



## MINDFULNESS IN WALES: A Toolkit for Introducing Mindfulness in Education

### Executive Summary

The Mindfulness Toolkit sets out to provide the information an education setting might need to develop a strategic mindfulness journey to embed high quality mindfulness across the institution in a sustainable and effective way. It is designed to support the wellbeing of staff and learners in any education setting in Wales as well as implementation of the Whole School Approach to Mental Health and Wellbeing and the new curriculum for Wales, particularly the four purposes of education and the health and Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE).

It has been developed from good practice in Wales and elsewhere with input from as many sectors and relevant organisations as possible. It forms part of a wider 'living strategy' for mindfulness in Wales which is developing to include health, public service and other workplaces, community and more, which will support the aims of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. The involvement of wider society in Wales will amplify the work in education settings and contribute to making Wales a kinder, more compassionate and responsive nation.

We have looked at the potential for mindfulness in all sectors of education to support the concerns about children and young people's emotional and mental health. We know that 50% of mental health problems begin before the age of 15 years and 75% by age 24 years so early prevention is important. This work has been given even greater significance by the experiences of learners, staff, leaders and families in response to Covid-19 as well as the systemic change required to implement the transformation agenda and the far-reaching new curriculum.

### Mindfulness in an Education Context

For all of us in education mindfulness can help us cope with the pressures and uncertainties of life and work, connect with people and places, flourish through appreciating ourselves, others and the world around us, and provide the perspective and vision to empower us to change what isn't working for us. These four aspects are key to our wellbeing.

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The Toolkit draws on the good practice criteria identified in the Estyn Review *Healthy and Happy: School impact on pupil health and wellbeing* which also forms an important element of the draft Statutory Guidance in The Whole School Approach.

The key aspects of good practice identified in the Estyn review which can be applied to mindfulness in education for all age groups and settings in Wales include:

- quality consistent training for staff

- ongoing support in schools/clusters/colleges/universities/areas
- embedding mindfulness in a whole school/college/university or setting approach
- cross curriculum application
- a spiral curriculum throughout education
- involving families where possible

We know that many schools have introduced entry-level or mindfulness-inspired activities perhaps using Apps or staff experience of mindfulness or a related discipline. Staff and learners generally enjoy these activities and learners will have various responses. They may be more aware of their current emotional state, they may feel calmer, more focused and able to concentrate or more able to make effective choices. These can be a great introduction to mindfulness but may not give learners the more sustainable understanding, the range of skills and the self regulation to embed mindfulness in their lives. The difference between mindful activities and a high quality mindfulness curriculum is like the saying “Give someone a fish and you feed them for a day, but teach them to fish and you feed them for life.” In line with the criteria set out in Estyn’s *Healthy and Happy* Review we make a distinction in this Toolkit between mindfulness-inspired activities and the high quality mindfulness programmes available which will contribute effectively to the Health and Wellbeing AoLE and the Whole School Approach.

## Cost Effectiveness

In order to introduce and sustain mindfulness in an effective way to enable to full benefits, including training as many staff as possible in an 8 session course (based on extensive research evidence) and supporting key staff to access the further training to teach one of the learners’ programmes there is an up-front cost (guide costs are set out in Annex 2 of the Toolkit). Once staff have been trained there is minimal ongoing cost in supporting staff and providing the curriculum.

Training staff who go on to deliver a high quality mindfulness programme to learners over five years reduces the cost per head to around £5. But perhaps the greater cost effectiveness relates to staff themselves, especially in these challenging times. Research by Katherine Weare *Evidence for Mindfulness: Impact on the Wellbeing and Performance of School Staff (2014)* found:

<b>Increased:</b>	<b>Decreased:</b>
Wellbeing	Stress
Mindfulness	Anxiety
Self-compassion	Depression
Sustained attention	Demotivation
Emotional regulation	Time-urgency
Teaching efficacy	Burnout symptoms

This could have a significant impact on staff absence and quality of teaching providing a cost benefit in terms of cover costs and performance.

## How Mindfulness fits with other Initiatives

We recognise that there is no room or time to pursue initiatives that do not form part of a coherent and complementary whole. We have set out how mindfulness links to and

supports a range of activities already being implemented in education settings. Mindfulness can be a significant contributor to the curriculum in its own right but can also be an enabler for learners in all aspects of their lives.

## Mindfulness Embedded for All

Mindfulness provides skills and understanding which are relevant to all ages and abilities. We have a range of programmes that have the potential to make mindfulness accessible for a wide range of additional learning needs. The programmes identified in the Toolkit are designed for whole class teaching and the aims of cope, connect, flourish and empower change are relevant for all learners, especially as part of the new curriculum.

## Good Practice Examples

We have drawn on the developing good practice in a range of settings in Wales where mindfulness has been introduced in different ways and in various contexts. These case studies are intended to provide examples which might help other settings in starting their own strategic mindfulness journey. We look forward to collecting others as more settings develop their strategic mindfulness journey.

## Costs and Models of Implementation

The Toolkit sets out the programmes currently available which best meet the criteria set out in the Estyn Review *Healthy and Happy: School impact on pupil wellbeing*. It demonstrates the training routes education staff would be able to take to develop their own mindfulness and to enable them to access training programmes which would equip them to teach high quality programmes to learners and includes guide costs to inform ongoing strategic planning.

## Links with the New Curriculum

Annex 3 sets out how mindfulness can support the four purposes of education and the What Matters Statements of the Health and Wellbeing AoLE. Links are also being developed for mindfulness across the curriculum, and as part of learner wellbeing and assessment.

## Evaluating the Impact of Mindfulness in Education

We need to be sure our good intentions translate into practice and actually make a positive difference to the adults and learners we work with. This Toolkit (Annex 4) identifies a range of measures which are available to help us demonstrate the impact of mindfulness for adults and learners in education.

Evaluating impact suggestions included here fall into three main categories:

1. Evidence and observations directly related to mindfulness in the classroom
2. The contribution made by mindfulness to the Progression Steps for the Health and Wellbeing AoLE and the Whole School Approach
3. More formal research and validated tools for measuring wellbeing

We will continue to work with settings to identify ways to capture the developing understanding and skills without adding to the assessment burden. We believe the new

assessment arrangements and evidence from some of the existing tools in common use will be important in this task and provide some examples of how they have been used to date.

## Conclusion

Introducing and embedding a range of mindfulness practices and understanding some of the underpinning neuroscience over time help develop focus and attention, regulate emotions and calm ourselves, connect with others and encourage curiosity, kindness, appreciation and gratitude. Mindfulness is much more than coping strategies – it's about empowerment, self-awareness and creativity.

These strategies are as important for staff as they are for learners, as we move forward into a period of significant systemic change as part of the National Mission for Education. We believe mindfulness can support education staff to cope with the challenges they are facing due to the impact of COVID-19, and to help strengthen their resilience to take forward the exciting new developments. We hope it will give as many learners as possible the tools which might enable them not only to cope better with the world in which they are growing up but also perhaps the skills, awareness and perspective to change it for the better.



Please see the full document

[MINDFULNESS IN WALES: A Toolkit for Introducing Mindfulness in Education](#) for more detailed information.



## MINDFULNESS IN WALES:

# A Toolkit for Introducing Mindfulness in Education

This paper builds on the ongoing work of groups of practitioners and on conversations with key stakeholders across Wales (**Annex 1**). It forms part of a wider ‘living strategy’ for mindfulness in Wales including other sectors such as Health, Community and Public Service which will support the aims of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.

We have looked at the potential for mindfulness in all sectors of education to support the concerns about children and young people’s emotional and mental health. We know that 50% of mental health problems begin before the age of 15 years and 75% by age 24 years<sup>1</sup> so early prevention is important. This work has been given even greater significance by the experiences of learners, staff, leaders and families in response to Covid-19 as well as the systemic change required to implement the transformation agenda and the far-reaching new curriculum.

Whilst we would like as many staff and learners as possible to experience the benefits of high quality mindfulness provision there is no intention to make the teaching of mindfulness mandatory. Mindfulness can form part of a jigsaw of provision which will contribute to the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE) and support the emotional and mental wellbeing of staff and learners as well as contribute to the developing Whole School Approach. It can also support the emphasis on mental and emotional health in Further and Higher Education and in all aspects of youth work.

If you think mindfulness may have a contribution to make as part of the approach to supporting wellbeing in your setting we hope you’ll find this Toolkit useful in ensuring the highest quality provision to make a real difference to the children and young people in your care.

## Mindfulness in an Education Context

Mindfulness is all about learning to pay attention to our experience as it unfolds, moment by moment, with open-minded curiosity and acceptance. It is about being with our present moment experiences with friendly awareness rather than thinking about what has happened or might happen. We learn to see clearly what our experience actually is and it trains us to respond skilfully to whatever is happening right here right now. We learn how our minds, emotions and body sensations are interconnected so we can develop our awareness of what’s going on for us and how this affects our actions and choices. Mindfulness is a way of living with mindful meditation just one tool in the toolkit to help staff and learners develop their mindfulness skills.

Introducing and embedding a range of mindfulness practices and understanding some of the underpinning neuroscience over time help develop focus and attention, regulate

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<sup>1</sup> Zisook 2007, American Journal of Psychiatry <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/17898345/>

emotions and calm ourselves, connect with others and encourage curiosity, kindness, appreciation and gratitude. Mindfulness is much more than coping strategies – it’s about empowerment, self-awareness and creativity. We hope it will give as many learners as possible the tools which might enable them not only to cope better with the world in which they are growing up but also perhaps the skills, awareness and perspective to change it for the better.

Mindfulness has so much to offer as part of the curriculum, but settings tell us that what makes the most significant contribution to creating a mindful setting is mindful staff. As Ginott says of teachers,

*“I’ve come to a frightening conclusion that I’m the decisive element in the classroom. It’s my personal approach that creates the climate. It’s my daily mood that makes the weather.”*

This has become even more important in the current situation when establishing a supportive and compassionate environment is essential in enabling learners to access learning in the midst of continuing challenges.

Mindfulness might sound deceptively simple, but introduced sensitively and with understanding these skills and experiences have the potential to support the school or setting ethos, the new curriculum, particularly the Health and Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience (AoLE)<sup>2</sup> and the Whole School Approach<sup>3</sup> as well as in the longer term contributing to the goals set out in the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act 2015.<sup>4</sup>

Mindfulness can also make a significant contribution outside the classroom especially for young people. Using mindfulness and developing their understanding of some of the neuroscience underpinning the practices can provide young people with a toolkit for relationships, life and work.

**Annex 2** sets out how mindfulness maps against the four core purposes of the new curriculum<sup>5</sup> and the Health and Wellbeing AoLE. **Annex 3** provides some examples of implementation of mindfulness including information on the costs related to various training routes to help settings plan their strategic mindfulness journey. **Annex 4** sets out how settings might evaluate the impact of a high quality mindfulness curriculum.

## Why Mindfulness can Support Education

For all of us in education mindfulness can help us cope with the pressures and uncertainties of life and work, connect with people and places, flourish through appreciating ourselves, others and the world around us, and provide the perspective and vision to empower us to change what isn’t working for us. These four aspects are key to our wellbeing.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/health-and-well-being/statements-of-what-matters>

<sup>3</sup> <https://gov.wales/embedding-whole-school-approach-mental-health-and-well-being>

<sup>4</sup> <https://futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/designing-your-curriculum/developing-a-vision-for-curriculum-design/#curriculum-design-and-the-four-purposes>

**Cope:** We know that learners in all settings face more challenges than ever with pressures from every direction. These are shared by those who work with and care for them, whilst engaging in the most far-reaching developments in education in Wales for a generation. Mindfulness can help staff and learners develop the resilience to cope with the inevitable pressures which arise in our lives, whether personal or professional, and gives us tools to deal with difficulty.

**Connect:** The strength of our social networks is one of the best protective factors against anxiety and depression and mindfulness can have a profound effect on the way we handle our relationships with others and develop our capacity for empathy. Mindfulness can also help strengthen our connection to place, family, the natural world, our sense of community and belonging, being grounded, helping us work towards an integrated and interconnected nation.

**Flourish:** Our flourishing as human beings comes not from fame or events but from a sense of appreciation of pleasant moments in daily life, a feeling of gratitude, our relationships with others, trust, compassion and kindness, or from a sense of awe and wonder from the natural world. Mindfulness can help us train our minds to savour experiences using all our senses with all the emotional and physical benefits that brings.

**Empower change:** Mindfulness can help us become aware of how things actually are at any given moment, and sometimes that can be uncomfortable. Recognising these thoughts, emotions and body sensations helps us to deal with them, rather than let them deal with us. We can use that awareness, understanding and perspective to make better decisions and to enhance our creativity.

In line with the range of policy developments to enhance the emotional and mental wellbeing of everyone in education mindfulness can help:

- ◇ Empower settings to put wellbeing at the heart of everything we do
- ◇ Create a culture of self-care and compassion
- ◇ Underpin relationships with self and others, including families
- ◇ Cultivate a climate of creativity and confidence for all in education
- ◇ Embed mindfulness in settings for staff and learners
- ◇ Enhance shared values within settings and with home
- ◇ Develop and value compassion and kindness - 'cydymdeimlad'
- ◇ Move from surviving to thriving
- ◇ Develop perspective and balance in life for all

## The Factors of High Quality Mindfulness Provision

Many settings engage in a range of entry-level or mindfulness-inspired activities, for example using various Apps, Go Noodle, or because one or more members of staff has some experience of mindfulness. Staff and learners generally enjoy these activities and learners will have various responses. They may be more aware of their current emotional state, they may feel calmer, more focused and able to concentrate or more able to make effective choices. This widespread interest in mindfulness is a great basis for development and will add support to a more rigorous, sustainable and systematic mindfulness curriculum, but

settings should be aware that some resources vary in quality and consistency. We make a distinct differentiation between mindfulness related activities and high quality mindfulness programmes which include significant training for staff. The difference between mindful activities and a high quality mindfulness curriculum is reflected in the saying *“Give someone a fish and you feed them for a day, but teach them to fish and you feed them for life.”*

The Health and Wellbeing AoLE provides an additional context for the development of a more comprehensive approach to teaching mindfulness as an intrinsic aspect of the curriculum, to enable staff and learners to develop a more meaningful understanding of the benefits of mindfulness and the skills to apply them. See Annex 2 for details.

We have the tools available through high quality mindfulness programmes to build on these mindfulness-related activities with progressive mindfulness curricula which will enable learners to understand how their minds work and help them develop a mindfulness skillset to enhance their lives. The programmes identified in this paper meet the good practice criteria identified in the Estyn Review *Healthy and Happy: School impact on pupil health and wellbeing*<sup>6</sup> which forms an important element of the draft Statutory Guidance in The Whole School Approach<sup>7</sup>. This can also make a significant contribution towards implementing the Health and Wellbeing AoLE and achieving the descriptions of learning and progression steps. These programmes can help raise the impact of mindfulness to achieve the potential benefits of cope, connect, flourish and empower change.

