



Mental health and emotional wellbeing in schools

Our programme of support to schools and colleges on mental health and emotional wellbeing continues to develop at speed. We base our work on the '[whole school wheel](#)' – an easy to use evidence based model.

This article uses the wheel to give examples of work that we are supporting in each area.



evidence based and linked to the Ofsted framework. For learning beyond the classroom, such as through whole-school assemblies on mental health and wellbeing, [access content](#) developed by Thought-Full.

Work to **enable student voice** happens in many ways, including our developing programme of Mental Health Ambassadors. In 2022/23, we have trained and supported 273 children and young people attending 21 schools to take on the role. Young people have said:

- '*I like being a mental Health Ambassador because it gives me the ability to speak to those people who won't speak to a teacher.*'
- '*I like being a MHA because it allows me the opportunity to take part in training and activities to better support my mental health and how to support other people.*'
- '*We have helped our school in making them more aware of Mental Health.*'

We know that **staff development** is also critical to pupil wellbeing. We offer:

- staff wellbeing and training sessions for staff, senior leadership team and governors
- county wide network events

Leadership and management

The DfE recommends that schools nominate a senior mental health lead (SMHL) to take forward work on mental health and wellbeing. Training is available using a grant from the DfE. In West Sussex 70% of schools have accessed this training (ahead of the national average of 58%). Find out more [Online](#). Work to support governors will develop next year.

In West Sussex we have the brilliant [E4S tools](#) and curriculum available free to all schools, with one cornerstone being emotional wellbeing to support **curriculum teaching and learning**. E4S is



- support with the setting up of working groups and identifying resources and signposting
- locality networks for SMHLs will begin to develop from the autumn, beginning in Horsham and are dependent on us knowing who your SMHL is

Unless we **identify need and monitor impact**, we may not use our scarce resources in the best way. We have developed a [**reflective tool**](#) to help schools to map their work on mental health and emotional wellbeing and plan what they will do next. We are also part of a regional project to develop tools to measure impact of our whole school approach work, and some of our schools are currently piloting new tools. Watch this space for more news on this exciting project!

Our **support for parents and carers** (in partnership with schools) is needs-led. We run informal coffee mornings and provide information for school events. At other times, we signpost to local voluntary organisations such as Reaching Families or Aspens. We have also run specific groups for parents and carers to enable them to learn more about mental health and emotional wellbeing

'When I've told other parents about the course, they have all said I'd love to do that'.

At times, students will need individual **targeted support**. Through signposting to [**SPOA**](#), referrals to [**Thought-Full**](#) and MAMHET (for eligible schools) we are able to provide access to the right support and are working hard to make this as timely as possible.

