

Cover Sheet

For this assignment, I have submitted the following:

Component 1: PowerPoint 15 minute presentation script

I acknowledge the use of ChatGPT in July/August 2026 to Harvard Reference my references

I used the prompt(s): Please Harvard reference my reference list.

Presentation Script: Mental Health, Emotional Regulation and Behaviour in Primary-Aged Children

15-Minute Presentation Script

Understanding Children's Mental Health

Hello. In this presentation, I'll be looking at children's mental health, with a particular focus on behaviour and emotional regulation in primary-aged children. I chose this topic because mental health can influence how children learn, develop relationships, cope with challenges and participate in school life. I will look at what mental health and emotional regulation mean, why they are important, and some of the factors that can affect children's wellbeing. I will use relevant research, Welsh Government guidance and children's rights to explore how schools can support children in practice.

What Do We Mean by Mental Health?

Mental health is about more than whether a child has a diagnosed condition. It is also about how they feel, cope and manage everyday life. The World Health Organization describes mental health as a state of mental wellbeing that enables people to cope with life, use their abilities, learn and function effectively (World Health Organization, 2022). For children, mental wellbeing is closely connected to learning, relationships and everyday participation.

This is also reflected in Curriculum for Wales. Welsh Government states that good health and well-being are important to enable successful learning (Welsh Government, 2022). This highlights that children's wellbeing plays an important role in their learning and overall experience at school. Children's mental health can change over time; this means that all children can benefit from support that promotes positive mental health and wellbeing.

Emotional Regulation and Behaviour

Emotional regulation is about children learning to understand their emotions and finding ways to manage and respond to them. Primary aged children are still learning these skills and may not always have the words or strategies to explain what they are feeling.

Behaviour can therefore sometimes provide adults with important information. National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (2022) highlights that children's behaviour can be a way of communicating their needs and emotions. For example, anxiety may appear as refusal, while frustration may appear as anger. This does not mean every challenging behaviour indicates poor mental health, but it encourages practitioners to consider what may be happening behind it.

The Curriculum for Wales highlights the importance of helping children develop strategies to manage and regulate their emotions. Developing these skills can support children's emotional wellbeing and contribute to positive mental health (Welsh Government, 2022). Adults can help children develop these skills by supporting them to manage their emotions and showing them how to respond calmly.

Why Is This Significant?

Mental health and emotional regulation are important because they can influence many different aspects of a child's life.

Children can show that they are struggling in different ways. Some may express their feelings through anger, challenging behaviour or refusing to take part, while others may become anxious, quiet, withdrawn or less involved. Welsh Government highlights the link between our experiences and emotional wellbeing, explaining that the way we understand and respond to what happens to us can have an impact on our mental health and wellbeing (Welsh Government, 2022). This means practitioners need to look beyond the behaviour they see and think about what the child may be feeling or experiencing.

What Can Influence Children's Mental Health?

A child's mental health can be influenced by many different aspects of their life and surroundings. This can include their relationships with family and friends, experiences at school, bullying, poverty and inequality, as well as difficult experiences such as trauma or loss. Bronfenbrenner's ecological theory is useful because it shows that children's development does not happen on its own but is shaped by the different environments and relationships around them. This includes influences from their family, school, community and wider society, which can all play a part in their development and wellbeing (Bronfenbrenner, 1979).

This wider view of wellbeing is also reflected by Bradshaw (2016), who considers children's wellbeing from an ecological perspective, recognising the importance of the different environments and circumstances surrounding children. This supports the idea that children's wellbeing cannot be understood by looking at the child alone.

Welsh Government recognises that children's wellbeing can be influenced by their surroundings and by the relationships they have with adults. This highlights the importance of creating a safe and supportive school environment where children feel included and able to engage in their learning. Positive relationships with adults and peers can support children's mental health and emotional wellbeing, while a whole school approach encourages schools to work alongside families and other professionals when further support is needed (Welsh Government, 2026a).

