



Eden Park Primary and Nursery School

Willow Wellbeing

"FIND OUT WHO YOU ARE AND DO IT ON PURPOSE." DOLLY PARTON.

"MAY I LOVE AND ACCEPT MYSELF JUST AS I AM." TARA BRACH.



Definition of well-being

The state of being comfortable, happy, or healthy.

Definition of Mindfulness

A practice of letting go and relaxing into the present moment as it is. The quality or state of being conscious or aware of something that is achieved by focusing awareness on the present moment, while calmly acknowledging and accepting one's feelings, thoughts, and bodily sensations.

The stages of a curriculum that supports well-being

- Recognising and identifying emotions in oneself and others and being able to share ideas and thoughts.
- Being inspired to explore solutions and overcome obstacles, to accept success and failure and to use mindfulness strategies to remain calm.
- Reflecting on one's own actions and recognising the effect they have on themselves and others.
- Accepting oneself and using strategies to maintain physical and mental well-being.



Eden Park Primary and Nursery School

Willow Wellbeing

Golden Rule

"If the ocean can calm itself, so can you. We are both salt waters mixed with air." Nayyirah Waheed.

Children emulate and imitate. Adults and teachers need to practice looking after their own well-being and staying calm to inspire children and show them the benefits of taking care of both their physical and mental well-being.

Willow Well-being's Characteristics:

- Let yourself be inspired.
- Learn to inspire others.
- Learn to lose well and to win graciously.
- Relax.
- Share with others.
- Reflect on your actions.
- Be peaceful.
- Empathise with others.
- Treat others as you wish to be treated.
- Listen to your conscience.

Created here is a framework that supports the teaching of this core value. It is a progression based on personal development and not age. Each of the developmental stages breaks into subsections making the progression easier to follow.

However, it is not a document in which children need to do each and all the activities and in the order they appear. Personal development is about moving towards being better, so this is not sequential and so teaching and focus will rightly be taken from across this framework.

See it as a resource bank, helping adults support children towards emulating the 10 essential characteristics.



Willow Wellbeing

Recognising and identifying emotions in oneself and others and being able to share ideas and thoughts.

The child is supported to identify both positive and negative emotions and to share their thoughts and ideas with adults and their peers.

Principles and guidance:

- Children learn the difference between positive and negative emotions.
- Children are introduced to the normality of feeling both positive and negative emotions throughout daily life.
- Children are taught how to recognise and identify emotions in themselves and in others.
- Children are encouraged and taught how to share their ideas and thoughts in a safe environment.

Activities that support this stage:

- Introduce the idea of emotions and ask children to think about occasions when they have felt positive or negative emotions. If it does not come up naturally in the discussion, introduce the three broad types of feelings for each of positive and negative:
 - Positive: Happy, Excited, Calm
 - Negative: Sad, Angry, ScaredEnsure that learners understand what each of these means. They could then be asked to come up with ideas of when they might feel those different emotions. This activity could be extended to a set of different hypothetical scenarios with learners identifying the feelings that they might feel in each of those.
- Consider the following questions:
 - What is an emotion?
 - What do we mean by feeling positive?
 - What do we mean by feeling negative?
 - Why do we have emotions?
 - How can we use our emotions to help us?This practice can be reinforced in different ways, depending on the age of the children. Teachers could check in on feelings and emotions of children during daily check-ins or create a 'feelings' space in the classroom where the children can practice sharing their thoughts. Children also need to be taught to "read" emotions on the faces/ bodies of others, being aware that often autistic spectrum children will find this particularly challenging.
- In life, we will feel different emotions at different times. Children need to understand that this is a normal part of how we think about what is going on around us. Sometimes our feelings change quickly, and other times we might feel the same way for a time. It is not always easy to tell what emotion someone is feeling, and some people might choose to try to hide how they are feeling for different reasons. However, we can also pick up some clues about how people are feeling.
- As well as seeing how someone looks, we can also use our understanding and inference of a situation to help us to guess how someone might be feeling. This can be demonstrated and practiced in reading sessions when the focus is inference. This is a great opportunity to consider using pictures/text based around emotions and feelings to have a class-based discussion and share thoughts and ideas of others and see if children can practice the notion of empathy.
- The teacher could start with the three main categories of emotions for each of positive and negative and ask children whether they can recreate what those facial expressions might look like for each emotion. This can be extended to draw or write down what those look like – for example, children could create a poster.
- Some children may be supported by the use of emoji or pictures to represent emotion.