This Estyn review makes clear that there are many factors in the success of a resource or approach, and we recognise that there will be various ways to introduce the aspects of the new curriculum. The evidence shows that *“Interventions were only effective if they were completely and accurately implemented: this applied particularly to whole-school interventions which could be ineffective if not implemented with clarity, intensity and fidelity.”*

The key aspects of good practice identified in the Estyn review of research which can be applied to mindfulness in education for all age groups and settings in Wales include:

- ❑ **quality consistent training for staff** - as many staff as possible to have experienced an 8 session basic mindfulness programme based on extensive research over many years to ensure they have the knowledge and mindful experience to create an appropriate mindful environment. In time this could be incorporated into teacher and youth work training.
- ❑ **ongoing support in schools/clusters/colleges/universities/areas** - a mindful ethos and environment and opportunities for staff to practice together
- ❑ **embedding mindfulness in a whole school/college/university or setting approach** - as an important thread in the Health and Wellbeing AoLE and as part of the developing Whole School Approach to mental health and wellbeing in schools. Mindfulness could also be embedded in non-compulsory settings.

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<sup>6</sup>[https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Healthy%20and%20Happy%20report%20En\\_0.pdf](https://www.estyn.gov.wales/sites/www.estyn.gov.wales/files/documents/Healthy%20and%20Happy%20report%20En_0.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://gov.wales/embedding-whole-school-approach-mental-health-and-well-being>



- ❑ **cross curriculum application** - enabling and encouraging learners to incorporate mindfulness wherever it might be useful in all aspects of their life, not just as part of the Health and Wellbeing curriculum.
- ❑ **a spiral curriculum throughout education** - age appropriate mindfulness including the underpinning neuroscience introduced from early years onwards based on the quality programmes available for learners and working outwards from this foundation, including in non-compulsory settings. This requires staff who have received appropriate training
- ❑ **involving families where possible** - sharing some of the knowledge and experiences their children are having, specific programmes for families, and expanding some of the innovative work being done on mindfulness for children and their families.

The extensive research on adult mindfulness, and the emerging evidence on mindfulness in schools indicates that a high quality and spiral mindfulness curriculum, including introducing appropriate neuroscience has the potential to actually exploit the neuroplasticity of the brain and move towards altered traits, behaviours and responses which become ‘wired’ as ‘neurons which wire together fire together’. Brain imaging studies show that regular and ongoing mindfulness practice can reliably and profoundly alter the structure and function of the brain to improve the quality of thought, feeling and concern for others.

High quality mindfulness programmes introduce complex concepts in age-appropriate ways learners can understand and put into practice in their lives. Those programmes that will make a significant difference for learners and will properly support the Health and Wellbeing AoLE require specifically trained staff in the same way that you would want qualified swimming instructors to teach children to swim. Potential training pathways are included at Annex 3. There are many activities and short courses readily available that do not seem to require staff to have much, or sometimes any knowledge or experience of mindfulness. Many of these will be enjoyable activities in themselves and would provide an introduction or complement to a mindfulness curriculum but are unlikely to replicate the potential understanding and benefits of a developmental approach based on appropriate professional learning.

Further research is needed on the impact of mindfulness with children and young people, but initial research<sup>8</sup> and extensive anecdotal evidence from around half a million learners who have experienced one of these high quality mindfulness programmes shows great potential for learners to show significant changes.

## High Quality Mindfulness Programmes Available

The programmes included here meet the criteria for good practice set out in the Estyn review as set out above. The priority will be training as many senior leaders and staff as possible in all settings in an 8 session basic mindfulness course, in the first instance for their own self-care and wellbeing. The 8 session courses identified in this toolkit are all specifically cover the learning in *Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction* and *Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy*. These programmes have been extensively researched over the last 40 years to demonstrate their effectiveness in introducing mindfulness in all sectors of society.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://mindfulnessinschools.org/the-evidence-base/>

We believe this is essential to provide a sound basis for the introduction and teaching of mindfulness in education settings. We know that mindful staff create mindful settings which benefit learners as well as meeting Estyn’s recommendations for effective teaching and learning:

**Heads and Senior Leaders:**

*Mindfulness for Education Leaders (MEL)*<sup>9</sup>, an 8 session course developed with particular reference to the systemic change and challenges facing education in Wales, is part of the Innovation Pathway of the National Academy of Education Leadership (NAEL) available online or in person in English or Welsh. We recognise the extreme pressures headteachers and senior leaders have face during the pandemic, and the contribution of MEL to personal and professional wellbeing is ever more important. Mindful leadership can have a significant impact on the atmosphere and ethos of the school or setting, and participation in MEL will provide senior leaders with the skills and knowledge to support development of an effective mindfulness curriculum.

Senior leaders might also access the more generic programmes including *MBSR*, *MBCT*, *Breathworks*, *Finding Peace in a Frantic World* and *.b Foundations*, or the online *.begin for Educators*. Senior Leaders’ programmes will also be available for leaders in wider education settings.

**Staff:**

Eight session courses available include *MBSR*, *MBCT*, *Breathworks*, *Finding Peace in a Frantic World*, *Living in The Present* and the Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP) *.b Foundations* and their online course *.begin for Educators*, both developed specifically for education communities. The priority for staff involvement in these programmes is to support and enhance their own wellbeing and creativity and help them to be more responsive rather than reactive in their lives and relationships with learners and learning – to help them create the ‘weather’ in their classrooms.

For some staff who go on to develop their own established mindfulness practice, completion of an 8 session course will enable them to train to teach one of the high quality programmes for learners.

We take the widest interpretation of staff to be involved including teachers, LSAs, support staff, lecturers, youth workers, counsellors, outdoor activity leaders and others working with children and young people.

Accreditation - a *Post Graduate Certificate in Mindfulness and Wellbeing for Professional Practitioners* has been approved by the University of Wales Trinity St. David, with a stand alone module worth 20 credits at level 7 (Master’s level) *The Mindful Practitioner (Schools)*<sup>10</sup>.

**Learners:**

*The Present for 3-12 year olds*, *Paws b for 7-11*, and *.b for 11-18* are the main programmes used currently in schools in Wales. All these are now available in Welsh and the Mindfulness in Schools Project has mapped their curricula against the four

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.mindfulnessinaction.co.uk/mel/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.uwtsd.ac.uk/pgcert-mindfulness-and-well-being-for-professional-practitioners/>

purposes and the six areas of learning and experience<sup>11</sup>. The *Dots* programme for 3-6 year olds has been developed by the Mindfulness in Schools Project and is now available for training. *Living in The Present* has a version which would be appropriate for 16+ young people in formal, informal or non-formal settings and a programme for 12-19 year olds will be available later in 2021. *Cool Cats*, an introduction to mindfulness for younger children and those with additional needs is being piloted in Wales. These programmes require staff to have completed an 8 session course in order to access the training and resources to teach the pupil programmes. *Youth Mindfulness*, used widely in Scotland and in parts of the UK also requires specific training and has a programme for KS2 and SOMA for 12-21 year olds. We will add more programmes where we find others which meet the criteria set out in this paper. Programmes in schools can be supplemented and enhanced by activities requiring less training such as *.breathe*, *MindUp* etc. Information is included in Annex 3 and 4.

### **Families:**

Taster sessions, *.b Foundations*, *Paws b*, *.b* or *.breathe* could be used to introduce mindfulness to families. Some settings have introduced mindfulness for families, including some joint sessions for parents and their children. The *Nurturing Parents* mindfulness course is tailored specifically to parents and includes content about neuroscience and parenting and attachment, fostering parent/child connection as well as feelings of parent self-worth.

There is also *The Present for Adults* - a less formal approach but a structured and user-friendly course. MiSP have also developed the online *.begin* for educators, parents and carers. Many schools, youth settings and Urdd Gobaith Cymru already have family programmes which could include mindfulness.

### **Wider education settings:**

Full time youth workers and staff working in Further or Higher Education would be covered by the sections on Staff and Learners above and the aim should be for as many staff as possible in all settings to have experienced an 8 session course for their own self-care and to enable them to create a mindful climate, as well as progress to training to teach mindfulness to their young people.

Wherever possible part time youth workers should have access to the same opportunities but we recognise the challenge for staff working for a few hours each week. We intend to explore with youth work organisations how we can best enable part time youth workers to participate, supported by full-time workers who have received the rigorous training to deliver the more structured programmes.

*The Present*, *Paws b*, *Cool Cats* and *Nurturing Parents* were created in Wales – something to celebrate!

## **Mindfulness Embedded for All**

Mindfulness for learners is potentially very beneficial but it is NOT therapy. When training staff to deliver the learners' programmes it is always emphasised that issues such as worries

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<sup>11</sup> <https://mindfulnessinschools.org/mindfulness-in-schools-project-misp-and-the-new-curriculum-for-wales/>

they might have should be raised in a general way, rather than any specific issues relating to an individual child or young person. Susan Kaiser Greenland makes the point that we should explicitly avoid “exposing the soft underbelly” which might make a child or young person vulnerable. The Train to Teach programmes give participants skills in engaging learners in complex concepts whilst ensuring their confidentiality.

Some adult mindfulness programmes are delivered in a clinical setting as a therapeutic intervention but always by people with a specific clinical qualification e.g. psychologist, counsellor, mental health practitioner as part of their treatment plan. Mindfulness in education is deliberately light touch rather than designed as a therapeutic intervention but it does require a level of skill and understanding to ensure it is delivered appropriately. Evidence on community mindfulness suggests there may be a protective factor against multiple indices of harm.<sup>12</sup> The programmes identified in this paper require staff to have undertaken a basic mindfulness course and to have undertaken further specific training to teach one of these options. In addition the programmes should usually be delivered in a situation where there are established safeguarding procedures in place. This includes informal, non-formal and open access non-compulsory settings.

The high quality programmes we have are designed to be deliverable to a whole class or group with lots of relevant general interaction and experience to date shows that many learners with a wide range of difficulties have been able to benefit from skilled mindfulness teaching.

Residential and outdoor activities offer great opportunities to develop and apply mindfulness. The priority should be mindfulness training for staff to enable them to identify the opportunities. Further training available might include *The Present* which includes mindfulness through the whole range of existing activities indoors and outdoors.

### **Mindfulness for children and vulnerable adults with additional learning needs**

The mindfulness programmes set out in this paper are designed for whole class participation and are relevant to a wide range of abilities within mainstream and wider education settings. In some parts of Wales, in particular in Carmarthenshire, staff from a wide range of additional needs provision have been trained to deliver *.b* or *Paws b*. This work is at an early stage and we will be developing case studies on how the programmes have been adapted to enable children with significant additional needs to access the mindfulness toolkit in appropriate ways.

In the South East Wales region as part of the ALN transformation work adaptations to enable children with vision and hearing impairment to engage in mindfulness are also being discussed. We know that children and young people with additional learning needs are up to six times more likely to suffer mental health problems.

Research by the Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities clearly identified that people with profound and multiple learning disabilities do experience mental health

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/psychological-medicine/article/prevalence-of-harm-in-mindfulnessbased-stress-reduction/A97168BD448E68E12394A66738C0FECE>

problems, often for reasons similar to those of the general population. However, identifying the signs and symptoms that indicate changes in the emotional and mental wellbeing of people with profound and multiple learning disabilities takes longer, and it is often family members who are best placed to identify such changes.

Mental health problems may be worsened for those with greater support needs, particularly if they are unable to communicate about their feelings or communicate their distress (it may result in this behaviour mistakenly being seen to be challenging). As a result, changes in emotional wellbeing in children and adults with high support needs may easily be overlooked by those who care for them, particularly if they have high levels of medical needs.<sup>13</sup>

Mindfulness offers the opportunity to help carers to be more aware and in tune with learners' needs and to help learners' mental and emotional health.

### **Education other than at school**

The Mountain Movers Project aims to introduce mindfulness to children with complex needs educated out of mainstream schools, together with their parents. The range of needs includes Autism, Down's Syndrome, Cerebral Palsy and associated learning needs, Pathological Demand Avoidance (PDA), Selective Mutism, Dyslexia, High Anxiety and Eating Disorders. The project will be evaluated throughout and will provide some important case studies for sharing the benefits of mindfulness in an inclusive setting.

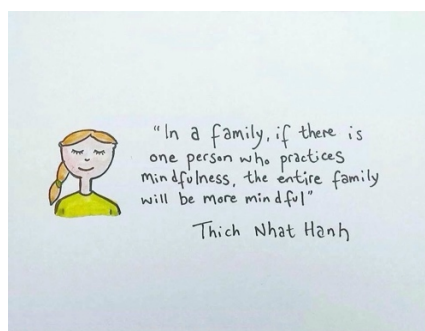
### **Mindfulness and Families**

We know that the home learning environment, including the attitudes and behaviours children and young people experience has a profound impact on their mental and emotional health and wellbeing, more than family socio-economic status. Engaged parenting leads to improved outcomes even for those with low initial achievement. We also know that parents' likelihood to be involved in their children's learning also correlates highly with the self-perception of their adequacy to be helpful.

Enhancing and supporting the mental and emotional health of parents benefits the whole family, and the children most of all. We know that mindfulness would help parents better support their children's learning and their attitudes and behaviours. Introducing mindfulness for families could support and amplify the impact of the mindfulness programmes their children experience in school and significantly enhance the home learning environment.

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<sup>13</sup> CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES - UNDERSTANDING THEIR MENTAL HEALTH  
<https://youngminds.org.uk/bond/>  
<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/sites/default/files/children-and-young-people.pdf>



## **Mindfulness in Further and Higher Education**

[Healthy Universities UK](#) defines a healthy university or college as being a place where a university or college is adopting a holistic, whole systems approach to health. This involves seeking to create a learning environment and shared institutional culture where health, well-being and the sustainability of communities are recognised as being core to success. Healthy institutions characteristically provide supportive and welcoming settings, increase the profile of health and sustainability and connect with, and contribute to, the health and well-being of the wider community.

In Wales we have a better opportunity than most to make a difference. The Healthy and Sustainable Colleges and Universities network provides an opportunity to build on successful previous healthy settings development in Wales. Following the healthy schools model, a group of people from across the university and college sectors as well as policy makers from Welsh Government and leading experts from Public Health Wales have come together and developed the [Healthy Universities and Colleges Framework for Wales](#). This includes best practice standards for mental and emotional health and wellbeing. One of the tasks for the Healthy and Sustainable Colleges and Universities network is to explore how it can work with other networks and bodies in Wales with shared or similar goals and objectives to the common aim of a healthier and more sustainable Wales.

Stress and anxiety in staff and students have become more prevalent in further and higher education over recent years. Factors behind this increase are many faceted and likely reflect a similar increase in society. Mindfulness provision, along with a suite of other interventions and services can help address this increase by providing staff and students with the tools and training to develop self-reflection and resilience.

A growing evidence base suggests that mindfulness interventions within HE play an important role in addressing the mental health needs of students and may improve attention, interpersonal relationships and academic performance. A review and meta-analysis conducted by Regehr et al (2013)<sup>14</sup> was prompted by concerns about growing anxiety and depression levels amongst university students. The conclusion was that mindfulness interventions play an important role in addressing this and that universities should be encouraged to make these programs widely available to students.

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<sup>14</sup> Regehr, Cheryl, Dylan Glancy, and Annabel Pitts. "Interventions to reduce stress in university students: A review and meta-analysis." *Journal of affective disorders* 148.1 (2013): 1-11.

