

Emotional and social wellbeing of primary school children

**Research Question(s)**

- What is the effectiveness and cost-effectiveness of school-based interventions to promote the emotional and social wellbeing of primary school children?
  - **Population:** Children in primary school aged 4-11.
  - **Intervention (non-NHS):** School-based interventions (including multi-component programmes) to promote emotional and social wellbeing.
  - **Comparator:** Usual practice. This is likely to vary greatly across schools and will therefore need to be well documented, possibly as part of the study, to aid generalisation.
  - **Outcomes:** Improved emotional and social wellbeing of children. Secondary outcomes may include improvements in health, social capacity and education; acceptability of interventions; durability of acquired skills.
  - **Duration of follow up:** At least 2 years. The programme is particularly interested in proposals that include transition to secondary school.
  - **Impact on inequalities:** Research design should consider the impact of the intervention on health inequalities, including gender and ethnic inequalities. Researchers to specify and justify.
  - **Design:** Primary research, researchers to specify and justify.
  - **Setting:** Primary school.
  - **Public engagement:** Proposals should incorporate a mechanism for public involvement.

**Background to commissioning brief:**

*Good social and emotional wellbeing can help children negotiate difficult situations and may reduce the likelihood of developing mental and physical health disorders. In 2004, the Office for National Statistics reported that 10% of children and young people aged 5–16 had a clinically diagnosed mental disorder. Mental disorders among young people increased between 1974 and 1999 (NICE public health guidance 13). A UNICEF study assessing wellbeing of children from 21 rich countries was published in 2007 and placed the UK at the bottom.*

*The emotional and social wellbeing of primary school children can affect the development of healthy lifestyles and enable children to confront adversity and challenging circumstances in later life. A commonly shared and potential stressful event is the transition to secondary school. Incorporating this transition in research may help evaluate the effectiveness of interventions to promote emotional and social wellbeing.*

## **Notes to Applicants**

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