Eden Park Primary and Nursery School

Willow Wellbeing

- The teacher can ask children to think about what situations or scenarios might lead to the different emotions and write down some ideas. The children could be posed a series of hypothetical scenarios and asked to imagine what the emotional response of someone else might be to those events.
- This could also be considered in other areas of the curriculum. For example, when events are described in history or geography, learners could be asked for their reflections on how the individuals involved might have felt at those times and why. "Texts that Teach" will also provide opportunities to discuss both emotion and intention.
- After an emotional outburst of a child, sit and reflect with them what triggered this and how the emotion felt. Also reflect on how the child moved away from this negative emotion: what was it that supported this (e.g. an adult, an activity, a distraction, time.) Likewise repeat for strong positive emotions such as joy. How did this emotion make you feel physically and what were the triggers?



Willow Wellbeing

Being inspired to explore solutions and overcome obstacles, to accept success and failure and to use mindfulness strategies to remain calm.

The child is encouraged to persevere and remain when things do not go as planned. They are taught to be kind to themselves in these situations.

Principles and guidance:

- Children are encouraged to persevere when they are faced with a challenge. This links with the independence framework.
- Children are taught mindfulness strategies to remain calm to explore a variety of solutions and to overcome obstacles they may face in their learning and in their wider daily life.
- Children are inspired by stories of both success and failure to demonstrate the inevitability of these in life.

Activities that support this stage:

To teach children to persevere and to keep trying when things 'go wrong' teachers should consider asking the children:

- How do you feel when something goes wrong?
 - Can you give any examples?
 - Why might negative emotions make you want to give up?
 - How can you try to keep going instead?
 - What would 'success' look like?
 - What steps could be taken to achieve this?
 - How can you support yourself when you don't know what to do next?
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- None of us ever want something to go wrong for ourselves. Unfortunately, in life, there is a huge amount that is far beyond our control, and so it is inevitable that sometimes things go wrong. These might be small things, or they might be much more significant things. Children need to be prepared and understand that these things are an inevitable part of life.
 - It is important to recognise that it is very natural and normal to have a strong emotional response to something going wrong. Sometimes, we will have a combination of all these emotions, or feel them at different times, particularly in response to something which has gone very wrong – like the death of a loved one. However, we also need to avoid letting our emotional responses overwhelm us.
 - Children need to be told that we all feel like giving up sometimes. If you feel sad, angry, or scared, the natural response can be to take yourself out of the situation and do something else. In some cases, for example if you are in danger, then that is the right response. At other times though, we need to think about how to be *resilient*. That is, how do we keep going despite feeling negative emotions? There is a link here with the *Independence Framework*.
 - The teacher could introduce a discussion (either 1:1, small group or class based depending on the situation) of when things have gone wrong for them and how they felt in response. They can then pose other hypothetical or real scenarios that learners will be familiar with and ask them how they think the individuals involved felt because of those events.
 - This can be expanded to learners reflecting individually on small setbacks they have experienced and how they felt as a response. It can also be used in the moment (at the point of the situation happening). The aim is to try and teach the child to be in the present moment and recognise that it shall pass and that there are solutions available.
 - Sometimes when learners are facing setbacks themselves, a teacher can play an influential role in helping them to identify negative emotions they are feeling in response, and coach them to continue to persist even in the face of setbacks.



Willow Wellbeing

- Learning about other world events, communities or characters in literature can also provide a range of scenarios and setbacks, which can be useful for framing a discussion about overcoming the urge to give up.
- Remaining calm during these situations can be difficult as emotions can run high and can feel overwhelming so teachers need to stay calm themselves and show children why this is important.

Managing emotions: FEAR

When we have one of these emotional responses, we might take actions which end up making things much worse. When we are *scared*, we try to protect ourselves. This can be a sensible step if we are in danger and need protection.

However, sometimes we want to run away from something when we are not really in danger – we are just worried. If we run away in this situation, we might end up being unable to continue with what we are doing – essentially, we end up giving up.

Teachers need to talk a child through this feeling and explain that whilst it is fine to feel this, we need to take back control and move on from it. There are links here also to the PSHE curriculum on personal safety as the emotions triggered through fear may be the right ones to respond to when we are asked to do something that “does not feel right.”