## **Mindfulness and Creative Learning**

In creative education, the interrelatedness of the emotional aspects of learning with academic development are widely recognised. Anxiety and depression have been found to negatively impact the ability to learn and respond flexibly and creatively. Mindfulness plays a key role in providing tools for students and staff in supporting positive cycles of wellbeing, engagement, motivation, creative flow and academic progress. As well as being beneficial for mental health, research studies have shown a positive impact of mindfulness on aspects of creativity, such as divergent thinking (idea generation), cognitive flexibility and insight problem solving.

## **How Mindfulness can Support Systemic Change in Education**

Mindfulness can support people in understanding their own behaviour, give them some skills and release some creative energy to genuinely do things differently and sustain the systemic change which will be important in realising the opportunities of the new curriculum. Some potential benefits identified by the working group include:

- ❖ Mindfulness practice and understanding can create a climate for real systemic change in behaviours
- ❖ Preparing settings as vital hubs for our communities for a future we can't predict but can try to be ready to support
- ❖ Systems in place to support and guide the wellbeing of leaders so they can look after others
- ❖ Part of curriculum for Health and Wellbeing helping to create time to 'be present' in a busy world
- ❖ Helping to bring balance to a world overloaded with technology, allowing learners to explore self and relationships with others
- ❖ Training for settings on all levels which highlights the way researched, scientific, proven, benefits for wellbeing, decision-making, relationships, learning etc
- ❖ Parental/family involvement is paramount to sustaining change

## **CAMHS Transformation Project and Mindfulness**

In 2018 Aneurin Bevan Health Board working with the South East Wales local authorities were successful in securing additional funds from the Welsh Government to look at whole school approaches to mental health and well-being. Developing an effective whole-school approach to emotional wellbeing is a key priority area within the wider CAMHS Transformation Programme. The programme aims to achieve a step change in how Health, Social Care and Education services work together, and work differently, to support children's emotional wellbeing in Gwent. This approach is now being adopted for Wales as a whole.

At the heart of the CAMHS Transformation work programme is a multi-agency approach that emphasises the need to invest in specialist, psychologically-minded expertise that is embedded within communities and alongside frontline childcare staff. Frontline staff, with the right access to support, can be enabled to work with children and families in a way that is informed by an understanding of the importance of context, child development, the impact of ACEs and trauma. The transformational model recognises that not all children need access to therapy, but they do need relationships that are therapeutic. Development

of a culture of 'support in', whereby frontline staff can access specialist support to enable them to 'hold on' rather than 'refer on' aims to support these existing relationships, and to thereby embed stability and consistency in the lives of our most vulnerable children.

This transformation agenda provides an *ideal opportunity* to align the CAMHS Transformation work programme to the wider transformation agenda of:

- ◇ ALN transformation
- ◇ The new curriculum

Mindfulness provision for learners is already beginning to contribute to these developments and mindfulness for staff in all settings has the potential to support the systemic change required to achieve this transformation.

## Evaluating the Impact of Mindfulness in Education

There is extensive evidence of the impact of mindfulness for adults<sup>15</sup> but mindfulness in education is still comparatively new. The early evidence<sup>16</sup> points in the right direction and anecdotal and qualitative evidence is very strong - you just need to talk to some of the learners who've experienced the programme as they are very powerful ambassadors. Even at this early stage schools have observed increased attendance, reduction in behaviour incidents, better learning environment, improved readiness to learn and enhanced attitudes to learning. BrainFutures<sup>17</sup> have produced a report showing how the pandemic has affected children's neural development and citing high quality mindfulness as one of the remediating programmes.

Some of the evidence available so far cited here was conducted by Dr. Dusana Dorjee<sup>18</sup> who was part of the team that created *Paws b* and *The Present*. Much of this research was conducted in Wales when she was working at Bangor University.

The growing body of research on mindfulness in HE includes many case studies carried out by teaching staff who have integrated mindfulness interventions into the curriculum and evaluated the results. Anna Bhushan, Senior Lecturer at Cardiff Metropolitan University is presently carrying out PhD research into the effects of mindfulness meditation on the learning experience of students of Art & Design. Emerging findings from the data suggests that mindfulness promotes energy and focus, confidence, creativity, academic engagement, team-working skills and wellbeing.

Overall, the findings from the case studies support the review of research conducted by Shapiro et al (2011)<sup>19</sup> that concluded that mindfulness can improve cognitive and academic performance, as well as the management of academic-related stress. Calmness and focus

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<sup>15</sup> [http://franticworld.com/what-can-mindfulness-do-for-you/?utm\\_content=buffer4a4ed&utm\\_medium=social&utm\\_source=twitter.com&utm\\_campaign=buffer](http://franticworld.com/what-can-mindfulness-do-for-you/?utm_content=buffer4a4ed&utm_medium=social&utm_source=twitter.com&utm_campaign=buffer)

<sup>16</sup> <https://mindfulnessinschools.org/the-evidence-base/>

<sup>17</sup> [https://hechingerreport.org/opinion-why-policymakers-and-school-leaders-cant-ignore-how-the-pandemic-hurts-childhood-brain-development/?fbclid=IwAR2iG2JWjDI4a3litxeitwy8zWc9xw\\_dvS1TQiF0x1ChR3qhIOkzLdIRIQA](https://hechingerreport.org/opinion-why-policymakers-and-school-leaders-cant-ignore-how-the-pandemic-hurts-childhood-brain-development/?fbclid=IwAR2iG2JWjDI4a3litxeitwy8zWc9xw_dvS1TQiF0x1ChR3qhIOkzLdIRIQA)

<sup>18</sup> [https://pure.york.ac.uk/portal/en/researchers/dusana-dorjee\(384a88e8-7089-4910-a1af-07a3709a4a82\)/publications.html](https://pure.york.ac.uk/portal/en/researchers/dusana-dorjee(384a88e8-7089-4910-a1af-07a3709a4a82)/publications.html)

<sup>19</sup> Shapiro, S.L., Brown, K.W. and Astin, J., 2011. Toward the integration of meditation into higher education: A review of research evidence. *Teachers College Record*, 113(3), pp.493-



were the words most frequently used to describe the subsequent effects of meditation and the students associated these feelings with being motivated and mentally prepared for the day, or for specific creative activities such as group work, presentations or individual creative tasks. Having a calm and/ or steady mind also helped students to feel more in control of emotions and more mentally balanced in the working environment.

As mindfulness becomes more established in education it will be important to demonstrate its impact and identify best practice. Working with practitioners we have developed some useful guidance on ways to collect and collate evidence at setting level, set out at **Annex 4**, and covering:

1. Evidence and observations directly related to mindfulness in the classroom
2. Mindfulness in relation to Learner Wellbeing and Assessment, the Progression Steps for the Health and Wellbeing AoLE and the Whole School Approach
3. More formal research and validated tools for measuring wellbeing

## Cost Effectiveness

In order to introduce and sustain mindfulness in an effective way to enable to full benefits, including training as many staff as possible in an 8 session course and supporting key staff to access the further training to teach one of the learners' programmes there is an up-front cost. Schools, colleges, universities and other settings can spread this load by planning implementation over several years, but once staff have been trained there is minimal ongoing cost in supporting staff and providing the curriculum.

For example, a teacher who has done an 8 session course and a train to teach course at a total cost of around £750-£800, teaching at least 30 children each year for 5 years evens out the cost to around £5 per head. At secondary level a trained teacher could be timetabled to teach several groups in each year reducing the cost per head even further.

Perhaps the greater cost effectiveness relates to staff themselves completing an 8 week course, especially in these challenging times, and whether or not they go on to do further training. Research by Katherine Weare *Evidence for Mindfulness: Impact on the Wellbeing and Performance of School Staff (2014)* found:

<b>Increased:</b> Wellbeing Mindfulness Self-compassion Sustained attention Emotional regulation Teaching efficacy	<b>Decreased:</b> Stress Anxiety Depression Demotivation Time-urgency Burnout symptoms
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This could have a significant impact on staff absence and quality of teaching providing a cost benefit in terms of cover costs and performance.

## How Mindfulness fits with other Initiatives

**WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH:** The **Draft framework guidance on embedding a whole-school approach to mental health and emotional well-being**<sup>20</sup> will become statutory guidance in due course. The framework is intended to support schools in reviewing their own well-being landscape and in developing plans to address their weaknesses and build on their strengths. It recognises that the school alone cannot meet all the needs of a complex population of children and young people, and sets out the role of regional bodies, the NHS and others such as the third sector, in supporting the school. It is meant to support and complement the new national curriculum for Wales and in particular the Health and Well-being Area of Learning Experience.

**LEARNER ASSESSMENT AND WELLBEING: mutual support systems** September 2020<sup>21</sup>: This document focuses on the relationship between assessment and well-being of a learner. It explores how using assessment on an ongoing, day-to-day basis to identify, capture and reflect on individual learner progress over time provides continuing opportunities to promote the well-being of the learners, specifically practice in assessment that promotes learners' sense of affiliation, autonomy and agency and their capacity to take ownership of their learning.

The document identifies the concept of well-being as including developing and flourishing as a person, being fulfilled and contributing to the community. It is concerned with 'being' at the present moment, as well as 'becoming' and preparing for the future. This correlates with the aims of mindfulness in Wales as helping to cope, connect, flourish and empower change.

The terms **affiliation**, **autonomy** and **agency** at the heart of the discussion paper as being fundamental to promoting well-being also have strong resonance with aspects of mindfulness. **Affiliation** refers to the extent and the ways in which the learner feels connected to the school and those within it and is directly supported by the mindfulness aim of supporting and enriching connection.

The well-being of individuals is associated with access to opportunities to practise **autonomy**, to take responsibility for their activities, to make informed choices and to exercise control. Mindfulness develops awareness of how things are in any given moment and we can use that awareness, understanding and perspective to make better decisions and to enhance our **agency**.

Mindfulness also enhances metacognition – the ability to step back and observe thoughts and emotions which would support the ability of learners to understand the process of learning and recognise learning strategies, enabling them to take more ownership of their own learning and apply these strategies in different contexts.

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<sup>20</sup> <https://gov.wales/embedding-whole-school-approach-mental-health-and-well-being>

<sup>21</sup> <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/88a9bd44-9410-4bbb-addc-3fb45f93ff12/learner-well-being-and-assessment-mutual-support-systems.pdf>

**THE SIX AREAS OF LEARNING AND EXPERIENCE (AoLES):** Mindfulness has the potential to contribute to other AoLEs as well as the more obvious links to Health and Wellbeing. More work will be undertaken on exploring the cross-curricular potential.

**ALN and CAMHS TRANSFORMATION:** Mindfulness has been identified as having a potentially significant contribution as these far reaching change programmes take effect.

**Public Health Wales - Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes, Healthy and Sustainable Pre School Schemes, Healthy and Sustainable Higher Education and Further Education Framework:** Mental and emotional health and wellbeing is a major priority throughout this work. Mindfulness is already part of provision in many settings as part of these developments.

**THRIVE:** Mindfulness and Thrive are complementary:

- Thrive is a comprehensive programme which aims to build children's social and emotional resilience using attachment and child development theory, play, the arts and creativity.
- Thrive is underpinned by established neuroscience which has a direct crossover with mindfulness including supporting learners to make sense of their experience so that they can make choices, re-shaping the stress regulation system, develop their concentration and become more resilient.
- One of the core processes identified is to enable children to regulate their emotions and to be in the present moment - in other words, to be mindful
- The activities and experiences of the Thrive programme implicitly and explicitly include the introduction of some of the basic mindfulness techniques such as recognising emotion and physical sensations, learning calming techniques based on the breath.
- Mindfulness is one part of Thrive's comprehensive approach and does not explicitly require staff undergoing Thrive training to have any mindfulness experience.
- Staff who have trained to deliver both Thrive and one of the children's mindfulness programmes say how complementary the programmes are.

**ELSA:** Mindfulness trained ELSAs report an increase in the willingness and ability of children to talk about emotions and worries and seeking support in difficult situations after they have experienced the Paws b programme and integrated mindful practices into their ELSA sessions. This together with their greater understanding of how their minds work gives them a vocabulary to describe how their strong emotions are affecting them and their actions. They cope better with worry, anxiety and difficult circumstances and mindfulness helps boost their self esteem.

**ACES:** whilst mindfulness in education is not therapy, it can have particular benefit for children and young people who have experienced multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES). We know that these experiences have a profound effect on cognitive, emotional and social needs. Mindfulness can help children to self-regulate, helping them to cope with difficult situations, support more effective decision making and help them develop better social connections. Regular mindfulness practice can lead to rewiring the brain, contributing to counteracting some of the impact of children's adverse experience.

**TRAUMA INFORMED SCHOOLS, RESTORATIVE APPROACHES, EMOTIONAL COACHING:** together with high quality mindfulness programmes for staff and pupils these for the core training for the Behaviour Transformation Programme in Carmarthenshire.

**YOUTH WORK STRATEGY:** Mindfulness aligns closely with many aspects of the Youth Work Strategy. It underpins the purposes of youth work, can contribute to helping young people thrive and develop and maintain effective relationships, support them in developing a sense of connection and belonging, enhance opportunities for social, emotional and person development, and support voluntary and full-time youth workers' ongoing development

**GUIDE TO HEALTH AND WELLBEING FOR YOUTH WORKERS:** Mindfulness can have an impact of a range of health-related behaviours but most importantly the Emotional Wellbeing strand of the 5 ways to wellbeing.

**VALUES BASED EDUCATION (VbE):** As its name suggests VbE is based on the emphasis on explicit and implicit embodiment of values throughout the school for learners and staff. There is a strong complementary relationship between VbE and mindfulness through emphasis on overall wellbeing, connectedness of people and places, agency and transformation supporting empowering change all underpinned by the promotion of reflective thinking.

**PERMA WELLBEING TOOL** to help schools identify and respond effectively to the wellbeing needs of pupils. It comprises a wellbeing monitoring system and a teacher resource/strategy bank. The monitoring system has been developed from the Positive Psychology work of Martin Seligman and takes the form of an online questionnaire that assesses pupils against the five strands of PERMA and gives a snapshot of each pupil. The strategy bank can be used to point teachers towards interventions and strategies that may help to meet the wellbeing needs of their pupils, as indicated by the monitoring system. The mindfulness programmes for learners *Paws b* and *.b* are examples of strategies that are included in the resource bank. The monitoring tool can then be used to measure the impact of such interventions on pupil wellbeing.

