See Me.
See Change.

Self-assessment Tool

See Me See Change: Self-assessment tool to end mental health stigma and discrimination in schools

Every school will be at different stages in their mental health anti-stigma journey. See Me, Scotland's national programme to end mental health stigma and discrimination, has created this self-assessment tool for your school to judge how it's doing in regard to reducing stigma and discrimination, and what more could be done to improve it in the future. The self-assessment tool has been developed in line with the Scottish Government **Whole School Approach** framework to support children and young people's mental health. See Me has identified six areas of the school to consider when tackling mental health stigma and discrimination, and outlined some key considerations to help your school take stock and make improvements wherever needed. You can use this self-assessment tool to gauge how far you have come already in addressing mental health, and identify what more you could do across the areas.

1. Leadership and management

Senior leaders, line managers and supervisors in our school understand that tackling mental health stigma and discrimination is foundational to creating a mentally flourishing school environment.

Indicators of success	Where are we now?	What more is required?
Our senior leaders produce and implement strategic plans that take account of the mental health needs of staff and pupils.		
Our senior leaders prioritise efforts to end mental health stigma and discrimination, and support focussed action to reduce it; this includes sufficient budgeting and resourcing towards anti-stigma action.		
Our leaders promote mental health inclusion and are confident to challenge stigma and discrimination to encourage behaviour change across the whole school.		
Our senior leaders recognise the value of sharing lived experience of mental health problems to help normalise conversations about mental health and encourage help seeking.		
People who manage or supervise others within the school are confident, informed and able to discuss their mental health needs, and offer (or signpost to) support, including reasonable adjustments.		

2. Ethos, culture and environment

Our school environment has a significant impact on individuals' social and emotional wellbeing. We are impacted by our surroundings more than we might appreciate. We all have mental health; any of us could struggle, so it's vital that we can all talk about it; encourage people to take part in activity, and all contribute to creating an open culture where people can speak out without fear or shame. It's important to create an environment where pupils and staff feel secure in their ability to discuss sensitive aspects of mental health and wellbeing. Non-inclusive language can vary from dismissive comments to bullying or harassment, all forms of discrimination, and a school must have effective polices to challenge and address this kind of behaviour should it arise.

As well as recognising that we all have mental health, those that experience more severe, enduring and/or complex mental health problems and illnesses (e.g. bipolar disorder, schizophrenia, psychosis) can significantly struggle in school and workplaces. Staff need to be informed and confident in their role when supporting pupils and other staff who experience more complex mental health problems, and ensure that they can support and develop a mental health inclusive approach that enables them to thrive within the school environment.

Indicators of success	Where are we now?	What more is required?
Individuals embody inclusivity in their behaviour and language, the environment creates the conditions that encourage acceptance and people adopt language and behaviours that reflect the policies and values of our school environment.		
Everyone in our school is able to bring their full selves to school or work, and feels able to disclose and discuss mental health problems, believes that they won't be overlooked or treated differently if they do and feels confident that they can report accurate reasons for absence.		
Our policies consider the needs of those who experience more complex mental health problems, including guidance on reasonable adjustments and signposting, and providing appropriate support if required.		
Our senior leaders lead by example, role modelling non-stigmatising language, attitudes and behaviours in our school.		

3. Curriculum and learning

People can be aware of the importance of reducing mental health stigma and discrimination, but in order to ensure culture change and put policies into practice, training activities and interventions need to improve mental health literacy, focus on behaviour change, and develop skills in promoting help seeking behaviours. Embedding mental health into and across the existing school curriculum has the potential to reach all young people, 'normalise' mental health as part of everyday activities and engage teachers and adults to become literate in youth mental health as part of their professional activities.

It's also important to address the multiple stigma that young people from diverse ethnic communities, LGBTQ+ young people, young men and women face as research has found that these groups experience higher levels of, and more specific instances of, mental health stigma and discrimination. Peer to peer approaches can be an effective way to support mental health education and learning, with senior role models helping to normalise conversations about mental health.

Indicators of success	Where are we now?	What more is required?
With support from senior leadership, staff and pupils are able to prioritise time to engage and participate in training, learning and development opportunities to build capacity in their knowledge, understanding and skills in relation to mental health as well as challenge their own mental health prejudices.		
Our school utilises social contact/lived experience perspectives to ensure effective and impactful learning experiences for pupils and staff.		
Learning in our school is focused on specific priority groups across the school such as young people from diverse ethnic communities, LGBTQ+ young people, young men and young women.		
Our school normalises mental health conversations by incorporating learning on mental health and wellbeing across all subjects and departments, and embedding mental health and wellbeing links to learning and support.		
Our school ensures that peer leadership approaches are embedded into the learning opportunities for pupils and staff where appropriate.		