Managing emotions: ANGER

- When we are *angry*, we behave differently. Being angry makes us feel like we have energy, but we might end up taking actions which are poorly thought through. There is a term of a ‘red mist’ descending when we are angry – it means that when we have a strong emotional response, we stop being able to think clearly about what is going on. Instead, we look to blame someone or to try to fix an injustice. We might end up being aggressive to other people or situations and behave in ways that are not appropriate, damaging relationships in the process.
- For these reasons, we need to think about how to avoid these emotional responses when something goes wrong. The teacher should consider sharing mindfulness strategies to calm the body and mind. Strategies will need to vary as no individual is the same. The apps and resources in the appendix may help the teacher to consider strategies to teach.
- After a child’s outburst, it is always worth returning to the emotion to see how it felt and what triggered it as the child may have an underlying issue (e.g. with another child) that is undetected. It is useful, with repeated episodes, to consider tracking the occurrence on Behaviour Watch: is there a pattern to these episodes such as time of day (when hungry), session (reading) for instance. The pastoral team will be able to help with filters.

What it means to feel calm:

- Calmness is a positive emotion which is when we are settled and content with a situation. It is not a strong positive emotion like happiness, or an energetic, positive emotion like excitement. It is challenging to move from a setback to strong positive emotions, but with practice, it is possible to neutralise strong negative emotions, to get back to a state of calm. Being calm is helpful because it gives space to think about a setback or a problem to think through what could be done instead. It is tough to make good plans or develop new ideas if you are not feeling calm first.

How to stay calm

- There are a few steps to calm down if you feel angry and teachers should share these with the children:
 1. It is essential to make a choice to calm down. It will take thoughtful effort to be able to calm down and will take energy.
 2. Space might be needed. Particularly if bad news has just been received or a child is feeling upset about someone’s actions. Removing oneself out of that situation, so you have time and space to think might be beneficial. Combining this with fresh air works well.



Eden Park Primary and Nursery School

Willow Wellbeing

3. Encourage children to think about something calming, like people you love, happy memories or something they are looking forward to.
 4. Sometimes people focus on *breathing slowly* as there is some evidence that this helps you to focus.
 5. Some people find *counting* in their heads an effective way of avoiding an immediate adverse reaction.
 6. Offer the children the opportunity to talk to someone they trust and who is supportive. Sometimes talking about something can help you to feel less angry or upset by it. However, this may not be available immediately and so it is important to explain that.
 7. Sometimes *physical activity* can help, as can trying to relax your body – if we are tense, it often causes us to tense our shoulders, for example.
 8. Children may like to draw or write about their emotions afterward and be offered this as a way of becoming less angry.
 9. For some children food/ drink will assist as it also acts as a distraction.
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- Some of these different approaches will be effective for different people. However, remember that the critical step is to teach children to recognise when they are feeling angry or upset, and support them in making the *decision* to become calm.
 - The teacher could talk learners through thinking about different setbacks that might lead them to feel angry or scared, and then what the subsequent consequences might be. Learners could reflect on a time they have felt angry or scared and what they then did and how that made the situation worse.
 - The teacher can ask learners for any suggestions that they might have about how to reduce their feelings of anger or fear in the face of a setback. This list can be compared to the advice given here and discussed.
 - Learners could consolidate this learning by producing a list of tips or poster to share this insight with others.
 - These ideas can be reinforced in a classroom setting. It might be worth having a visual reminder of what an individual can do to stay calm in the face of setbacks which can be referred to if children are scared or angry in the context of the classroom or elsewhere in the school.
 - It might also be possible to provide children with regular reflective opportunities for them to think about their emotions of the week, and how they have managed any setbacks.



Willow Wellbeing

Reflecting on one's own actions and recognising the effect they have on themselves and others.

The child is taught to reflect on their actions and recognise the effect their behaviour has and to subsequently listen and be kind to themselves and others.

Principles and guidance:

- Children are encouraged to consider their own actions and the consequences these have on themselves and on others.
- Children are shown ways to listen and be kind to themselves and others and show empathy.
- Children will be taught to consider how to inspire others.