## Useful References

<https://www.mindfulnessinaction.co.uk/mel/>

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org>

[sc.silverton150@gmail.com](mailto:sc.silverton150@gmail.com) re The Present [www.thepresentcourses.org](http://www.thepresentcourses.org)

<https://youthmindfulness.org/mindfulness-kids-programme/#1530021088259-ad000eb3-c18c>

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/teach-dots-3-6/>

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/teach-paws-b/>

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/teach-dot-b/>

[www.mindfulfamilies.co.uk/coolcats](http://www.mindfulfamilies.co.uk/coolcats)

## Annex 1

### Co-production Partners

*The following people have been involved directly or indirectly in co-producing this guidance through working groups or in discussions. The earlier versions of the guidance have been shared widely at local level across Wales for widespread discussion and awareness raising. We really appreciate the contributions of those listed as well as those not acknowledged here who have helped create, shape and refine the document.*

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Dawn Webb	Malpas Court Primary, Newport
Keith Towler	Chair Youth Work Board
Sarah Silverton	The Present co-creator/Mindfulness Teacher
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Samantha Gunnarsson	Wellbeing and Safeguarding Manager Bridgend College
Nia Brodrick	Project Officer Colegau Cymru
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Anna Bhushan	Senior Lecturer Illustration Cardiff School of Art and Design, Cardiff Met
Chivonne Preston	CEO Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP)
Claire Kelly	Director of Curricula Mindfulness in Schools Project
Elizabeth Williams	Co-Lead with WG Officials, Chair Mindfulness Wales
Paul Trotman	Headteacher Pwll Primary Llanelli
Kerry Morgan	Accredited Mindfulness Teacher & Public Health Professional

Many more people in large and small groups and as individuals have contributed to the discussion to ensure this toolkit is as relevant and comprehensive as possible.

## Annex 2

### WHAT'S HAPPENING AT THE MOMENT

All over Wales settings are beginning their journey to introduce mindfulness. Training staff and introducing mindfulness successfully and sustainably requires a long term plan and on-going support for staff. The information in this Annex is intended to help settings develop strategic and costed plans for the implementation and sustainability of high quality programmes.

Here are just a few examples of some of the different ways settings are planning the introduction of mindfulness:

#### **A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH AT GARNTEG PRIMARY, GARDIFFAITH, PONTYPOOL**

Garnteg Primary School sits at the heart of the community in Garndiffaith. With 43% FSM it has a significant number of children with a range of additional needs, multiple ACES, social challenges and other vulnerabilities. The school has doubled in size in the last two years through the merger of two local schools and an extensive new build.

Garnteg's mindfulness journey grew from the personal experience of a senior member of staff who recognised the potential for the school, to all 50 staff including TAs and support staff completing the 8 week *b Foundations* course in two tranches. Headteacher Susan Roche says this itself has changed the way staff relate to each other, in conversations and attitudes and how they relate to the children - and for her and many of the staff how they relate to their own families. Whole school support included introducing regular random acts of kindness and staff meetings have been used to provide top up mindfulness sessions to refresh and deepen practice.

*Paws b* was originally introduced in Y4 as a pilot, resulting in a significant shift on the wellbeing scale, increased capacity to self-regulate, children able to cope better in the dinner hall, and help with sport. A programme of further training for relevant staff means that *Paws b* and *The Present* are now being built into the curriculum, and in Foundation Phase the Centre for Healthy Minds *Kindness Curriculum* forms the basis of their introduction to mindfulness from nursery onwards. Mindfulness also finds its way into the outdoor education programme. Children keep Learning Logs and many include aspects of the mindfulness journey in their records. Senior Leaders covering Professional Learning Experiences in other classes regularly start and finish the session with a mindfulness practice. Mindfulness is now woven into the curriculum and the ethos of the school.

The school has extensive family engagement and parents have asked if they might be able to participate in mindfulness sessions themselves. Garnteg is now exploring ways this might be achieved including the *Nurturing Parents* course for parents and their children.

In March 2019 the Estyn inspection explicitly recognised the contribution of mindfulness in all classes to the excellent provision to nurture pupils' mental and emotional wellbeing. The school was able to demonstrate the impact through a range of evidence including improved attendance, reduced behaviour incidents and readiness to learn measures. Data collected included the PASS survey, the school's own wellbeing survey, aspects of Thrive, improved attendance figures, and behaviour incidents significantly reduced in key classes.

The next steps for Garnteg include more staff trained to teach *The Present* and *Paws b*, and engaging parents to enable them to build a mindfulness toolkit for themselves. There are plans to extend the work to the Abersychan cluster and more widely in Torfaen. Staff have been invigorated by these developments and are keen to take them forward with the new curriculum and the opportunities presented by being an Innovation School.

### **A CLUSTER APPROACH IN THE WILLOWS CLUSTER, SPLOTT, CARDIFF**

The Willows cluster Mindfulness journey initially grew from the enthusiasm of a member of staff at Moorland Primary who had completed an 8 week course, seen the potential benefits for children and sought support from the school to train to teach *Paws b*. From the start there has been a brilliant response from children. The advantages of implementing the whole class model, making mindfulness a core part of the curriculum is proving very powerful. Pupils who have not been able to access counselling or emotional support on a one-to-one basis for a range of reasons, are all included in this whole class approach. Everyone benefits, and wider research is already showing that those who need it most benefit most.

Jane Jenkins, head of Moorland Primary and her deputy took up the offer of an 8 week *.b Foundations* course for senior school leaders organised by the Central South Consortium. As well as the real personal benefit, they were sufficiently convinced of the potential benefit for children in Splott that they involved all 6 schools in the cluster in an ongoing plan to introduce mindfulness for staff and pupils. The Willows cluster includes a range of communities with longstanding and significant social issues with a significant proportion of the pupils suffering from adverse childhood experiences. This includes parental addiction, parental incarceration, domestic violence, unemployment, in-work poverty and on-going mental health issues for parents and children.

They developed a cluster working plan emerging from the PDG LAC grant. They trained 100 staff through 8 week courses which were run in 5 schools. This has been transformational in promoting mindfulness on a cluster level, providing a shared understanding and common language in their joint cluster approach. Staff in all primary schools have done *Paws b* as well as restorative approaches. Mindfulness offered a useful vehicle to involve Willows High to begin the work towards a spiral curriculum approach from 3-18. This cluster bid for one year has kick started something really powerful. This approach recognises that mindfulness is not for everyone, and that some staff will not be interested on personal level. However, all staff are able to recognise the benefits to learners and support children to be mindful throughout the school day.

Y4-Y6 at Moorland have now all experienced the *Paws b* curriculum and as their class teachers have an understanding of mindfulness, this can be embedded and promoted throughout the school week. Already there is a noticeable difference. One major observation is that incidents in the playground leading to fights have virtually disappeared – children are stepping back from a very emotional response and using other strategies, with a significant impact on the learning environment. Upper KS2 staff will often start their afternoon session with mindful practice and find this really beneficial in terms of creating an atmosphere conducive to learning. Further training has included *The Present* which will be integrated into the mindfulness curriculum as it develops.



The Willows cluster has plans for schools to collaborate to develop approaches for involving governors and families, including working with other agencies to involve the local communities. Enabling families and the community to develop mindfulness skills has the potential to significantly amplify the benefits children are experiencing in schools and beyond. The schools recognise that supporting the mental health and emotional wellbeing of the whole family is the key to turning lives around. The interest of parents has already been aroused by children sharing their experiences of mindfulness in school and the cluster is keen to capitalise on this!

### **THE DELL PRIMARY, CHEPSTOW**

The case study on mindfulness developments at The Dell Primary in Chepstow is detailed on the Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP) website:

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/The-Dell-Case-Study.pdf>

You can also hear Debbie Cass's input to the MiSP Conference 2020 here: (insert link when available). Mindfulness has made a significant contribution to The Dell being the first school in Wales awarded the Carnegie Excellence for Mental Health in Schools Silver Award.

### **A WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH 3-18 HOWELL'S SCHOOL, LLANDAFF, CARDIFF**

Increased concern about the impact of growing pressures on young people's mental and emotional health and wellbeing led Natalie Chyba, Deputy Principal at Howell's School, to explore the possibility of introducing mindfulness throughout the school.

Taster sessions for all staff in 2015 formed the first stage of a 5-year strategic plan, the Mindful Mountain (see diagram), based on stations along the climb. It was made clear to staff that they didn't have to practise mindfulness personally but that Howell's wanted to work towards becoming a mindful school to benefit the school community and their support was a vital part of that process. Many staff have since reported personal benefits from engaging with mindful activities and recognise that staff understanding and engagement is vital to the mindful school ethos if learners are to benefit in a meaningful way.



**Howell's is a Mindful School**  
Join us in learning helpful strategies to promote positive wellbeing

Mindfulness	
Paying attention	On purpose
In the present moment	Non-judgementally

**Nursery**

- Teddy Bear Breathing
- Mindful Stones

**Juniors**

- Mindful Moments
- Mindful Club
- Pencils Down

**Seniors**

- MiSP .b Curriculum
- Fofboc
- Beditation

**College**

- Mindfulness Sessions
- Our Mindful Team

*"You can't stop the waves but you can learn to surf" Jon Kabat-Zinn*

**HEADSLIP @HOWELL'S**

At Base Camp, 'Taster' sessions were provided for all staff, then at Station 1 eighteen of the seventy staff completed the 8 session .b Foundations course. Over the following years 4 staff - the Mindful Team - have trained to teach the .b curriculum which is now introduced to all Y7 each year in the spring term. To overcome the curriculum time challenge, each subject area 'gifts' one lesson during the term to the .b lessons, recognised as an investment in the mental and emotional health of the pupils, and staff and pupils refer to the .b curriculum ensuring its status is recognised.

The first pupils introduced to mindfulness were Year 6 in 2017. They were taught Paws b as a basis for development and as a springboard to transition. Following this, the Mindful Team took delivery of the .b curriculum in Year 7 and are now making use of the four additional lessons created by MiSP to extend the .b curriculum into Years 8 and 9 to create a spiral curriculum. Lots of resources have been produced by the Mindful Team to support pupils at various stages, and to enable parents to understand what's going on and the benefits for their children.

Having Leadership Team support and involvement has been crucial and has enabled small shifts to be made alongside the strategic plan such as introducing whole school mindful activities in designated wellbeing weeks. As Deputy Principal, Natalie was also in a position to play a lead role in ensuring mindfulness features in assemblies and to provide regular updates to staff on strategic development as part of whole school INSET.

Mindfulness is now well established throughout the school. All pupils in the Senior School have participated in the .b curriculum and mindfulness features in many aspects of school life, including breathing gifts in assemblies, providing calm moments during exam preparation, and enhancing pupils' concentration and calmness in lessons. Breathing images often play as children come into assembly and into the library. In 2019, mindful moments were also introduced on exam days and for younger pupils, practices are now offered before school tests.

Signature strategies have also been agreed across the whole school so that mindfulness is introduced and practised in age-appropriate ways in the Nursery, Prep and College sections of the school with key practices being regularly revisited.

Now at the last stage of the Mindful Mountain strategy, mindfulness is growing into the curriculum through art, languages and other subjects. An audit is underway to find out the full picture of the level of mindfulness engagement across staff and the curriculum. The climb up the Mindful Mountain has seen the school move from no mindful provision at all 5 years ago to a major shift in school culture. Pupils often share how they have used mindfulness in a particular situation and even when some pupils don't recognise that mindfulness is relevant to them at any given time, the school acknowledges the value of giving pupils coping tools which may help them when they encounter a crux moment some time later on life.

Introducing mindfulness on this scale involves an initial investment but Howell's School demonstrates that it is important to take the time to implement mindfulness properly and sustainably if you truly want to make a difference. That commitment has been maintained by the enthusiasm of the staff and regular Mindful Team meetings ensure mindfulness thrives as an intrinsic part of the school's wider HeadsUp mental health programme which is understood and supported by parents.

Howell's hope to move forward and train additional staff in the delivery of Paws b so that younger children in the school can benefit as fully as possible from mindful learning within the curriculum. In the Senior School, the ambition is to reach a point where mindfulness is embedded across the academic lessons with teachers being confident to use mindful techniques and practices as a core resource in providing a fully rounded education.

### **A LOCAL AUTHORITY LED APPROACH IN CARMARTHENSHIRE**

Carmarthenshire's longstanding investment in its most vulnerable learners, in particular Looked After Children has seen commendable improvements in achievement. At the heart of this success is the commitment to behaviour transformation – changing the philosophy of behaviour management to *relationship* management, recognising that adults dealing with a distressed and deregulated child need the skills to regulate themselves.

The *.b Foundations* 8 week mindfulness course has been introduced as one of the core elements of CPD for staff in schools throughout Carmarthenshire, alongside Trauma Informed Schools, ACE Awareness, Emotional Coaching and Restorative Practices. The aim has been to enhance both pupil and staff wellbeing. Over 200 education staff have completed *.b Foundations*, with some schools already building a critical mass of staff who have experienced mindfulness training. Over 30 teachers and children's services/central staff have trained to teach *.b* or *Paws b*. This includes primary, secondary, the PRU and staff working with a wide range of additional needs.

Schools are at the beginning of their journey in introducing mindfulness to pupils, The LAC support team have begun to play an important role in introducing mindfulness in schools which do not yet have internal capacity, and schools across the authority are introducing

The Local Authority approach, led by Bethan James and Head of Corporate Parenting will continue to offer the 8 week *.b Foundations* course to school staff, the newly developed bespoke *Mindfulness for Education Leaders*, and training for school staff to teach *.b* or *Paws b*. In time it is intended to offer training to teach *The Present for 3-14 year olds*.

The LA is monitoring and tracking how schools are rolling out mindfulness from the point of view of both staff and pupils' wellbeing, and will be using the range of data available to the Authority to continue to evaluate the impact.

Mindfulness and the introduction of some of the underpinning neuroscience provides a shared understanding and language to enable pupils and staff to review and discuss relationships and behaviour and their implications. This far-reaching training programme, with mindfulness at its heart has the potential to achieve genuine transformation in the learning environment in schools throughout Carmarthenshire. Schools will also be equipped to deliver mindfulness to pupils as part of the Health and Wellbeing AoLE, getting a head start in establishing the new curriculum.

Special schools and the PRU have had whole staff training in the 8 week course and are already reporting fewer internal exclusions and better pupil engagement, less physical restraints and improved attendance. Bethan James describes the feedback to date as overwhelming. Children have provided moving testimony of mindfulness helping them calm themselves, concentrate better, deal with stress and anxiety, exams and social anxiety, family issues and realise potential.

Carmarthenshire has 114 schools, including many small schools so the LA will continue a programme of 8 week courses open to staff from all schools. Professional growth and development days will help staff maintain their professional practice in mindfulness and headteachers will be invited to participate in a specific course for senior leaders. Schools will be encouraged to build mindfulness into their Health and Wellbeing AoLE developments and work towards a whole school approach. At the end of this academic year they plan an event to share developments and good practice across Carmarthenshire.

#### **MINDFULNESS AT CARDIFF METROPOLITAN UNIVERSITY**

Concern about growing levels of anxiety and depression amongst students and the knock on effect on student engagement, creativity and academic achievement led Anna Bhushan, Senior Lecturer in the school of Art and Design at Cardiff Metropolitan University to apply her training as a meditation teacher to introduce a mindfulness initiative to support student wellbeing. The popularity and positive feedback from these classes led to a request to run a similar course for staff. Six years later this has developed into to a rolling program of mindfulness courses open to both staff and students across the university that are well attended. In addition to this, mindfulness sessions have been embedded into the curriculum through elective transdisciplinary projects and study groups. The mindfulness techniques taught include observation of the natural breath and contemplative compassion based meditation. The feedback from undergraduate students of art & design has been that the sessions have been very beneficial to their learning experience. As well as more formal mindfulness courses, smaller scale activities have been integrated into classes as a way to create 'headspace' through the working day, again with positive feedback from students.

