

## Educational wellbeing practitioners

**We are a team delivering short-term evidence-based strategies to children and young people with mild to moderate mental health difficulties, such as anxiety or low mood.**

### What is mental health?

We all have mental health and it is just as important as our physical health. Also known as emotional health or wellbeing, it is important to look after it in order to make the most of your potential and cope with life.

Mental health affects us all and we all have periods of time when we feel stressed, frightened or down. Sometimes these feelings pass but in some cases they develop into a more serious problem.

Mental health changes according to varying circumstances and as you move through different stages of life.

### Mild to moderate health difficulties

According to the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines, mild mental health problems are when a person has a small number of symptoms that have a limited effect on their daily life.

A moderate mental health problem is when a person has more symptoms that can make their daily life much more difficult than usual. A person may experience different level at different times.

#### Behaviour to look out for:

- Changes to sleep pattern
- Physical health complaints e.g. headaches, stomach aches
- Shaky, sweaty, restless
- Appearing low, sad or more tearful
- Worrying much more than usual
- Being more withdrawn/not talking much
- Not wanting to see friends or play
- Being angry, argumentative, getting into fights
- Changes to appetite—eat more or less, or switch between these two
- Wanting to run away or talking about not wanting to be alive or hating their lives
- Not achieving so well at school
- Losing confidence—avoiding doing things they used to do e.g. clubs, activities
- Recreating “stories, worries” in their play

### What evidence-based strategies do we use?

We deliver guided self-help in order to support a person and their parents to develop the skills, knowledge and experience to help themselves. It focuses on the idea of supporting the development of confidence in children's and parents' own skills and ability to cope. A large part of what we do is helping parents to understand how to help their children develop coping skills.

It is a brief intervention, usually lasting between 5-8 sessions which can be face-to-face or over the phone. The guided self help interventions are based on cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). CBT has a strong and growing evidence base for a number of different anxiety and low mood disorders. For more information on these interventions, please visit [www.nice.org.uk](http://www.nice.org.uk).

### How do I refer my child?

If you have concerns about your child, please speak to your designated Mental Health Lead at school or to your class teacher.