Activities that support this stage:

- There are incidents in world history or even closer to home where it feels that a situation has been bleak. Most difficult situations we deal with in our day-to-day lives, however, are much more balanced – they might be miserable, but they are rarely catastrophic. More widely, there are often upsides to a situation, but we need space and time to recognise these. Children need to be taught that reactive behaviour will have consequences and whilst we cannot always take the time and space we would like, we need to try and still consider the consequences of our actions to a situation.
- Teachers could consider discussion with children the idea of identifying opportunities and threats as well as positives and negatives. Writing these down with children may be a way of showing children the consequences of actions. In Japanese, the best translation of “crisis” is opportunity. This led to the Simpsons TV cartoon coining the phrase “*crisi-tunity*” which helps see the parallels that can be drawn simply look for the benefits in any situation.
- In school, behaviour is rewarded and given consequences. Children need to be taught what this means and why it is as it is. It is not enough for a child to be rewarded or given a consequence if they do not understand WHY.
- Link consequence back to the enrichment programme, giving a child to change their course of action through “thinking time” before metering the consequence of a behaviour record. Younger children will certainly need support with “thinking time” a long the lines of “if you continue, I will need to record/ write/ tell a parent” or “what you are doing is upsetting me.” There are links here with the Respect Framework.
- The reasons why children display different behaviours will be because of varied situations and life experiences. Teachers need to remain sensitive and kind and show that is what is expected of the children. This ties in with the Respect framework: we earn respect by showing it.
- Sometimes the problem is not the problem. A reaction has been triggered from an event, but the child was in a poor position to handle the event anyway, for instance they are hungry, tired, worried about an event at home. This does not excuse the poor reaction, but it does contextualise it. When discussing the poor reaction, try and engage if anything else is going on for the child. There are obvious Child Protection considerations here.
- Teachers could discuss times when there are positive outcomes to a tricky situation or when there are negative outcomes to something that appears ‘great’.
- It is important to emphasise the importance of trying to take an ‘objective’ view of a situation by trying to get some distance between the reality and the emotional response to it.
- Teachers can use subjects across the curriculum to introduce these ideas. For example, when discussing difficult situations in history, geography or literature, children could be encouraged to think not just about the negatives or threats, but also the positives or opportunities. This is particularly helpful because it can lend itself to more dispassionate analysis.
- There will also be setbacks for individual children, and here a coaching role can support them to identify for themselves what some of the opportunities or positives are in situations and focus on those.



Willow Wellbeing

Consequences and blame

- There are a couple of other essential things to consider when thinking about the reactions that individuals have when something goes wrong.
- They might react not just based on the thing that has gone wrong but about what the *consequences* of that might be – that is, what will happen next as a result. In some situations, individuals will be worried about whether they will be in trouble themselves or whether it will cause them more problems in the future.
- They might also look to *blame* someone or something else for what went wrong. This can sometimes be a negative result of working in a team – an idea which is explored more in the *Teamwork* skill. It is helpful to be aware of these additional influences on people's reactions when you try to understand how they are feeling. At the end of a misbehaviour persistently ask: "what did YOU do wrong?" and repeat this if the child starts with "Well, THEY..." Eventually the child will see that they completed an act that was unacceptable.
- Show how their misbehaviour links back to a lack of respect. This may be for others, for adults, for property, for themselves. Linking behaviour in this way supports the other core value.
- At this point, consider reparation as well/ in instead of punishment. What could they have done better and how can we try to make this situation right? Is saying sorry enough?
- The child will need to see that other children who were involved in wrongdoing were treated equally.

Cheering others up

- When thinking about what will cheer other people up, we should start by thinking about how they are feeling. The right thing to do will depend a lot on their emotions and choosing the wrong approach might end up making things worse.
- Children need to consider how they would feel first and then try to see if this would be the same for the other person. The empathy needed to do this is hard for young children to develop and so support it and guide it.

Taking time

- The better you know the other individuals who are involved, the easier it usually is to think about what will be most effective in getting them back into a positive emotional state. Remember not to rush it – people will take different amounts of time to get back to that positive emotional state than others, depending on them as individuals and the size and nature of what went wrong.
- The teacher can remind children about the different emotional responses that people might have when things go wrong. It is worth reminding children that if they have those reactions, then it is reasonable that others might have those reactions too.
- The teacher can facilitate a conversation about why it is important to support others to return to a positive emotional state, and then think about some of the different approaches depending on whether the other individual or individuals are sad, angry, or scared.
- Children might share some of their experiences that help to illustrate these different approaches and what did or did not work in them. This could be built upon through role-play where learners take on different roles and try out techniques for cheering up others acting out different emotional states.
- In the classroom setting, there will be opportunities for children to work together. In these cases, there will inevitably be setbacks or things that go wrong, and these provide opportunities for children to apply their skill of being able to cheer others up.
- Reflection after such events will help children to capture those experiences for themselves and make it more likely they can perform the skill step effectively in the future.