These include techniques such as 5 minutes of mindful movement, 5 minutes of conscious breathing, mindful walking and interactive activities to improve awareness of self and others.

## MINDFULNESS AT YSGOL BRO GWAUN, FISHGUARD, PEMBROKESHIRE



**YSGOL  
BRO GWAUN**

**Mindfulness in Schools Project (Misp .b) KS4**

Contact name – Rachel Dean Williams      rachel.williams@ysgolbrogwaun.com

**Aims**

- To help pupils experience greater well-being.
- To address anxiety caused by exam stress.
- To improve concentration and focus.
- To work with difficult mental states such as depressive, ruminative and anxious thoughts.
- To equip pupils with strategies to help them cope with stress throughout their lives.

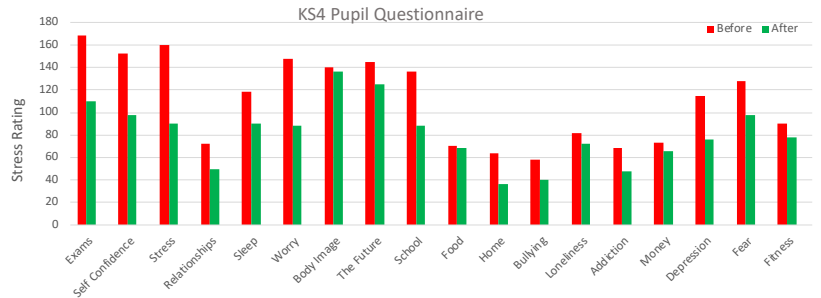
**Pupil Feedback**

"I use 7/11 most days now and feel like I've got a much better handle on things. You know what I was like before: I'd flip out, get all dramatic and make the situation 100 times worse by getting angry and lashing out. I like the feeling of grounding myself, feeling my feet on the floor and breath in my body. It calms me down. I'm smoking a lot less now, I'm feeling healthier and I'm sleeping better."

"My foster carer and me have a deal: I go to my room and do a FOFBOC whenever she winds me up. I still lose it but not in her face now. After a few minutes of doing a FOFBOC I settle down and feel more in control. She's started doing it too and I think we're getting on better."

"For years, I'd always get so nervous before a show. My horse would pick up on it too and not perform as well but now when I'm waiting to go on, I sit back in my saddle, put my heels down in the stirrups and focus on my breath and after about 2 minutes everything feels clearer. I can concentrate and remember everything. My coach and my mum can't believe the difference. Jackson's happier too and we're definitely closer. It's made a massive difference to me. I love it and I've taught it to some of the younger ones in the club as well. Thank you."

"Doing a FOFBOC really helped to calm me down before an exam. I'd concentrate on my breath and after a couple of minutes I'd look at my paper and felt I could smash it."



**Process**

- Specifically targeted more vulnerable pupils whom we felt would gain the most from participation.
- Formed 2 mixed groups of year 10 & 11 girls (10 pupils per group).
- Delivered the .b curriculum over 8 weeks (9 distinct lessons which teach pupils a different mindfulness skill each week).
- Pupils completed a questionnaire designed to measure a number of aspects of well-being (before and after course). Feedback interviews were also carried out after course completion.



**Outcomes**

- Overall there was a significant increase in well-being among pupils in both groups. Pupils felt that the .b program had given them a range of useful tools to help them navigate stressful situations, regulate their emotions for behaviour and ultimately help them to make better choices.
- Pupils overwhelmingly felt the positive impact of the project on their focus and behaviour at school *and* at home.
- Three major themes emerged from the interviews and questionnaires; Exams, Stress / Anxiety and Self confidence. The impact of the project in these priority areas clearly indicates the potential benefits for both pupils and schools.
- The key message from pupils was that .b needed to be rolled out to other pupils in the school, particularly those going through GCSE exams. However, there was a recognition that logistically this would prove to be difficult on a large scale and it was suggested that a solution might be to timetable a .b / wellbeing lesson onto the KS4 timetable.
- All pupils said that they would continue to use the .b strategies and felt that the coping skills developed over the course had the potential to make a real difference to the lives of young people and positively impact levels of happiness, mental health and well-being among teenagers.

## MINDFULNESS IN RESIDENTIAL AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES: URDD GOBAITH CYMRU

Urdd Gobaith Cymru is a voluntary youth organisation with the aim to ensure that all the young people of Wales (between 8 and 25 years of age) are given the opportunity, through the medium of Welsh, to develop into rounded individuals, and enable them to play a constructive role in the community, by developing personal and social skills

Founded in 1922 and with a current membership of 56,000, the Urdd is a unique organisation. As well as excellent residential experiences, the Urdd offers substantial opportunities in the areas of sport and arts as well as humanitarian projects and volunteering work. To date, over 4 million children and young people have engaged positively with the Urdd. The experience provided has helped nurture their self-confidence, broadened their horizons and has helped them contribute positively to society and their communities. The Urdd has nurtured generations of young men and women to be positive embodiments of our unique language and culture, to be proud of their country while at the same time being outward-looking citizens of the world.

The Urdd residential centres are central to the Urdd and more than 2 million young people have attended and as a result have experienced the strength of friendship and teamwork.

The Urdd has 4 residential centres<sup>22</sup> and an Outdoor Activities Service<sup>23</sup>, all of which have a central theme of **Connecting - People and Place** to create new or renew bonds and networks. Through these connections and appreciating the space and location children and young people can: -

- Reflect
- Appreciate and capture the moment and create positive memories
- Face and overcome challenges and develop resilience
- Space and time to talk
- Meet new people, young and old, developing new friendships and networks
- Through Cronfa Cyfle I Bawb<sup>24</sup> Fund for All – increasing the access for children and young people from disadvantaged areas and backgrounds.

### **Action Plan to Introduce Mindfulness in Urdd Gobaith Cymru**

1. Re-development of Pentre Ifan as a place for a **digital detox**, encouraging young people to connect with the surrounding environmental and cultural landscapes to experience a more sustainable way of life. It will **be a safe place** for young people to share experiences, build trust and relationships, develop resilience, wellbeing and practice mindfulness.
2. Develop a training and development plan for staff and instructors
3. Revisit activity and residential centre timetabling to include designated times and spaces for mindfulness
4. Expand the 'Fund for All' activities more children and young people
5. Redevelopment of the infrastructure at Llangrannog and Glan-llyn to make the areas more conducive for young people's and adults' mindfulness
6. Cascade good practice between departments

### **DEVELOPMENTS IN *THE PRESENT FOR ADULTS AND CHILDREN***

Rogerstone Primary School in Newport now have all their full-time teaching staff trained to deliver *The Present for 3-14 year olds*. Conscious of the importance of evaluating the programme they are investigating the possibility of a Master's student from University of York looking at their whole school experience.

There is a lot of interest in *The Present for Young People* and a new programme for 14-19 year olds is being developed. It is currently being piloted and should be available later in 2020.

For schools which have a significant experience and expertise in teaching *The Present for Children*, plans are being developed to enable expert teachers within the school to train other staff, offering a cost effective route.

### **Welsh Government Funding for Gwynedd and Ynys Mon Project**

There have been two successful funding bids to Successful Futures (Public Health Wales) by staff from Ynys Mon and Gwynedd Councils. This will allow all teaching and teaching

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<sup>22</sup> Gwersyll Llangrannog, Gwersyll Caerdydd, Gwersyll Glan-llyn nad Pentre Ifan (Pembrokeshire)  
<https://www.urdd.cymru/en/residential-centres/>

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.urdd.cymru/en/outdoor-education-service/>

<sup>24</sup> Fund for All - <https://www.urdd.cymru/en/support-us/cronfa-cyfle-i-bawb/>

assistants in both counties the opportunity an offer to attend a fully funded mindfulness eight-week course. This is open for primary and secondary school staff. Teachers have the choice between *Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)* and *The Present for Adults*. Both of these courses will be offered through the medium of Welsh (or bi-lingually as appropriate).

After completing the eight-week introductory course, if people have adopted a mindfulness practice, they will be eligible to, and invited, to take part in training to share mindfulness with the children and young people at school through attending The Present for Schools training.

It is hoped that funding will continue beyond this financial year to allow all staff who wish to explore how mindfulness can support them, especially through these challenging COVID-19 times, to access this learning. It is hoped that it will be also possible to offer mindfulness courses to parents so that the learning in school can be shared and supported at home. Dr. Dusana Dorjee is carrying out research on this project from her new base at the University of York.

The first courses will begin online this month. Applications for courses early in 2021 are welcome. For further information please contact Tomos Lloyd Roberts at [TomosLloydRoberts@gwynedd.llyw.cymru](mailto:TomosLloydRoberts@gwynedd.llyw.cymru) or Sarah Silverton at [sc.silverton150@gmail.com](mailto:sc.silverton150@gmail.com) or [sarah@thepresentcourses.org](mailto:sarah@thepresentcourses.org)

### **POSSIBILITIES FOR A MINDFULNESS TRAINING JOURNEY**

The following information is provided to help those settings choosing to introduce or further develop mindfulness to plan and cost their long term, sustainable strategy. The costs are as accurate as possible at the time of creation but will hopefully provide sufficient information to estimate costs. The models are based on the programmes meeting the criteria set out in the Estyn *Health and Happy Review* as well as the aims set out in this guidance for the implementation of high quality mindfulness, so start with the completion of an 8 week course for as many staff as possible, and follow through to the possibility of training to teach adults to increase capacity across Wales.

### **WALES CASE STUDIES FROM THE MINDFULNESS IN SCHOOLS PROJECT (MiSP) WEBSITE**

#### **Fitzalan High School - Supporting Restorative Approaches using Mindfulness**

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Case-Studies-Fitzalan-dot-b-breathe.pdf>

#### **Brynnau Primary Schools - Pupil Mindfulness Ambassadors**

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Case-Studies-Chevone-Paws-b.pdf>

#### **Wales Page on MiSP Website**

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/mindfulness-in-schools-project-misp-and-the-new-curriculum-for-wales/>

# POSSIBILITIES FOR A MINDFULNESS TRAINING JOURNEY

All prices are approximate to enable estimation of cost of implementation of various models



Sharing Mindful Activities with Learners (without specific training)

<b>8 WEEK ADULT MINDFULNESS COURSE:</b> .b Foundations, .begin, Finding Peace in a Frantic World, MBSR, MBCT, Breathworks, The Present for Adults, MEL £100-£250
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<b>DEVELOP YOUR OWN MINDFULNESS PRACTICE</b> Share simple mindful practices with learners
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<b>TRAIN TO TEACH CHILDREN</b> After completion of 8 week course				After completion of 8 week course <b>Sharing Mindfulness</b> 4 sessions For adults in the workplace to be able to lead practices with colleagues £100-£200 Able to lead colleagues in simple practices
<b>Teach Paws b +</b> 7-11 yr olds 3 days in person 4 days online £0 - £565*	<b>Teach .b +</b> 11-18 yr olds 4 days in person 5 days online £0-£760*	<b>Teach THE PRESENT +</b> 3-14 yr olds 3+ days in person Series of sessions online £385-£495 ~	<b>Teach Youth Mindfulness</b> 7-11 yr olds 5 days £495	
NEW for early years After completion of 8 week course Teach <b>Dots</b> 3-6 year olds 3 days £415*    Teach <b>Cool Cats</b> 3-8 year olds/ALN 6 sessions £250				

<b>TRAIN TO TEACH ADULTS/OLDER YOUNG PEOPLE</b> After completion of 8 week course		
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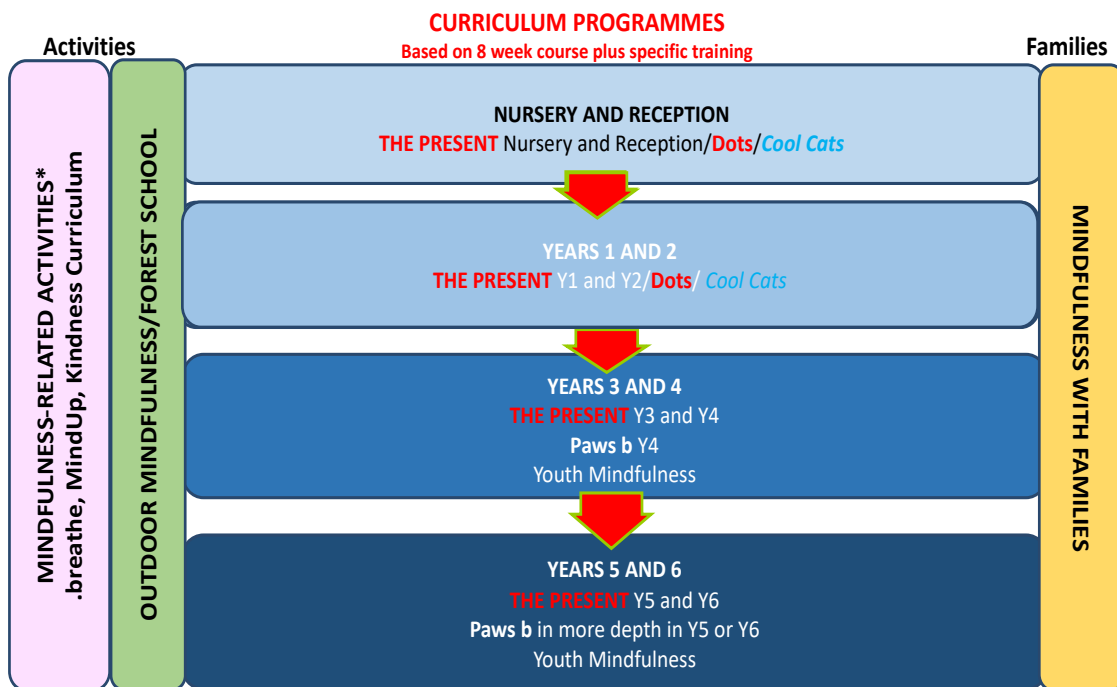
After delivering Paws.b or .b to learners x 2 <b>MiSP School Mindfulness Lead</b> 6 days in person 12 part days online ££0-£895*	<b>Adult Mindfulness Teacher Training Level 1 (TTR1)</b> 7-8 days £1383-£1533 Able to teach the relevant 8 week course to adults in the general public	<b>Teach THE PRESENT FOR ADULTS</b> 6 days in person/modular online £1000-£1500 Able to teach the relevant 8 week course to adults/young people in the general public COMING SOON
	 <b>Teach .b Foundations</b> 3 days £0-£895* Able to teach adults in local school communities	 <b>Teach THE PRESENT FOR ADULTS</b> 3 days £300 approx Able to teach adults in school communities, parents and also appropriate non-school-based adults

\*MiSP offers fully and partially supported places (and group discounts) on all courses  
 ~THE PRESENT Price reduced to £385 for larger groups. Free places (x2) in exchange for venue + available in Welsh



