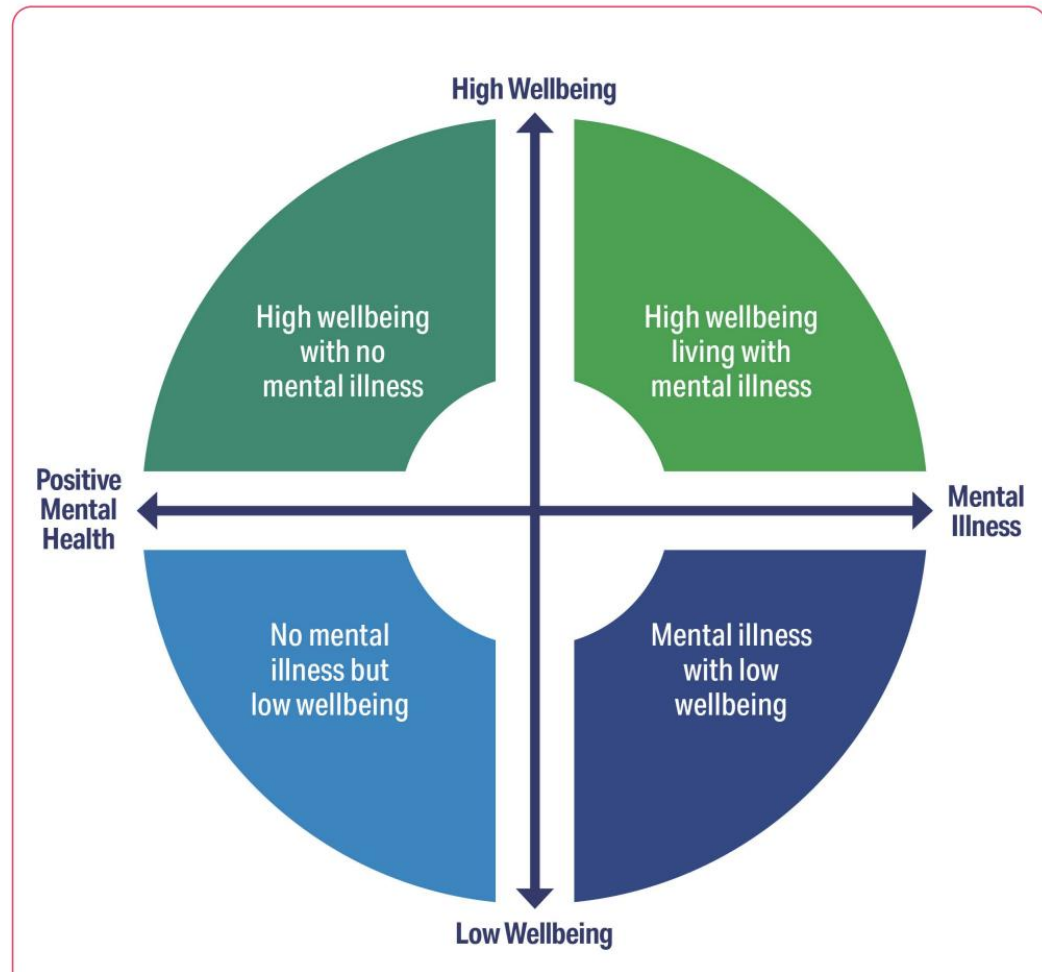




**Prevention First:
Children & Young People's Mental Health in Schools**

**Charter Designated Safeguarding
Leads**

Mental Health Continuum





- The former chief inspector says national wellbeing checks on pupils could worsen children's mental health and make them "start to believe they are sad or worried".
- Amanda Spielman opposed an amendment to the [children's wellbeing and schools bill](#), currently before the House of Lords, which called for collecting national data on children's mental health and wellbeing. 15th September 2025



Why Prevention Matters

- 1 in 6 children aged 5–16 have a probable mental health disorder (NHS Digital, 2022).
- Half of all mental health problems start before the age of 14.
- Schools are uniquely placed to promote wellbeing, build resilience, and identify early signs.
- Prevention reduces escalation to crisis and improves learning outcomes.

The NHS Prevention Framework

Wider determinants of mental health – food and housing insecurity, education, care, substance abuse, travel

Primary Prevention
(Universal)

Prevent

Secondary Prevention
(Early / Targeted)

Reduce risk of
escalation

Tertiary Prevention
(Ongoing Need)

Delay -minimising
the impact

Care & Response
(Specialist)

Our collective goals

**prevention as
'business as usual'
across all our
schools**

**Implement
prevention
approaches that
have the greatest
return on
investment – data!**

**Take an evidence,
data and insight
informed approach**



Primary Prevention (Universal)

- Whole-school ethos of wellbeing, inclusion, and safety.
- Curriculum: PSHE/RSHE mental health education, resilience building.
- Staff training to recognise stress, promote positive coping.
- Anti-bullying, positive behaviour culture.
- **Reflection:** What are we doing universally to promote wellbeing?



Secondary Prevention (Early / Targeted)

- Staff noticing early warning signs.
- Pupil voice, wellbeing surveys, pastoral check-ins.
- Targeted interventions: mentoring, nurture groups.
- Early parental engagement, signposting.

Reflection: How do we identify and support pupils at risk early?



Tertiary Prevention (Ongoing Need)

- Reasonable adjustments for pupils with ongoing difficulties.
 - Individual pastoral plans, flexible timetables, safe spaces.
 - Working with families and external agencies.
 - Supporting re-integration after absence or hospital stay.
-
- **Reflection:** How do we reduce escalation and keep pupils engaged in school?



Care & Response (Specialist)

- CAMHS, NHS Mental Health Support Teams, counselling.
- Crisis plans, safeguarding collaboration.
- DSL role: ensuring safe information-sharing, continuity in school.
- **Reflection:** What's our role when specialist care is needed?

Primary Prevention (Universal)	Secondary Prevention (Early/Targeted)	Tertiary Prevention (Ongoing Need)	Care & Response (Specialist)
Whole-school culture of wellbeing	Early identification of concerns	Reasonable adjustments in school	CAMHS / MHST / NHS services
PSHE/RSHE on resilience, emotional literacy	Wellbeing surveys, staff noticing early signs	Pastoral plans, safe spaces, flexible support	Counselling, therapeutic interventions
Staff training in mental health promotion	Targeted interventions: mentoring, nurture groups	Multi-agency work with families	Crisis/safety plans and safeguarding protocols
Anti-bullying, inclusive practice	Early parental engagement, signposting	Support for re-integration after absence	DSL role in info-sharing, continuity in school

The Prevention Continuum



4th February 2025

An introduction to self-harm prevention in schools & colleges

https://youtu.be/4649qMKeV3w?si=AJF52tL4O_5iiHvm



Anna Freud
building the mental
wellbeing of the
next generation