Evidence and Guidance

There is a wide range of research showing how important children's social, emotional and mental wellbeing is. The World Health Organization emphasises the importance of both promoting positive mental health and preventing mental health difficulties in children and young people (WHO, 2020). NICE guideline NG223 recommends a whole school approach, where social, emotional and mental wellbeing is supported through school culture and ethos, relationships, the curriculum and everyday practice (NICE, 2022).

The Curriculum for Wales also gives Health and Wellbeing an important role within children's learning, recognising that good health and wellbeing support successful learning and should be reflected across school life (Welsh Government, 2022).

Research also supports these approaches. Durlak et al. (2011) reviewed 213 school based universal social and emotional learning programmes and found improvements in children's social and emotional skills, behaviour and academic performance.

These findings support the importance of including social and emotional learning as part of everyday educational practice, rather than only providing support when difficulties arise.

What Can Schools Do?

Schools can help by creating a safe and supportive environment where children feel secure, learn how to recognise and manage their emotions, and know there are trusted adults they can talk to when they need support.

The Curriculum for Wales highlights the importance of children learning to recognise and communicate their feelings, as well as understanding when they may need help to manage their emotions. It also recognises the value of developing positive and healthy relationships, which can help children feel safe, supported and able to seek help when they need it. Together, these skills can support children's emotional wellbeing and help them develop the confidence to understand and express their feelings in a positive way (Welsh Government, 2022).

The importance of relationships within school is also supported by recent research. Brown et al. (2025) highlight the value of a relational approach to children's wellbeing, drawing attention to the importance of relationships, identity and a sense of belonging within the school environment. This reinforces the importance of children feeling connected to the people and environment around them. Musgrave (2017) also emphasises the importance of supporting children's health and wellbeing through everyday practice, reinforcing the role practitioners and supportive environments can play in promoting wellbeing.

This shows that children can be supported to manage their emotions through positive relationships as well as through direct teaching. Strategies such as calm spaces, regular emotional check-ins and different ways of coping with difficult feelings can benefit all children, while some may need additional or more specialised support.

Supporting Emotional Regulation in Practice

A simple classroom example might be a child who becomes frustrated after making a mistake, pushes their work away and no longer wants to continue. In this situation, the adult's response can make a difference. Staying calm, acknowledging the child's frustration and allowing them time to use a familiar strategy, such as breathing, movement or a quiet space, can help them settle. Once the child is calmer, there is an opportunity to talk about what happened and consider what might help next time.

This illustrates co-regulation in practice: maintaining appropriate boundaries while recognising that a child may need support to regulate their emotions before they are ready to reflect, problem solve or re-engage with their learning.

Howard, Burton and Levermore (2020) emphasise the importance of taking a whole school approach to children's mental health and emotional wellbeing. This supports the idea that emotional wellbeing should be considered within everyday school relationships and practice, rather than only when a child is experiencing difficulties.

Working With Parents, Carers and the Child

Partnership with parents and carers is important because families can provide valuable information about their child's needs, experiences and behaviour. Welsh Government guidance emphasises working in partnership with parents, keeping them informed about their child's progress and sharing information about significant changes in behaviour (Welsh Government, 2026b). In practice, this means practitioners can share their observations, listen to what families are noticing at home and work together to identify appropriate ways of supporting the child.

Partnership should also include the child's own voice. Article 12 of the UNCRC recognises children's right to express their views on matters that affect them and for those views to be given appropriate consideration according to their age and maturity (United Nations, 1989, Article 12). Children should therefore be involved, in ways appropriate to their age and understanding, in conversations and decisions about the support they receive.

Children's mental health and wellbeing can also be viewed from a rights based perspective. Article 24 of the UNCRC recognises children's right to the highest attainable standard of health (United Nations, 1989, Article 24). Welsh Government guidance also places children's wellbeing, nurturing relationships and opportunities to develop and thrive at the heart of childcare practice (Welsh Government, 2026b). Supporting children's mental and emotional wellbeing therefore reflects both good professional practice and a commitment to children's rights.

Conclusion

To conclude, mental health is fundamental to children's learning, relationships and overall wellbeing. Emotional regulation continues to develop throughout the primary years, and children's behaviour can sometimes provide important information about how they are feeling and what they may be experiencing.