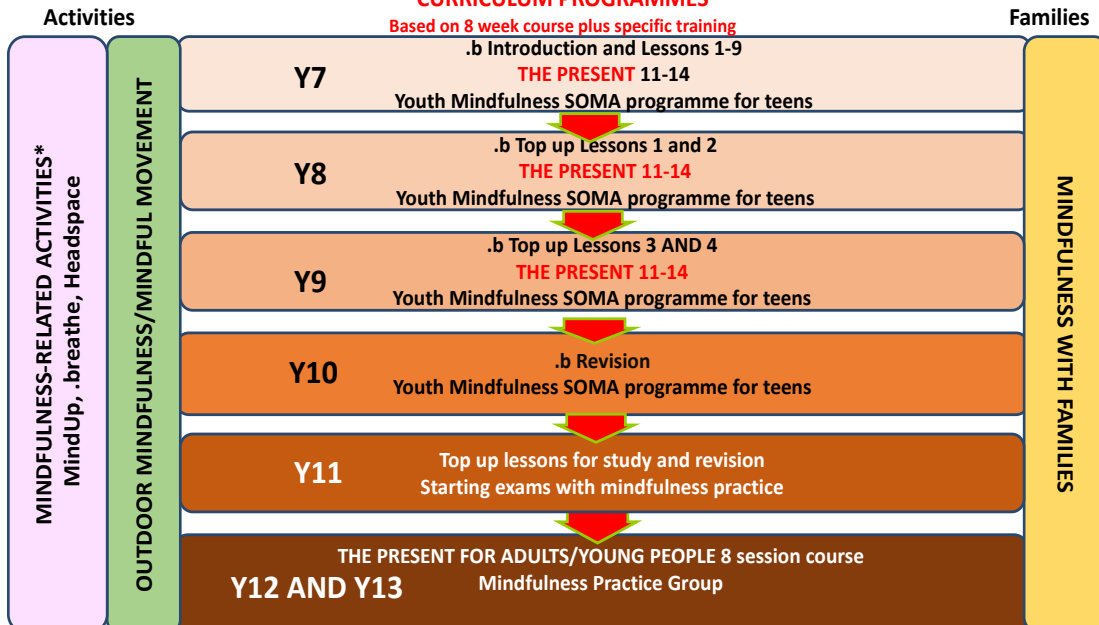
Some of the available programmes settings might choose from are listed here:

### MINDFULNESS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A possible whole school curriculum model



\*Not necessarily requiring previous mindfulness training for staff

### MINDFULNESS IN SECONDARY SCHOOLS: A possible whole school curriculum model



\*Not necessarily requiring previous mindfulness training for staff

PATHWAYS TO MINDFULNESS: Youth Work/FE/HE



Mindfulness in Further Education: A possible whole college model



## Annex 3

### Mindfulness and the New Curriculum for Wales

The overarching aims of mindfulness in education are to help us cope, connect, flourish and empower change (see main Mindfulness Toolkit for details). These aims thread through the four purposes which are the starting point and the aspiration for all other considerations in the development of the new curriculum. Cope, connect, flourish and empower change are also strongly represented progressively in the descriptions of learning, and by progression step 5 the descriptors cover all four mindfulness aims.

This paper sets out the aspects of a high quality mindfulness curriculum which could contribute to the four purposes and the What Matters Statements of the Health and Wellbeing AoLE.

#### How mindfulness underpins the four purposes of the curriculum

<https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/designing-your-curriculum/developing-a-vision-for-curriculum-design/#curriculum-design-and-the-four-purposes>

#### Ambitious capable learners, ready to learn throughout their lives

Mindfulness actively supports the development of:

- Concentration and choice of focus
- Supportive attitudes such as curiosity, interest and exploration
- Awareness of self (body and mind and how these interrelate)
- Relational skills to build connection with others
- Metacognitive awareness (an ability to “step back” and see all internal and external experience clearly)
- Knowledge about the brain and how brain functioning informs and supports our learning
- Awareness of the process of learning and valuing experiences and learning that arises from the process as much as the outcomes
- Independence and autonomy
- A positive relationship with change

#### Enterprising, creative contributors, ready to play a full part in life and work

Mindfulness actively supports the development of:

- Engagement in life through present moment, sensory awareness
- Self-awareness and knowledge to recognise skills and strengths
- Valuing both conceptual and experiential knowing of situations, broadening available options and flexibility
- Self-care strategies
- Awareness and willingness to choose people, activities and environments that support and nourish them
- The ability to articulate and communicate experience
- Active listening to self and others

#### Ethical informed citizens of Wales and the world

Mindfulness actively supports the development of:

- Awareness of self as a human being and an individual

- The ability to respond from awareness (of self and others) rather than to habitually reacting, especially when experience is challenging
- Connection with self, others and place.
- Recognition of experiences that support wellbeing (personally and as a human)
- Compassion, kindness, empathy and appreciation enabling us to flourish and deepening our connection to and understanding of others

### **Confident and healthy Individuals, ready to lead fulfilling lives as valued members of society**

Mindfulness actively supports the development of:

- Enhanced and full human engagement with experience through awareness and understanding the interconnection between thoughts, emotions and body sensations
- Self-care strategies built from present moment awareness and self-knowledge developed from being present in experience (physical and emotional)
- Confidence in perception of experience as “true”, valued and trustworthy
- Attitudes that support playful curiosity and a willingness to develop positive, appropriate strategies to live well
- Relational skills helping to build strong social networks
- Awareness of others and how their emotions and experiences might affect them
- Tolerance of distress as well as the improved capacity to choose to take action to support themselves
- Development of empathy, kindness and compassion for self and others
- Resourcefulness and resilience through self-directed strategies and seeking support as appropriate from others

## **Health & Wellbeing Area of Learning and Experience: how mindfulness can contribute**

### **How mindfulness can support WHAT MATTERS for Health and Wellbeing**

#### **Developing physical health and wellbeing has lifelong benefits**

Mindfulness can help us:

- Become more aware of our body, recognising its messages and developing skills to act appropriately on these signals to support our self-care and wellbeing
- Become aware of the interconnectedness of our body, thoughts and emotions and develop skills in recognising these influences, taking them into account in our choices and our relationships with others
- Develop our awareness and willingness to choose people, activities and environments that support and nourish us

#### **How we process and respond to our experiences affects our mental health and emotional wellbeing**

Mindfulness can help us:

- Develop awareness of how our thoughts, emotions and body sensations affect our perceptions, actions and decisions, helping us understand how these connections impact on our mental health and emotional wellbeing
- Develop our awareness of the thoughts, emotions and body sensations arising from our life experiences as they happen, helping us to reflect on their impact on our mental health and emotional wellbeing

- Provide us with the understanding, skills and techniques to enable us to self regulate and where appropriate, communicate about our feelings
- Encourage supportive attitudes such as curiosity, interest and exploration
- Develop metacognitive awareness, able to “step back” and observe our internal and external experience rather than be carried away by it, helping us cope and self regulate
- Develop our awareness, understanding and a new relationship with the full range of human experiencing
- Use our awareness and understanding to help us make appropriate choices in our lives and experiences
- Develop awareness of and empathy with the impact of our thoughts, feelings and actions on others as well of ourselves, strengthening our connection with those around us

### **Our decision-making impacts on the quality of our lives and the lives of others**

Mindfulness can help us:

- Increase our concentration, developing our skills of choice in directing our attention
- Develop the awareness and confidence to make choices in the people, activities and environments that support and nourish us
- Develop our awareness of others’ mind and body states and of how their emotions and experiences might affect us as well as themselves
- Use our awareness of ourselves and others to support our involvement in and contribution to group discussions and decisions
- Develop more tolerance of difficulties we might experience as well as the improved capacity to choose to take action to support ourselves
- Grow our confidence in perception of experience as “true”, valued and trustworthy
- Develop attitudes that support playful curiosity and a willingness to develop positive, appropriate strategies to live well
- Establish a positive relationship with change, bringing an open mind, curiosity and interest to new experiences
- Increase our awareness of self and others and support decision making including our approach to risk and our understanding of the impact of decisions and actions on ourselves and others

### **How we engage with different social influences shapes who we are and affects our health and wellbeing**

Mindfulness can help us:

- Enhance our awareness of ourself as a human being and an individual, supporting independence and autonomy
- Develop our awareness and acceptance of ourself and others’ differences, values and attitudes with curiosity and kindness
- Develop the ability to respond from awareness (of self and others) rather than to habitually reacting, especially when experience is challenging
- Increase our sense of connection with ourself, with others and with place, and respect for others’ connections
- Recognise of experiences that support wellbeing (personally and as a human) and those that do not
- Develop resourcefulness and resilience through self-directed strategies and seeking support as appropriate from others
- Understand that individual experiences shape habitual reactions for ourselves and others and provide skills and techniques to help us respond rather than react

- Develop awareness of the impact of our behaviour, values and attitudes on others who may not share them and apply this understanding to our own behaviour

### Healthy relationships are fundamental to our wellbeing

Mindfulness can help us:

- Develop relational skills to build our connection with others
- Awareness of the thoughts, emotions and body sensations arising from our connections with others and the ability to make decisions which support our wellbeing
- Develop our ability to understand our own thoughts, feelings and actions in relation to others and to communicate these when appropriate
- Develop mindful listening to enable us to understand and respect the feelings and needs of others
- Awareness and willingness to choose people, activities and environments that support and feed us
- Recognising when relationships and experiences may not support or feed us and developing the ability to make choices to support our wellbeing
- Development of empathy, kindness and compassion for self and others

The Mindfulness in Schools Project has mapped its curricula against the new curriculum. Full details can be found here:

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/mindfulness-in-schools-project-misp-and-the-new-curriculum-for-wales/>

## Annex 4

# MINDFULNESS IN EDUCATION IN WALES: DEVELOPING GUIDANCE ON EVALUATING IMPACT

## Developing a Policy for Evaluating Impact

Why do we need to evaluate the impact of mindfulness? At heart it is because we need to be sure our good intentions translate into practice and actually make a positive difference to the adults and learners we work with. This guidance identifies a range of measures which are available to help us demonstrate the impact of mindfulness for adults and children in education.

Evaluating impact suggestions included here fall into three main categories:

4. Evidence and observations directly related to mindfulness in the classroom
5. The contribution made by mindfulness to the Progression Steps for the Health and Wellbeing AoLE and the Whole School Approach
6. More formal research and validated tools for measuring wellbeing

For all of us in education mindfulness can help us cope with the pressures and uncertainties of life and work, connect with people and places, flourish through appreciating ourselves, others and the world around us, and provide the perspective and vision to empower us to change what isn't working for us.

## COPE - CONNECT - FLOURISH - EMPOWER CHANGE

We have not yet been able to identify any single tool which would help measure the impact across these four identified high level aims, and indeed they will vary according to the situation. We have compiled some of the tools we have identified based on an assessment of the relevance, suitability and limitations in relation to mindfulness. This includes some of the widely used instruments for measuring general wellbeing and some of the data sets created and used by schools and other settings as well as some more specific assessment tools which might be relevant to more detailed research.

Our intention is to provide enough information to enable settings to select from these tools to develop a *practical and manageable* approach as part of their strategic mindfulness journey through mixing and matching as they feel appropriate:

- aspects of their existing data sets
- wellbeing measures already in use such as HAPPEN and PASS
- supported by more qualitative information e.g. learners' own stories
- assessment arrangements for relevant aspects of the Health and Wellbeing AoLE as these develop
- some of the more specific mindfulness related measures for research

This will help develop a rich information base on the impact of mindfulness over time for staff and learners in a manageable and accessible way.

As schools and other settings develop a spiral curriculum to build learners' mindfulness throughout the school, it would be helpful to develop an ongoing assessment strategy to run alongside the curriculum, identifying appropriate measures to use at key points. This might include longer term assessment, revisiting aspects over time. For example, evidence from neuroscientist Dr Dusana Dorjee found that whilst there was an immediate impact on learners' mood after completing the Paws b course, the positive impact on focus and attention was observed 3 months after the programme.

In addition we have identified some of the formal external research under way reflecting the growing interest in mindfulness in education across the world, and some of the academic studies which might add to the whole picture. There is significant research over many years on the impact of the various 8 week mindfulness programmes for adults which derive from Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR). There is a growing worldwide body of evidence on the impact of mindfulness programmes for learners. We hope over time to add to that information.

## 1.Evidence and observations directly related to mindfulness in the classroom

### What difference do we expect to make?

We asked a number of staff already teaching mindfulness in Wales to identify some of the behaviours they had observed in their pupils after teaching a high quality mindfulness programme and which we might reasonably expect to be able to attribute to what learners have been taught as part of the programme. These include:

- Calm
- Peaceful
- Soothing
- Being "boss of himself"
- Respect between pupils
- Increased empathy
- More positive relationships/friendships
- More appropriate responses
- Anger management
- Focus on learning/more able to learn
- Concentration
- Attention
- Kindness
- Emotional regulation
- Compassion
- General mood
- Appreciation
- Less impulsive behaviour incidents
- More creative
- Overcoming 'freeze' moments e.g. tests
- Think before acting
- Take more responsibility for their own wellbeing.
- Feeling more in control of their emotions.
- Trying to respond not react.



- Having a shared understanding of what's happening in their brains and a shared language to discuss it.
- An increase in conversations about mental health and wellbeing.
- Able to take responsibility for own feelings

This list might provide some ideas for staff teaching mindfulness to inform their observations of learner behaviour, either as a wide long list to see what turns up, or to select several of the most relevant to focus observation and inform group and class discussion.

### Learners' Stories

Where a high quality mindfulness programme has been introduced settings report powerful anecdotal stories of the impact on learners and staff, and often on learners' families as children take home and share their knowledge and experience. This is powerful qualitative evidence and is worth recording and preserving through recorded observations or through learners' own stories on video. Collected and collated against specific programmes delivered as part of the setting's mindfulness strategy these are important in their own right, but where relevant might also provide a basis for further analysis against some of the behaviours and attitudes listed above. This might include:

- Focused interviews with individual or small groups of learners collecting their responses to specific questions
- Encouraging learners to record their personal stories and experiences on video
- Encouraging groups of learners to share their experiences with each other
- Capturing aspects inside and outside the classrooms, including observations of staff on playground duty and lunch time supervisors, and of course parents/carers

### Mindfulness Teacher Journals

Some of us like recording on computer, others like the experience of a book with a lovely cover and good quality paper, or anything in between, but whatever you choose journaling observations is a well-established mindfulness practice. Recording observations of your own responses and significant responses from learners after a mindfulness lesson or practice or random observations of instances when learners show that mindfulness is landing with them will provide a rich treasure trove of evidence. This can include observations reported to you by others as well as your own.

### Schools and Individual Data Sets

Formal data may not provide a direct measure of the impact of mindfulness, but we can expect that learners who can better cope, connect, flourish and make better decisions will demonstrate better attendance, behaviour and even attainment. This might be relevant on an individual learner or whole class/school basis and will form an important aspect of a setting's policy for measuring impact.

