



Governors

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# Outline of Session

**This session will explore the role of governors in ensuring your school strategy for mental health and wellbeing and specifically how you, as governors support your Head and SLT in delivering a whole school approach.**

- What is Wellbeing?
- Why is it worth investing in?
- Role and Impact of Wellbeing Governor
- Overview of PaJeS Wellbeing & Me Award
- How can Governors support wellbeing in schools?
- Supporting the whole community – Staff & Students
- Questions to reflect on & Practical Actions

# What is Wellbeing?

**The World Health Organisation defines (universal) wellbeing as;**

‘A state of wellbeing in which an individual realises their own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life , can work productively and fruitfully and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.’

**The Big Book of Whole School Wellbeing defines whole school wellbeing as;**

‘A holistic approach, which involves all parts of the school working together and being committed to everyone’s social, emotional and mental wellbeing; everyone is considerate and respectful to everyone’s needs. The entire school community works with a common goal in mind and everyone is engaged with the values and ethos of the school.’



# Why Invest Time in Wellbeing?

**2014 Public Health England published a paper briefing headteachers on the link between pupil health and wellbeing.**

Research evidence shows that education and health are closely linked. Promoting the health and wellbeing of pupils and students within schools and colleges has the potential to improve their educational outcomes and their health and wellbeing outcomes.

## **Evidence**

1. Pupils with better mental and physical health and wellbeing are likely to achieve better academically.
2. Effective social and emotional competencies are associated with greater health and wellbeing, and better achievement.
3. The culture, ethos and environment of a school influences the health and wellbeing of pupils and their readiness to learn.
4. New Ofsted framework guidance.

# The Role of Wellbeing Governor

**8 Principles to Promoting a Whole School Approach to Wellbeing that supports and champions efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing.**



## Case Studies

“They take great **interest** in what we have been doing as a school for wellbeing and PSHE.”

“We **meet termly** to discuss the new things we have been working on as well as things already put in place and continue to work on. They are very **supportive** in their role of governor and is always asking questions, taking an interest and is available if support is needed.”

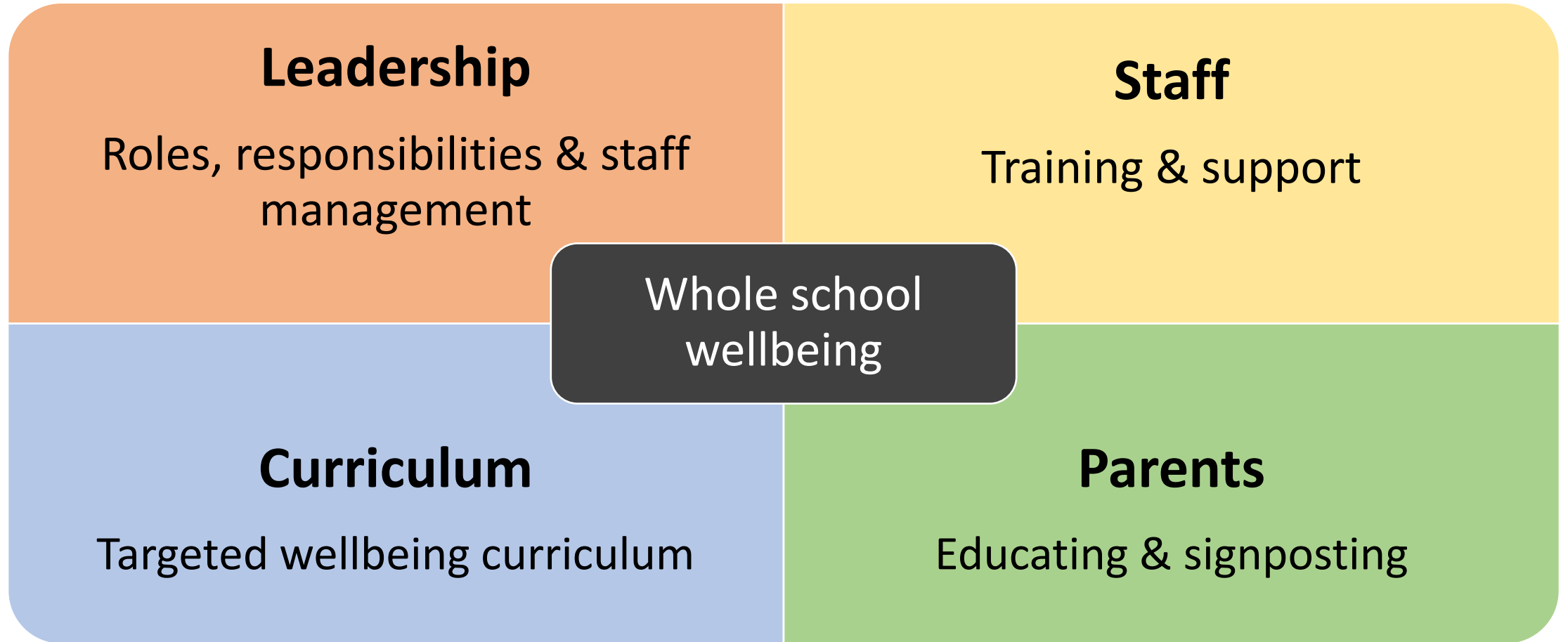
“I, unfortunately, do not have a relationship with the relevant governor and am not sure if this is a lack of interest or time. I cannot imagine it is because they do not care about wellbeing in our school”