Willow Wellbeing

Accepting oneself and using strategies to maintain physical and mental well-being.

The child is taught the importance of 'acceptance' mindfulness strategies to maintain positive physical and mental well-being.

Principles and guidance:

- Children are supported to have the confidence to be themselves.
- Children are encouraged to practice mindful strategies.
- Children will inspire others to take care of themselves.

Activities that support this stage:

- This could take the form of a personal bullet journal, to be customized, added to, and developed as new knowledge and skills are acquired, to form a 'well-being toolkit.'
- Teachers should encourage the children to establish a sense of self where they have the confidence to be themselves and take an objective view of the weight of other's judgements. Teacher could use self-reflective activities such as:
 - Who are you in words/pictures/colours?
 - Who do you want to be?
- Teachers could share strategies with the children where people have overcome adversity, been 'successful' and 'failed' to inspire them.

The value of talking

- Teachers should encourage the children to consider not only the ways to look after their physical body (through science) but also the importance of a healthy mind. Teachers could ask the children to consider what that may look like.

The value of eating in social situations

- Communicating with family and friends while eating together. Set home learning target to share a meal, chat, share your feelings and ask how the people you care about feel.
- Measure, and track, how much water is consumed daily. Discuss the proportion of water in our cells as humans and the detrimental effects of dehydration on our mood and health.
- Set clear rules and expectations for in-school snacks. Lower intake of processed sugars and increase intake of natural types of sugar.

The value of physical exercise

- Explore a range of physical exercise disciplines to discover which works best for you. Practice up-activating and down-activating activities. Also encourage the meditative benefits of practices such as yoga. Stay motivated by exercising with friends or family.
- Talk to each other while you run/swim or play.
- Stretching and deep-breathing exercises. Feel the tension in your body and how you can help it melt away with careful breathing and guided imagery.
- Exercise in different environments. Send it home as a home-learning task, it will improve parent well-being too!
- Promote the motivational benefits of joining local teams, making new friends, and working together.



Eden Park Primary and Nursery School

Willow Wellbeing

Understanding the importance of sleep and its effects upon well-being

- Produce and keep a sleep diary, discuss the effects upon well-being of an accumulation of poor quality/ lack of sleep. Measure timings and tabulate. Scribble how we feel all over the sleep diary, use one-word feelings and doodles to express ourselves.
- Explain that good nutrition and regular exercise contribute greatly to good quality sleep patterns and explore ways to relax and decompress before bedtime.

Recognising when we are struggling to maintain mental well-being and identifying a toolkit of life-skills, knowing where to seek additional support or help when it is needed:

- Discussions on how we know when we need help. Warning signs and triggers that can lead to stress levels affecting our mental well-being.
- Talk about ways that stress can be 'in disguise': tummy aches, irritable moods/anger or loss of appetite being a few.
- Research together, who can we ask for help? Talking to people we trust and describing how we feel so that we communicate our needs effectively, both in school, and out.
- Perhaps invite a guest in from an organization that supports mental health at some point in the future to present an assembly.
- Regularly encouraging the use of meditation and mindfulness.
- Supporting children to find self-soothing and self-regulating activities.
- Creating a calm space in the classroom environment or a 'Zen den'.

Websites:

www.headspace.com

www.calm.com

<https://www.skillsbuilder.org/universal-framework-steps/staying-positive-step-1>

[Home](#) | [Mind](#)

[The Eikon Charity - Children's Charity for Surrey](#)

[Mindfulness in Schools Project \(MiSP\) | Bringing Mindfulness to Schools](#)

[Free Resources | Mindfulness in Schools Project](#)

[5 Minute Classroom Mindfulness Activities | Mindfulness for Children \(teachstarter.com\)](#)

[5 steps to mental wellbeing - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[6 ways of wellbeing | Mental Health Resource](#)

"NO ACT OF KINDNESS, NO MATTER HOW SMALL, IS EVER WASTED." AESOP.