

To: Education and Children's Services Policy Board

On: 20 May 2021

Report by: Director of Children's Services

Heading: Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy for Education Establishments

1. Summary

- 1.1. In line with the Children's Services priority to reduce inequalities and deliver improved health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people, this digital policy has been developed, by a multi-agency team, for use in education establishments across Renfrewshire.
- 1.2. The purpose of the digital policy is to support the work establishments are doing around mental health and wellbeing. It will ensure that all education staff working with children and young people in Renfrewshire are provided with the necessary information and self-evaluation framework to plan for improvement while also identifying the effective practice already in place.
- 1.3. The policy provides a template for establishments to contextualise to suit their own settings. It outlines universal and targeted approaches to support the mental health of children and young people as well as signposting young people, staff and parents to sources of support. Training opportunities for staff are also highlighted.
- 1.4. The policy provides a framework to support effective mental health in establishments through the NHS Greater Glasgow and Clyde 6 box model. This includes self-evaluation of practice under 6 headings: one good adult; developing resilience in establishments; peer support and social media; guidance through the service maze; responding to distress; and developing resilience in communities.
- 1.5. The policy is underpinned by GIRFEC and is linked to the United Nations Convention for the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) articles 3,12,13,17, 24 and 29.
- 1.6. The digital nature of the policy ensures that live links can contain the most up to date information on an ongoing basis. There are 2 versions; one for secondary schools and the other for primary/early years.

- 1.7. Implementation of the policy across Renfrewshire establishments will be monitored by the Mental Health Action Group, chaired by the education Health and Wellbeing Development Officer. By June 2022, it is expected that all education establishments will be effectively implementing their own mental health and wellbeing policy.
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2. Recommendations

- 2.1. It is recommended that the Education and Children's Services Policy Board note the content of the 'Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy for Education Establishments' as a helpful digital policy document to support consistency and high quality practice across Renfrewshire education establishments.

Click [here](#) for link to the digital policy template

3. Background

- 3.1 The Scottish Government and COSLA have demonstrated their shared commitment to improving the mental health of children, young people and their families by working with delivery partners to invest in preventative services. The recommendations and actions from the [Better Mental Health in Scotland \(2018\)](#), [Audit Scotland Report \(2018\)](#) and [Mental Health Strategy 2017-27](#) highlight the significant need to provide opportunities for early intervention and prevention to avoid the unnecessary escalation of emotional distress in children and young people.
- 3.2 The Covid-19 pandemic has affected the way of life of every single person in Scotland. We know that the mental health impact of Covid-19 will not have been felt equally across Scotland. We also know that some of the mental health impacts of the pandemic will take time to materialise. As we start to recover from the pandemic, it is particularly important that there continues to be a focus on promoting good mental health and wellbeing and that support is provided whenever it is needed.
- 3.3 The Scottish Government publication [Mental Health – Scotland's Transition and Recovery summary/](#) October 2020 cites some key themes from initial findings of the Research Advisory Group into the impact of Covid-19. These include elevated rates of stress or anxiety, loneliness and the effects of economic pressures on families. Rates of traumatic reactions are expected to increase; including substance misuse, domestic violence, self-harm and suicide.
- 3.4 It is vital that there is a consistent high quality approach to supporting mental health and wellbeing across all education establishments underpinned by a clear and effective policy.

Implications of this report

1. Financial

None.

2. HR and Organisational Development

None.

3. Community/Council Planning

Our Renfrewshire is well	- Promotes wellbeing and resilience in children and young people.
Our Renfrewshire is fair	- Aims to ensure that all children and young people have the opportunity to access appropriate support from skilled adults.
Our Renfrewshire is safe	- Aims to protect vulnerable children and young people and reduce the risk of harm.
Building strong, safe and resilient communities	- Promotes effective support for vulnerable children and young people.
Tackling inequality, ensuring opportunities for all	- Aims to improve the mental health and wellbeing of all children and young people.
Working together to improve outcomes	- Provides professional learning opportunities for staff to support improved health and wellbeing outcomes for children and young people within Renfrewshire

4. Legal

None.

5. Property/Assets

None.

6. Information Technology

None.

7. Equality and Human Rights

The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website.

- 8. **Health and Safety**
None.
- 9. **Procurement**
None.
- 10. **Risk**
None.
- 11. **Privacy Impact**
None.
- 12. **Cosla Policy Position**
None.
- 13. **Climate Risk**
None.

List of Background Papers

Click [here](#) for link to the digital policy template 'Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy for Education Establishments'.

Other background papers are contained as live links within the Board Report.

The foregoing background paper will be retained within children's services for inspection by the public for the prescribed period of four years from the date of the meeting. The contact officer within the service is Julie Calder, Head of Service, email: julie.calder@renfrewshire.gov.uk 0141 6187194

Children's Services
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