Schools where a high quality mindfulness programme has been introduced are already reporting an impact on some of the data already collected routinely in schools. In order to make this meaningful, settings would need to be able to identify the data at a point before

the introduction of the mindfulness programme, perhaps for the previous term and the subsequent term

- Attendance
- Exclusion – External
- Exclusion - Internal
- Attainment
- Behaviour incidents

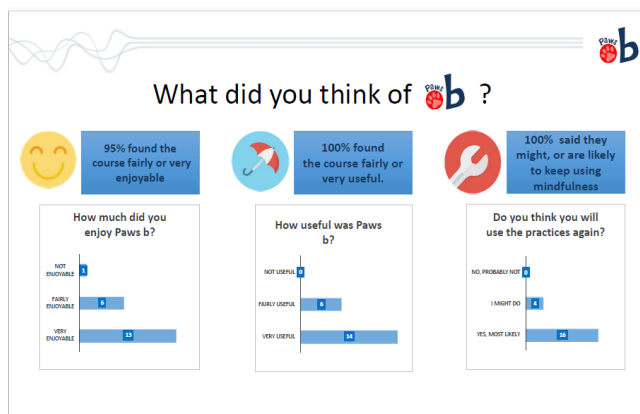
Some of this data will be used as part of the HAPPEN Network analysis provided to schools using this methodology. HAPPEN will provide before and after data if schools inform them when they plan to teach a mindfulness programme. PASS is also used extensively in schools and provides relevant information.

### Other Assessment Tools

Rachel Dean developed an informal questionnaire to use with secondary pupils selecting a range of topics relevant to their age group and collecting responses on a scale of 1-10 before and after the *Paws b* or *.b* programme. This questionnaire and the resulting analysis can be found at the end of this section.

### Class Impact Study Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP)

Staff teaching the MiSP *Paws b* or *.b* programmes can request a Class Impact Study at the completion of the programme. This includes online questionnaires for the teacher and pupils, which must be completed within 4 weeks. MiSP then provide an analysis of the data. Below is an example of one of several analyses of *Paws b* responses.



MiSP Impact Summaries for 2016-2019 can be found on the website.<sup>25</sup>

### More detailed use of Informal Data

For those who choose to take a more rigorous approach to using observed behaviours we have taken advice from the expertise used in observing behaviour in the Autism Teaching Facility at Pwll Primary School, Llanelli

<sup>25</sup> <https://mindfulnessinschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Website-Paws-b.pdf>  
<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Website-.b.pdf>

Observed behaviour can make a powerful contribution to measuring impact. Anecdotal evidence of behaviour change in individuals and groups are the most readily provided demonstrations of the impact of mindfulness in education. For example, several schools have provided testimony about the reduction of playground incidents after pupils have participated in a mindfulness programme, and the consequent improvement in learning in the sessions following breaks. The Dell in Chepstow has involved lunchtime supervisors in their mindful approach with a significant effect on afternoon sessions.

We will feedback on the development of this project as it develops but set out here some of the initial guidance which might be relevant for settings which might want to develop assessment based on their own observations.

<b>Collecting Informal Data on the Impact of a Mindfulness Programme</b>	
Step 1	<p>Identify a small number of behaviours/types of incident you feel are most relevant to your setting. A list of potential behaviours can be found on page 35 of this document.</p> <p>Establish a common definition for each of those behaviours in your setting.</p>
Step 2	<p>Identify who will do the observing/recording, who will be observed and when it will be done, over what period of time.</p> <p>Decide whether to monitor a whole class in this way or whether to identify specific pupils.</p> <p>Once established this can be ongoing observation as part of general assessment but for the purposes of data collection we suggest being specific about these aspects.</p> <p>Identify how measuring impact will be used as part of the development of the curriculum.</p>
Step 3	<p>Establish your baseline against which future findings will be judged. This needs to be in typical conditions and as accurate as possible.</p> <p>Decide on an end point to check the data.</p>
Step 4	<p>Teach your chosen high quality mindfulness programme (see the guidance on Developing Mindfulness in Education in Wales)</p> <p>Monitor on a regular basis.</p> <p>Graph the findings, which makes it easy to spot trends/patterns/outcomes</p>
Step 5	Analyse and report findings

## 2. The contribution made by mindfulness to the Progression Steps for the Health and Wellbeing AoLE and the Whole School Approach

The Health and Wellbeing AoLE includes a wide range of statements and progression steps to which mindfulness can make a significant contribution. The new assessment

arrangements will provide significant useful information on the impact of mindfulness. We recognise that mindfulness will be only one thread in the assessment of the Health and Wellbeing AoLE, and that assessment needs to be proportionate, enabling settings to demonstrate the impact of their provision and informing continuous improvement. Important aspects of the assessment guidance relating to mindfulness include:

- Assessment is an ongoing process which can make good use of observation
- Learners should be assessed in relation to the school curriculum across the 3-16 continuum, which will be supported by the spiral curriculum approach to implementing and developing mindfulness set out in this toolkit
- The descriptions of learning provide guidance on progression and it is recognised that learning is not necessarily linear
- Learners should be involved in self-assessment and peer-assessment appropriate to their developmental stage
- Assessment methods and techniques may be distinctive to individual areas of learning and support progression.

Similarly, recording learner progress will need to be proportionate and purposeful and the guidance in this toolkit suggests a range of ideas to fit different circumstances. The principles of recording set out in the curriculum guidance include:

- inform communications and engagement activity with parents/carers
- support the transition of learners along the 3 to 16 continuum
- help practitioners and leaders develop their understanding of progression
- inform curriculum development and inform future learning and teaching
- identify where improvement and support are needed as part of the school's self-evaluation process.

### Learner Wellbeing and Assessment: mutual support systems<sup>26</sup>

This discussion document published in September 2020 sets out how wellbeing and assessment can work together and be mutually supportive as the new curriculum moves forward. The principles fit usefully with the aims of mindfulness in Wales to help cope, connect, flourish and empower change. The underpinning concepts of autonomy, affiliation and agency are also supported by mindfulness.

Mindfulness might therefore make a fundamental contribution to the development of the relationship between assessment and well-being of a learner, supporting the implementation of these principles as the assessment arrangements for the new curriculum unfold.

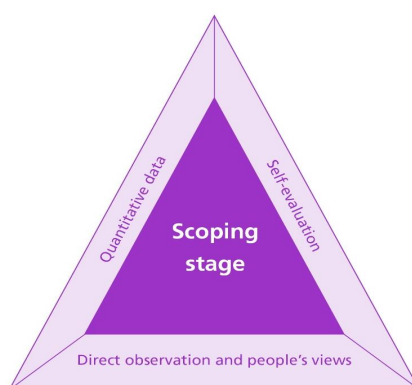
The assessment of the impact of mindfulness provision might also be supported by this approach. Observation and discussion with learners would enable teachers to explore how mindfulness is contributing to learners' understanding and experience of autonomy, affiliation and agency as well as enhancing their metacognition.

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<sup>26</sup> <https://hwb.gov.wales/api/storage/88a9bd44-9410-4bbb-addc-3fb45f93ff12/learner-well-being-and-assessment-mutual-support-systems.pdf>

## Whole School Approach Evaluation

The Welsh Government is developing a National Evaluation and Improvement Resource. The resource will promote self-evaluation and improvement planning as integrated features of effective school improvement processes. It will support schools' improvement work by providing principles of evaluation, as well as practical guidance regarding gathering, evaluating and analysing first hand evidence through a range of activities. The resource will support building capacity across the system by focusing on strengthening leadership, well-being of learners and staff, encouraging innovative practice, promoting reflection, and supporting professional learning.



The resource will support schools to engage in evidence-based self-evaluation of what is working well and what needs to improve and have greater positive impact on the well-being of learners. This will support schools to develop the behaviour and practices that will support change and help prepare for the design and implementation of their new curriculum.

### 3. More formal research and validated tools for measuring wellbeing

#### Formal Evaluation Tools which Measure Wellbeing

For those who choose a more formal and validated evidence base.

<b>HAPPEN</b> (already used extensively in primary schools)
Age range: Primary
HAPPEN is part of the National Centre for Population Health and Wellbeing Research (NCPHWR), which is funded by Health Care Research Wales. Through taking part in the HAPPEN survey, your primary school (years 4,5, and 6) can have a better understanding of pupils' <b>physical, psychological, emotional and social health</b> to enable everyone to work together to improve child wellbeing and academic achievement. HAPPEN is underpinned by the 4 purposes of education. The links between the 4 purposes and mindfulness is set out in Annex 3 of the Mindfulness in Education Toolkit.
Schools which are part of the HAPPEN Network can work with HAPPEN to submit assessments before and after teaching a mindfulness programme and will receive a range of data to enable them to assess the impact.

**PASS Pupil Attitudes to Self and School** (already used extensively in schools)

**Age Range 4-18+**

<https://www.gl-assessment.co.uk/content-pages/pupil-attitudes-to-self-and-school-pass/>

In just 20 minutes, the Pupil Attitudes to Self and School (PASS) survey provides you with an insight into students' mindsets that would otherwise be difficult to gain. It helps to detect possible barriers to learning, including issues around confidence, resilience, and motivation.

PASS highlights nine standardised factors proven to be significantly linked to educational goals:

Attitudinal factor	What it measures
1. Feelings about school	Explores whether a pupil feels secure, confident and included in their learning community.
2. Perceived learning capability	Offers an insight into a pupil's level of self-respect, determination and openness to learning.
3. Self – regard, as a learner	Equivalent to self-worth, this measure is focused specifically on self-awareness as a learner, highlighting levels of motivation and determination.
4. Preparedness for learning	This measure covers areas such as study skills, attentiveness and concentration, looking at the pupil's determination and openness to learning.
5. Attitudes to teachers	This measures a young person's perceptions of the relationships they have with the adults in school. A low score can flag a lack of respect.
6. General work ethic	Highlights the pupil's aspirations and motivation to succeed in life, this measure focuses on purpose and direction, not just at school, but beyond.
7. Confidence in learning	Identifies a pupil's ability to think independently and to persevere when faced with a challenge.
8. Attitudes to attendance	Correlating very highly with actual attendance 12 months later, this measure enables teachers to intercede earlier with strategies to reduce the likelihood of truancy.
9. Response to curriculum demands	This measure focuses more narrowly on school-based motivation to undertake and complete curriculum based tasks, highlighting the pupil's approach to communication and collaboration.

**PERMA Wellbeing Tool** (being introduced across the Central South Consortium area)

**PERMA stands for Positive Emotion (P), Engagement (E), Relationships (R), Meaning (M) and Accomplishment (A).**

**Age Range: Primary and Secondary, Adult**

The PERMA Wellbeing Tool was created by registered Educational Psychologists and teachers to help schools identify and respond effectively to the wellbeing needs of pupils. It comprises a wellbeing monitoring system and a teacher resource/strategy bank. At the time of writing, the tool is being trialled in a few schools, and is due to be made available to all schools in the Central South Consortium. The monitoring system has been developed from the Positive Psychology work of Martin Seligman, published in his 2011 book 'Flourish'. Positive Psychology differs from traditional psychology in that it focuses on developing strengths rather than trying to fix what's wrong. Wellbeing can be thought of as made up of these five elements, much as the weather can be thought of as being made up of cloud cover, wind, rain, temperature, etc. Our well-being varies from day to day, and naturally goes up and down from time to time. The point is that we can take positive action to improve our wellbeing in any and all of the five strands.

The system takes the form of an online questionnaire that assesses pupils against the five strands of PERMA and gives a snapshot of each pupil. The strategy bank can be used to point teachers towards interventions and strategies that may help to meet the wellbeing needs of their pupils, as indicated by the monitoring system. *Paws b* and *.b* are examples of strategies that are included in the resource bank. Teachers would be provided with details of each course and where to find out more information, e.g. MiSP website. The monitoring tool can then be used to measure the impact of such interventions on pupil wellbeing.

The strands of PERMA would appear to be a good fit across the aims of mindfulness to help cope, connect, flourish and empower change. All five strands underpin the ability to cope and empower change, and more specifically:

- Connection links with Engagement – the psychological connection to activities or organisations, and Relationships – feeling socially integrated, cared about and supported by others.
- Flourishing links with Positive emotions - hedonic feelings of happiness (e.g. feeling joyful, content, and cheerful), Meaning – believing one’s life is valuable, and Accomplishment – making progress toward goals, feeling capable to do daily activities, and having a sense of achievement.

### **EBPU Evidence Based Practice Unit: Wellbeing Measuring Framework**

**Age Range: Versions for Primary and Secondary Schools**

<https://www.corc.uk.net/for-schools/wellbeing-measurement-for-schools/>

EBPU has versions of this framework for primary and secondary schools and includes sections on students’ feelings, life satisfaction and resilience. It comprises a set of questionnaires completed online which can be used to measure wellbeing and resilience in children and young people. Students’ responses to the questionnaires:

- Provide a snapshot of the strengths and challenges students are facing, which can be used to target support
- Help schools to evaluate their interventions

- Send a positive message to parents and carers that the school is focused on students' wellbeing.

### The Stirling Children's Wellbeing Scale

**Age Range: 8-15**

<http://www.friendsforlifescotland.org/site/The%20Stirling%20Children%27s%20Wellbeing%20Scale.pdf>

The Stirling Children's Well-being Scale (SCWBS) was developed by the Stirling Council Educational Psychology Service (UK) as a holistic, positively worded measure of emotional and psychological well-being in children aged eight to 15 years. Drawing on current theories of well-being and Positive Psychology, the aim was to provide a means of measuring the effectiveness of interventions and projects designed to promote children's well-being and emotional development.

This is designed as a general wellbeing scale and provides useful information, though experience shows it is more appropriate for 9+.

### CASE STUDY: Measuring the Impact of Mindfulness at Templeton Primary School Pembrokeshire using validated measures

Working with Templeton Primary School, Kerry Morgan has developed a full Project Plan to test out some of the methods we have cited in this guidance. We will report on this pilot as it develops.

Main aspects of the project plan include:

***AIM: 'To explore the use of appropriate validated measurement tools for evaluating the impact of Paws b in Templeton Community Primary School'***

#### **Objectives:**

To maintain focus and set achievable measures the project will focus on the following objectives:

- Provide presentation to staff in Templeton School, introducing the Paws B course.
- Clarify ownership of the project and agreement to the commitment of resources / roles & responsibilities.
- Identify and implement valid measurement tools to evaluate both qualitative and quantitative outcomes (including pre/post measures).
- Deliver six week *Paws b* course to pupils in year 3 and 4.
- Provide an end of pilot review outlining lessons learnt, outcome measures and recommendations for future work.
- Increase mindful awareness and mental and emotional wellbeing amongst children.