“I share what has been going on with staff and children. We discuss what **strategies** that are in place and the **impact that they have on staff**. I have also shared new initiatives to all governors during governor meetings.”

“I have gained valuable **support and advice** from our wellbeing governor prior to sending out a recent wellbeing survey. They gave some useful suggestions and see things with a different perspective, not being in the school all the time”

# Wellbeing & Me

## The 4 pillar approach





**&wellbeing**  
**me**

# How governors can support the Wellbeing of Mental Health Leads, Heads and SLT's.

- Balance of support / challenge
- Mentoring, external coaching or through peer mentoring with other headteachers
- Wellbeing on the agenda
- Working hours
- Awareness of stakeholders

# Supporting the Whole School Community - Staff

- Evidenced based training
- PPA Time
- Staff wellbeing protocol
- Communication
- Mentoring / Coaching
- Employment Assistance Programme
- Wellbeing events
- Up to date equipment
- Staff Wellbeing Team

# Supporting the Whole School Community - Students

- Wellbeing Curriculum
- Physical environment, food, uniform
- Wellbeing Ambassador / Student voice
- Peer mentoring projects
- Relationship mapping

## Questions to Reflect On

- Do all the students access the curriculum?
- What do you already do well? What areas can be improved?
- Do we need to review the budget for wellbeing and professional development?
- What plans do school have for delivering mental health and wellbeing training?
- Does the school perform staff questionnaires?
- Is there an Employee Assistance Programme in place?
- How are staff supervised?
- Is staff turnover an issue?
- What referral systems are employed in schools to work with students who are struggling with their mental health? (Both long term and in the moment.)

## Practical Actions

- Staff mental health to be raised at every board meeting so all are aware of issues and suggested initiatives. A staff wellbeing team / questionnaire can aid this.
- Form a working group to review policies and procedures. Consider whether policies address the wellbeing of all involved, including headteacher. E.g. The complaints policy, staff discipline procedure, flexible working policy, staff wellbeing protocol.
- Champion flexible working and drive down workload. If senior leaders can make reasonable adjustments, it sets the tone for the rest of the staff.
- Adjust expectations surrounding update paperwork from Headteachers for Board meetings. Eg verbal updates instead of written
- Support the professional development of the Headteacher and SLT. This must be factored into the budget.
- Foster an environment of support, respect and openness and approach the Headteachers appraisal with wellbeing in mind.

## Practical Actions

- Explore how current CPD provision meets the needs of staff, whilst being mindful as not coming across as highlighting potential weaknesses which may cause additional anxiety
- DfE staff wellbeing charter (not statutory).
- Identify a senior mental health lead and suggest accessible and recommended funded DfE training. (ends 31/3/23)
- Give middle managers access to support and tools they need for line management.
- Create a positive behaviour culture within the Board of Governors,
- Ensure all pupils get access to support through policies, signposting and an accessible curriculum.
- Understand the impact of budget cuts on staffing, roles and responsibilities

## Wellbeing Governor's Actions - Case Studies

- "Introduced a **wellbeing day**, whereby staff can book off a day during the school year at a time that suits them. "
- "Increased **flexible working** options for staff."
- "Introduced **coaching for the headteacher**, who can, in turn, provide a coaching style of leadership to the staff."
- "Developed a proactive approach to succession planning, identifying opportunities to **recognise and develop staff potential**."
- "Kept introduction of new **non-statutory policies to a minimum** to ensure staff feel trusted to carry out their roles and aren't burdened with unnecessary bureaucracy."



## Further Reading

- Keeping Children Safe in Education – Gov.uk
- DfE Mental Health and Behaviour in School – Gov.uk
- The Big Book Of Whole School Wellbeing – Evans, Hoyle, Roberts & Yusuf
- The Link between pupil health and wellbeing and attainment – DfE 2014
- Mental health and behaviour in schools – Gov.uk
- Staff wellbeing charter - DfE

**g**wellbeing  
& **me**