Mental Health is a state of well-being in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to his or her community.

Anxiety is normal we all experience it at times. It is needed to help us function, explaining this to your child can help reassure them and encourage further conversations.

Looking after children’s well-being

Although we would like our children to sail through their school years without a care in the world, growing up isn’t always easy! It may be friendship issues, family splits, illness in the family, death of a pet- all sorts of things can upset a child’s equilibrium.

At Princethorpe Junior School, we have lots of ways to support children who are having a tricky time:

- Each child can receive support from their class staff or from a member of the Pastoral Team.
- Several of our staff members have received special training in supporting children through talk and play, and this can be provided at the instigation of the child, parents or the teacher. It’s often really helpful for children to have someone different to talk to about their problems or worries, and they can soon feel much better.
- We have Play Leaders who are a group of older children- “The Go- Between Team”- who have been trained to encourage positive play in the playground and support children in sorting out their own difficulties, with the support of a member of staff. This is especially useful for children who are having friendship difficulties.
- We also have various nurture groups including Lego Therapy, social skills groups and 1:1 group mentoring.

Five ways to well-being

5 ways you can help your child stay emotionally healthy by making sure they do normal things.

1. **Spend time with family & friends.** Enjoy doing things together. Talk to family, friends or teachers if you have a lot of worries.
2. **Stay active, exercise is good.** It makes you healthy, and makes you FEEL GOOD! You need proper rest and avoid digital devices (phones, X-Box, PlayStations etc.) for at least an hour before bedtime.
3. **Try something new.** Try a new hobby, visit somewhere new or make a new friend.
4. **Take a break to see how you feel.** Relax and look around you or listen to music, take a few deep breaths.
5. **Do something for a friend or relation/adult, as well as making them feel good, it can make you feel good too!**

Maybe parents/carers could try some of these tips too!

Emotional Health & Well-Being

Calming an Anxious Child

I am here
Tell me about it
How big is your worry?
What do you want to tell your worry?
Can you draw it?
Let’s change the ending...
What else do you know about...
What calming strategies can you use?
It’s scary AND...
I can’t wait to hear about...
What do you need from me?
You are safe
This feeling will pass

Mind Full, or Mindful?
Family well-being

We can offer family support through the pastoral staff in school but also through referring to outside agencies, if you ever feel you are in need of any support for your family please do come into school and talk to Mrs Kearns or Mrs Allport, as they are always happy to help. Emotional and Mental well-being defines how we feel, think and relate to ourselves and others. This has an impact on how we understand the world around us. Positive Mental Health improves our ability to manage, communicate, and form and sustain relationships.

- Coping with other changes in our lives are also affected such as bereavement, transition or parental divorce. Statistics show that one in four people will experience Mental Health problems at some point in their lives.
- You can talk to the following people if you feel overwhelmed by things:
  - Class Teacher & Teaching Assistant
  - Mrs Kearns or Mrs Allport
  - Parents
  - Friends
  - A person you trust

Organisations that offer support

- [www.headspace.com/kids](http://www.headspace.com/kids)
- [www.calm.com](http://www.calm.com)
- [www.kiotg.com](http://www.kiotg.com)
- [www.barnardos.org.uk](http://www.barnardos.org.uk)
- [www.minded.org.uk](http://www.minded.org.uk)
- [www.hptf.nhs.uk/wellbeing-service](http://www.hptf.nhs.uk/wellbeing-service)
- [www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk](http://www.itsgoodtotalk.org.uk)
- [www.childline.org.uk](http://www.childline.org.uk) – 08001111 calls are free and confidential
- [www.NSPCC.org.uk](http://www.NSPCC.org.uk) – NSPCC is linked to Childline. The counsellors offer advice and support 365 days a year. Our trained counsellors talk to children on the phone and online, helping them with any problem they are facing. Settle you glitter- app on iTunes Store

Sleep

A good sleep is just as important as good exercise. It helps the brain and body grow and develop so that children have positive physical and emotional well-being. There are a number of ways parents can help:

- Have a routine. Try to get your child to bed at the same time every night. Have calm time before going to bed to help mind and body wind down— they may want to read or listen to music or just play quietly.
- NHS recommends at least 90 minutes free from digital devices including phones and tablets prior to bedtime to allow the brain to power down.
- Make sure lights are dimmed. When light dims in the evening, we produce a chemical called melatonin, which gives the body clock its cue, telling us it’s time to sleep.
- Is it ok for a child to rest in bed rather than going straight to sleep if they are not tired or are finding it hard to get off to sleep.
- If your child has frequent worries about bedtime it might help to ask them to talk about worries earlier in the evening— this may be expressed as tummy aches, headaches or hunger especially in younger children.
- Mindfulness techniques can help your child relax before bed.
- It is normal for children to have bad dreams sometimes but if it is several times per week speak to your school nurse/GP.

Parents/carers may want to try some of these tips for your own sleep too.