The expected overall outcomes will include improvements in, for example:



- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Mindful attention and awareness</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Mental and emotional wellbeing</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Psychological functioning</i></li> <li>▪ <i>General sense of well being</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Increased confidence in learning</i></li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <i>Positive emotional state</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Positive outlook</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Social desirability</i></li> <li>▪ <i>Social connection</i></li> </ul> |
|--|--|

### Measurement tools

The following tools will be used to assess the delivery of *Paws b* course, within Templeton School:

### Quantitative measures

- *SCWBS* – The Stirling Children’s Well-being Scale consists of 12 items measuring emotional and psychological wellbeing.
- *MAAS-C* – Mindful Attention & Awareness Scale for Children is designed to measure child and adolescent mindfulness.
- *PASS* – Pupil Attitude to Self and School is designed to uncover emotional or attitudinal problems (such as low self-regard or attitudes to attendance) likely to hinder achievement at school.
- *MiSP Class Impact Study*

***These scales will be administered before pupils start the of the 6 week course and again at the end.***

### Qualitative measures

- *Teacher & pupil videos / stories* – video blogs / stories will be recorded to provide personal accounts and experiences from teachers and pupils whom completed the 6 week Paws B programme.
- *Parent Feedback* – a short survey will be administered to parents to assess whether they have noticed any changes in their children & / or whether the course has influenced the family in any way.

### Findings

The programme and some of the evaluation was completed before schools closed because of the pandemic, restricting the ongoing collection of evidence. From the evidence available the most positive findings come from the children themselves. They seemed to grasp the importance of learning mindfulness and were able to express how it helped them concentrate, self regulate, prepare for sleep and help others. Most children were able to recall most (if not all) of the practices and used them regularly. They even shared their practices with family members. The feedback from the parents was mostly positive, expressing interest in what their children had learned and some were keen for their children to learn more. It would be worth exploring the possibility of offering some training to parents so they could support their children.

The validated measures MAAS-C proved less appropriate for this age group (Y4), who required significant support to understand the statements, resulting in unreliable data. The SCWBS provided some useful data but again there are questions about the appropriate nature of the scale for younger children. However the SCWBS did show a significant number of children demonstrated positive improvement in their social dimension and demonstrated positive improvements in scores in the wellbeing sub-components within this scale which includes the measurement of Positive Emotional State and Positive Outlook.

Although the aim of this evaluation was to explore appropriate measurement tools, anecdotal feedback from teachers and parents suggests the importance of a whole school approach. From the process learning experience of this pilot it would be a recommendation that both teachers and parents are trained before the children. This will enable a supportive structure for the children which will not only be supported and encouraged by the school but also at home.

### Evidence Case Study Garnteg Primary School Torfaen

Garnteg Primary School has developed a spiral mindfulness curriculum. All staff have completed an 8 week mindfulness course and specific staff have trained to teach high quality programmes. Garnteg used a wide range of measures to evaluate the contribution made throughout the school.

#### Impact of Mindfulness at Garnteg Primary School

- ✓ Improved attendance and wellbeing of staff and pupils;
- ✓ Greater engagement and positive attitudes towards learning;
- ✓ Decrease in incidents of behavior and bullying;
- ✓ Improved independence, resilience, kindness, collaboration;
- ✓ **Embedding Mindfulness** through the curriculum through authentic experiences has supported pupils in developing their minds and bodies, improving their independence, resilience, kindness and collaboration across the curriculum.
- ✓ **Feedback from staff following training through questionnaires:** 16/27 gave Mindfulness training the highest rating of 10; The average score across all 27 was 9.18; All 27 would recommend training to colleagues.
- ✓ **Class Impact Reports for Years 4 and 5 pupil comments and data from questionnaires:** 93% found the course fairly or very enjoyable; 80% found the course fairly or very useful; 83% said they might, or are likely to keep using mindfulness.
- ✓ **Standards of PSWBCD** 100% of learners in Y2 achieved Foundation Phase Outcome 5+ for PSWBCD. Over the last three years performance of PSD has been above the LA and Wales for FO5+ and FO6+. In 2017, PSD was slightly below the LA and Wales for FO5+.



Estyn Report March 2019 whereby both Wellbeing and Attitudes to Learning and Care, Support and Guidance were graded as excellent.

Pupils who scored below 50% in attitudes to learning in PASS survey scored of above 80% in all areas.



## External Research into Mindfulness in Education

Writing in the developing Education Strategy of the Mindfulness Initiative Katherine Weare, Emeritus Professor of Education Universities of Exeter and Southampton, summarises the current research evidence for mindfulness in education<sup>27</sup>.

**“Mindfulness is already showing promise in helping to promote wellbeing, increase resilience, and address the growing mental health crisis.**

MBIs, in both clinical and educational settings are showing small but clear impacts on depression, anxiety and stress in school aged children, on the development of resilience, and on the alleviation of stress in university students. Small but promising evidence on eating disorders. Around 40 peer reviewed studies.

- A small but growing number of studies on impacts on physical health in the young, including blood pressure, stress hormones and sleep.
- MBIs are currently more effective in showing decreases in negative mental traits than in positive ones, although the evidence is mixed on whether those with more severe problems benefit most
- There is a smaller but consistent impact on wellbeing and positive affect in children and young people.
- Evidence (around 30 peer reviewed studies) shows small to medium impact of MBIs on social and emotional skills, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, emotional regulation, resilience, motivation, optimism and persistence, sociability and the ability to make relationships, in both students and teachers.
- Research has clearly demonstrated that social and emotional skills enhance learning and academic achievement, as well as psychological wellbeing, and their potential when integrated into mainstream teaching and learning is transformative.”

Black (2016)<sup>28</sup> systematically reviewed 41 MBI studies, including 13 RCTs, conducted in school and clinical settings. They concluded that MBIs in schools reliably impact on a wide range of indicators of wellbeing including: aspects of cognition and executive function, particularly the ability to pay attention; psycho-social variables such as emotional regulation, interpersonal relationships, stress, depression and anxiety; and measures of psycho-biological outcomes such as blood pressure and heart rate.

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<sup>27</sup> THE EVIDENCE FOR MINDFULNESS IN SCHOOLS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE Katherine Weare Emeritus Professor, University of Southampton, Honorary Visiting Professor, University of Exeter [skw@soton.ac.uk](mailto:skw@soton.ac.uk) 2018

<sup>28</sup> Black, D. S. (2016). ‘Mindfulness training for children and adolescents: A state-of-the-science review’. In K. W. Brown, J. D. Creswell, and R. M. Ryan (Eds.), *Handbook of Mindfulness: Theory, Research, and Practice*. Guilford: New York, NY.

MYRIAD (MY RESILIENCE IN ADOLESCENCE) Consortium of five Universities led by Oxford Mindfulness Centre, funded by Wellcome Trust  
<http://myriadproject.org/schools/>

MYRIAD is a long term research project investigating how secondary schools prepare young people to manage their emotional health and improve resilience. It will compare the existing, good-quality, social emotional learning that is already being taught in schools (known as 'teaching as usual') to a programme of study that is based on mindfulness techniques. Mindfulness is a way of being present to experiences, as they happen, rather than worrying about what has happened or might happen in the future. The mindfulness programme, called '.b,' has been developed by the Mindfulness in Schools Project. This project is a randomised controlled trial in which all schools are randomly allocated, using a computer programme, to continue either with 'teaching as usual,' or to provide the mindfulness programme alongside their current teaching.

The schools involved (including a small number of schools in Wales) taught .b to Y7 and Y8 pupils during 2019. Independent detailed follow up with staff and pupils is being undertaken during 2019-20 and 2020-21. Those schools selected to teach mindfulness now have a number of staff trained to teach .b to pupils and are able to extend the teaching to year groups not in the study. The impact findings of the MYRIAD study are expected in 2021-2022.

To date the analysis has been on implementation which has been useful to inform our guidance. We have linked with the MYRIAD team to ensure we are taking best advantage of this experience.

### Further Research in Wales

It would be a significant contribution to the development of mindfulness in education, and the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing AoLE and the Whole School Approach if there could be some specific external research including RCTs on implementation in Wales.

A proposal for a research project on the impact of mindfulness teaching on primary school children – a natural experiment is being put forward by Swansea University.

Questionnaire developed by Rachel Dean Williams at Ysgol Bro Gwaun  
.b Mindfulness questionnaire (Before starting course) (After finishing the course)

Age:-

Please write down on a scale of 1 - 10 how the following topics affect your wellbeing (10 being the highest, where you experience levels of anxiety or problems in this area. 1 being the lowest, where you don't experience any problems with this issue.). Please also comment on what the problems may be and how this affects you.

This questionnaire is completely confidential.

- 1) Sleep.....  
.....
- 2) Self confidence.....  
.....
- 3) Stress.....  
.....
- 4) Relationships.....  
.....
- 5) The Future.....  
.....
- 6) Worry.....  
.....
- 7) Image - How you see yourself.....  
.....
- 8) Exams.....  
.....
- 9) School.....  
.....
- 10) Food.....  
.....
- 11) Home.....  
.....
- 12) Bullying.....  
.....
- 13) Loneliness.....  
.....

- 14)Addiction.....
- .....
- 15)Money.....
- .....
- 16)Depression.....
- .....
- 17)Fear.....
- .....
- 18)Fitness.....
- .....

If you have any other comments you'd like to make, particularly things that you'd like help with? Or things you'd like to be better at or improve then please write them here:

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**Aims**

- To help pupils experience greater well-being.
- To address anxiety caused by exam stress.
- To improve concentration and focus.
- To work with difficult mental states such as depressive, ruminative and anxious thoughts.
- To equip pupils with strategies to help them cope with stress throughout their lives.

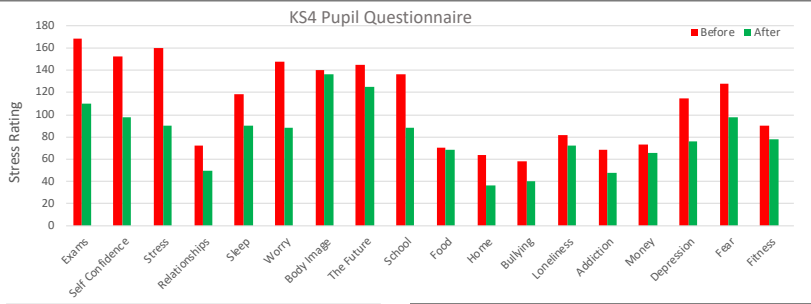
**Pupil Feedback**

"I use 7/11 most days now and feel like I've got a much better handle on things. You know what I was like before: I'd flip out, get all dramatic and make the situation 100 times worse by getting angry and lashing out. I like the feeling of grounding myself, feeling my feet on the floor and breath in my body. It calms me down. I'm smoking a lot less now, I'm feeling healthier and I'm sleeping better."

"My foster carer and me have a deal: I go to my room and do a FOFBOC whenever she winds me up. I still lose it but not in her face now. After a few minutes of doing a FOFBOC I settle down and feel more in control. She's started doing it too and I think we're getting on better."

"For years, I'd always get so nervous before a show. My horse would pick up on it too and not perform as well but now when I'm waiting to go on, I sit back in my saddle, put my heels down in the stirrups and focus on my breath and after about 2 minutes everything feels clearer. I can concentrate and remember everything. My coach and my mum can't believe the difference. Jackson's happier too and we're definitely closer. It's made a massive difference to me. I love it and I've taught it to some of the younger ones in the club as well. Thank you."

"Doing a FOFBOC really helped to calm me down before an exam. I'd concentrate on my breath and after a couple of minutes I'd look at my paper and felt I could smash it."



**Process**

- Specifically targeted more vulnerable pupils whom we felt would gain the most from participation.
- Formed 2 mixed groups of year 10 & 11 girls (10 pupils per group).
- Delivered the .b curriculum over 8 weeks (9 distinct lessons which teach pupils a different mindfulness skill each week).
- Pupils completed a questionnaire designed to measure a number of aspects of well-being (before and after course). Feedback interviews were also carried out after course completion.



**Outcomes**

- Overall there was a significant increase in well-being among pupils in both groups. Pupils felt that the .b program had given them a range of useful tools to help them navigate stressful situations, regulate their emotions for behaviour and ultimately help them to make better choices.
- Pupils overwhelmingly felt the positive impact of the project on their focus and behaviour at school and at home.
- Three major themes emerged from the interviews and questionnaires; Exams, Stress / Anxiety and Self confidence. The impact of the project in these priority areas clearly indicates the potential benefits for both pupils and schools.
- The key message from pupils was that .b needed to be rolled out to other pupils in the school, particularly those going through GCSE exams. However, there was a recognition that logistically this would prove to be difficult on a large scale and it was suggested that a solution might be to timetable a .b / wellbeing lesson onto the KS4 timetable.
- All pupils said that they would continue to use the .b strategies and felt that the coping skills developed over the course had the potential to make a real difference to the lives of young people and positively impact levels of happiness, mental health and well-being among teenagers.

For those wishing to engage in more specific research

## TOOLS FOR CHILDREN

### MAAS – C Mindful Attention Awareness Scale adapted for children in KS2 and KS3

Age Range: 9-15

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257795419\\_A\\_Validation\\_Study\\_of\\_the\\_Minful\\_Attention\\_Awareness\\_Scale\\_Adapted\\_for\\_Children](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/257795419_A_Validation_Study_of_the_Minful_Attention_Awareness_Scale_Adapted_for_Children)

A validated scale to measure the development of mindfulness skills adapted from the adult version of MAAS (see below). More suitable for older KS2 pupils and KS3.

### PANAS – C Positive and Negative Affect Schedule for Children

Age Range: (ages 6-19)

<https://www.phenxtoolkit.org/protocols/view/180502>

The **PANAS for Children (PANAS-C)** was developed in an attempt to differentiate the affective expressions of anxiety and depression in children. The final version of the measure consists of 27 items: 12 positive affect terms and 15 negative affect terms. Recommended by Dr. Dusana Dorjee who has been part of the development of Paws b and The Present.

### Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure CAMM

(Age 9+)

<https://thinkcbt.com/child-psychological-flexibility-measure>

<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/evaluating-projects/measuring-essential-skills/spectrum-database/child-and-adolescent-mindfulness-measure/>

The **CAMM** is a 25-item measure of **mindfulness**. It assesses the degree to which **children and adolescents** observe internal experiences, act with awareness, and accept internal experiences without judging them. It is available online or as a pdf. Overall, the CAMM appears to be a reliable and valid mindfulness measure for both boys and girls.

## TOOLS FOR ADULTS

### MAAS Mindful Attention Awareness Scale

(Adults)

<http://www.mindfulness-extended.nl/content3/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/MAAS-EN.pdf>

The MAAS assesses individual differences in the frequency of mindful states over time. The scale is a 15-item (1-6 Likert scale) questionnaire to assess dispositional (or trait) mindfulness. The measurements from the MAAS tap consciousness related to self-regulation and various areas of well-being.

### PANAS for adults

Adults
<a href="https://ogg.osu.edu/media/documents/MB%20Stream/PANAS.pdf">https://ogg.osu.edu/media/documents/MB%20Stream/PANAS.pdf</a>
The PANAS Scale or Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS) is a self-report questionnaire. The list is split up into two segments, or mood scales. One scale measures a person's <u>positive emotion</u> and the other scale measures the negative. Each segment has ten terms, which can be rated on a scale of 1 to 5 to indicate the extent to which the respondent agrees that this applies to him. The PANAS Scale was developed in 1988 by three American psychologists: David Watson, Lee Anna Clark and Auke Tellegen.

More information about available research tools can be found at

<https://mindfulnessinschools.org/hub/research/>

Useful information on measuring wellbeing more generally can be found at

<https://www.well-school.org/t/well-schools-guide-to-measuring-wellbeing/1685>