The evidence discussed throughout this presentation highlights the importance of looking beyond behaviour alone and considering each child's relationships, experiences and wider environment. Children can be supported through predictable routines, emotional literacy, co-regulation, trusted relationships and strong partnerships with families.

Supporting children effectively also means recognising them as active participants in their own development. Valuing children's views, listening to their experiences and involving them in decisions that affect them helps create a sense of belonging, confidence and emotional security. When children feel heard, understood and supported, they are more likely to develop positive mental health, resilience and lifelong wellbeing.

Ultimately, it is important to see the child behind the behaviour and consider what they may be trying to communicate. By providing supportive relationships, appropriate strategies and opportunities for children to have their voices heard, we can help promote positive mental health, emotional regulation and overall wellbeing.

Thank you for listening.

Reference List

- Bradshaw, J. (2016) *The well-being of children in the UK*. 4th edn. Bristol: Policy Press. Available at: https://librarysearch.uwtsd.ac.uk/permalink/44WHELF_UWTSD/1gapa6h/alma99100149160202421 (Accessed: 4 August 2026).
- Bronfenbrenner, U. (1996) *The ecology of human development: experiments by nature and design*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. Available at: https://librarysearch.uwtsd.ac.uk/permalink/44WHELF_UWTSD/1gapa6h/alma99100656736402421 (Accessed: 4 August 2026).
- Brown, C. et al. (2025) 'Connected Belonging: A relational and identity-based approach to schools' role in promoting child wellbeing', *British Educational Research Journal*, 51(4), pp. 1927–1965. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.4112> (Accessed: 4 August 2026).
- Durlak, J.A. et al. (2011) 'The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions', *Child Development*, 82(1), pp. 405–432. Available at: <https://academic.oup.com/chidev/article-abstract/82/1/405/8267426> (Accessed: 4 August 2026).
- Howard, C., Burton, M. and Levermore, D. (2020) *Children's mental health and emotional well-being in primary schools: A whole school approach*. 2nd edn. London: Learning Matters. Available at: <https://contentstore-cla-co-uk.uwtsd.idm.oclc.org/secure/link?id=05b9450a-da23-ef11-8076-0050f2f06092&ezproxy=true> (Accessed: 4 August 2026).
- Musgrave, J. (2017) *Supporting children's health and wellbeing*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd. Available at: https://librarysearch.uwtsd.ac.uk/permalink/44WHELF_UWTSD/1vbe9ev/alma99100156960302421 (Accessed: 4 August 2026).
- National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) (2022) *Social, emotional and mental wellbeing in primary and secondary education*. NICE guideline NG223. Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng223> (Accessed: 4 August 2026).
- United Nations (1989) *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Available at: <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/convention-rights-child> (Accessed: 3 August 2026).
- Welsh Government (2022) *Curriculum for Wales: Health and Well-being*. Available at: <https://hwb.gov.wales/curriculum-for-wales/health-and-well-being> (Accessed: 3 August 2026).
- Welsh Government (2026a) *Framework on embedding a whole-school approach to emotional and mental well-being*. Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2026-01/framework-on-embedding-a-whole-school-approach-to-emotional-and-mental-well-being.pdf> (Accessed: 3 August 2026).

Welsh Government (2026b) *National minimum standards for regulated childcare for children up to the age of 12 years: statutory guidance*. Cardiff: Welsh Government. Available at: <https://www.gov.wales/national-minimum-standards-regulated-childcare-children-age-12-years-statutory-guidance> (Accessed: 3 August 2026).

World Health Organization (WHO) (2020) *Guidelines on mental health promotive and preventive interventions for adolescents*. Geneva: World Health Organization. Available at: <https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/1cba1d3a-29b6-407e-9b3e-250753af02ae/content> (Accessed: 3 August 2026).

World Health Organization (WHO) (2022) *World mental health report: transforming mental health for all*. Geneva: World Health Organization. Available at: <https://iris.who.int/server/api/core/bitstreams/40e5a13a-fe50-4efa-b56d-6e8cf00d5bfa/content> (Accessed: 12 August 2026).