4. Wider school community

See Me's research has found that 67 per cent of young people feel that family members can be dismissive when they try to talk about their mental health. It's critical that the anti-stigma work extends to working with families and the wider school community.

The school community incorporates so many people from staff and students, to families and partner organisations, such as local businesses, community groups and public bodies like Police Scotland. It's important that activities include members of the wider school community and there is the opportunity for them to have their voices heard and to shape mental health anti-stigma activities for the school.

As young people develop their emotional literacy, they can influence their families and peer groups. This can provide a real opportunity to deliver the message that recovery from mental health conditions is possible, and that children and young people are valued and can make meaningful contributions to society.

Indicators of success	Where are we now?	What more is required?
Our school engages with pupils' parents, carers and guardians to ensure that mental health stigma is understood and tackled within the home environment, further embedding the anti-stigma message across all aspects of young people's lives, with consideration given also to those family members who may be experiencing mental health problems.		
Our school engages with local community organisations, leisure centres and businesses when tackling mental health stigma, encouraging opportunities to connect, learn and support one another.		
Our school organises events and campaigns to increase awareness and understanding of mental health and stigma as a barrier to accessing support; promoting the importance of having a discussion or informal chat amongst friends, peers and family to normalise talking about mental health.		
Our school works with partners and families to support pupils experiencing mental health problems to continue their education, considering individual needs within learning plans, and making reasonable adjustments where required.		

5. Enabling young people's voices and participation

Through enabling young people's voices and participation, the school will create roles and opportunities for young people to be ambassadors of change and role models for the younger year groups in your school.

Additionally, the school will be welcoming new ideas, perspectives and energy into approaches to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination.

Indicators of success	Where are we now?	What more is required?
Our school empowers young people to feel that they can safely speak out when they are struggling with their mental health.		
Our school supports and encourages more opportunities for peer to peer conversations around mental health.		
Our school ensures that young people take part in conversations around reasonable adjustments and decisions that affect them.		
Co-production approaches are adopted across the school where appropriate, so that pupils, families and carers, staff and people in the wider community can work together to identify what will work to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination.		
Our school empowers people who have experienced mental health problems to be involved in co-production, to be part of the change.		
Our school recognises and values the importance of champion and ambassador roles for senior pupils and staff to help drive forward change, ensuring opportunities are available and they are equipped and supported to take on these roles.		

6. Staff development and health and wellbeing

According to research, the three main causes of work-related poor mental health in Scotland were found to be: too much pressure; workload impacting on ability to take leave; and organisational change that was handled poorly.

Employee mental health was also affected by negative work relationships and people not feeling able to trust their managers. Unfortunately, only 13% of employees in the UK feel able to disclose a mental health problem to their line manager, and 37% of Scottish employees that made a disclosure felt ignored.

Staff mental health and wellbeing must be prioritised. In order for staff to effectively deliver their role, schools must ensure their wellbeing needs are heard and understood, and plans are in place to support their individual needs. It ensures a foundational level of mental health and wellbeing understanding is in place before moving on to support students.

Indicators of success	Where are we now?	What more is required?
Our school invests in creating the conditions for a mental health inclusive working environment, free from stigma and discrimination.		
Our school policies and procedures support safe and effective disclosure of mental health problems, and are implemented effectively to ensure staff are supported to stay in or return to work.		
Our staff feel informed, confident and able to have conversations about mental health with peers, and signpost to support.		
Our line managers and supervisors feel informed, confident and able to discuss the mental health needs of their staff, and offer, or signpost to, available support, including reasonable adjustments.		
Our school communicates anti-stigma messages and signposting to sources of support in internal and public campaigns and activities that encourage conversations about mental health in the workplace, providing personal perspectives where possible.		

See Me

End mental health discrimination

Thank you for taking the time to participate, reflect and learn about tackling mental health stigma and discrimination.

Together we can create the movement to end mental health stigma and discrimination. Contact **info@seemescotland.org** with any questions you may have, or to share your insights.

Additional resources and support can be found at

www.seemescotland.org

SAMH
for Scotland's mental health

Mental Health Foundation Scotland

Healthier Scotland Scottish Government

Brunswick House, 51 Wilson Street, Glasgow G1 1UZ

Phone: 0141 530 1111
Email: info@seemescotland.org

seemescotland   @seemescotland