.ncb.org.uk accessed on 26/11/20.

The Peer Education Project

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/projects/peer-education-project-pep> accessed 01/12/20.

Well Connected Communities: A study on community approach to mental health and well-being in five rural regions of Scotland.

<https://www.supportinmindscotland.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=addeb6f1-7848-4a23-891c-5f08e48c9c8d> accessed 30/11/20.