



North Tyneside Council

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Briefing note

To: NT CYP MHEWB
Senior officer group

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Title of Briefing: Embedding the Whole School Approach through a universal Mental Health First Aid programme

Purpose of Briefing

To give an overview of the planned long-term proposal to scale up existing work and enhance the universal offer across education settings by embedding a whole school approach to promoting good mental health.

Education settings can be a crucial protective factor to promoting good mental health and we want to build emotionally healthy, supportive environments that enable all our young people to build resilience and thrive.

This proposal takes an evidence-based approach to equip senior leaders with practical and sustainable approaches that will put mental health at the heart of strategic school improvement. The ambition in the first phase is to upskill, support and train all adults who work in schools with children and young people to have competence and confidence to discuss mental health and to better listen, reassure and respond to children, young people and their families. The subsequent phases will roll out Mental Health First Aid to children, families and communities.

By committing to a whole school approach and scaling up training in Mental Health First Aid across all schools in North Tyneside education settings will be able to actively support the emotional needs of young people and act on any concerns they might have. This is in line with the five identified outcomes for children and young people:

- I am safe
- I am healthy
- I am happy
- I have opportunities
- I have a voice

This work takes place within the broader long-term strategic goals of the Barnardo's Strategic Alliance. This proposal will support and complement the Department for Education (DfE) and the Department of Health and Social Care on the Wellbeing for Education Return. This is new national training package that has been developed to provide guidance and resources for education staff on responding to the impact of Covid-19 on the wellbeing of their students and pupils, until March 2021. This package reinforces throughout, the need for a whole school approach to promoting good mental health and will compliment this proposal.

This proposal also links with the implementation of statutory Relationships Education in primary schools, Relationships and Sex Education in secondary schools and Health Education in all schools, which includes teaching about mental wellbeing.

1. Background

'Promoting resilience, prevention and early intervention' is a key strategic priority of **North Tyneside's Children and Young People's Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy**. The intention of this proposal is to scale up and build on the existing work that has taken place in education settings and build mental health literacy across the whole system. It will complement and strengthen the interventions currently funded via the Barnardo's Strategic Alliance.

1.1. Education Settings: Senior Leadership Commitment

The Assistant Director of Education is advocating this proposal and has had numerous conversations with Senior Leaders in Education Settings who are committed to taking forward this approach in North Tyneside.

This proposal requires a long-term commitment from senior leadership teams to ensure that efforts to promote a whole school approach are embedded across each education setting. An integral principle is a commitment to promoting staff health and wellbeing, so they can support students. This also supports the mental health and well being of our work force making them more able to facilitate healthy strategies for managing within their wider communities.

In order to secure sustainability of the approach senior leaders will sign up to the eight principles to promote emotional health and wellbeing (see figure 1). The 8 principles are informed by evidence and practitioner feedback about what works, and if applied consistently and comprehensively will contribute towards helping protect and promote student mental health and emotional wellbeing. ([PHE \(2015\) Promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing](#))

1.2. Broad Aims

- To support schools in building back better in a post-Covid environment, where existing mental health issues may have been exacerbated.
- To ensure a shared understanding across the whole school improvement service on promoting good mental health in education settings, including a focus on the importance of staff well-being.
- To provide child and adolescent mental health training to all school staff, so they are better placed to support all children and young people when they need it.
- To use audited outcomes to support all schools and settings to take a whole school approach to becoming increasingly emotionally healthy.
- To use school community voice to enable to check and challenge the implementation of these approaches.
- To carry out a simultaneous review of behaviour approaches and relationships policies and curriculum plans in schools.
- To provide all children and young people with mental health awareness training, to improve their awareness and understanding of the language associated with mental health and wellbeing which will complement the Friend's resilience training already in some schools.
- Support an 'open door', inclusive education environment in all our schools to ensure our children and young people can speak confidently about their anxieties and concerns and where they can access early help to support their emotional wellbeing and mental health.

- That all schools and settings in North Tyneside will provide an enhanced 'universal mental health offer' in their work with all children, young people, their families and wider communities to enhance resilience and embed coping strategies.

Figure 1: Promoting Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing.



2. North Tyneside Context

The impact of Covid-19 on the mental health of children and young people is still unclear. Early research suggests that some children may be experiencing increased anxiety and stress about the virus. School closures and social distancing measures have led to a loss of structure and social contact that coupled with reductions in support services, could lead to a range of poor mental health outcomes.

Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic we had already noted the increase in prevalence of mental health issues amongst some cohorts of our children and young people:

- Proportion of children and young people with additional educational needs where emotional and mental health is noted as the primary need has risen from 15% to 24% (2016-2020)
- The number of children and young people with issues around their mental health and who are supported at a statutory level increased 36% in the period 2016-19. By January 2020 this had increased again, **a further 47% increase in just one year**

North Tyneside school surveys carried out in 2019 highlighted that compared to England our primary school children were

- more likely to have lower resilience
- More likely to report worrying
- More likely to report fear of going to school because of bullying

And our Secondary school children were:

- Less happy with life
- Less likely to have high self-esteem

As stated, with the leadership of the Assistant Director of Education the aims of this work are to provide an enhanced preventative universal offer by scaling up previous initiatives including:

- **Emotionally Healthy School Resource Pack** the Emotionally Healthy Schools resource pack was produced to help schools implement a Whole Schools Approach to supporting students' mental health and wellbeing. The impact of COVID 19 is not lost on headteachers and governors, who acknowledge the importance of capturing this to better adjust their provision.
- **Mental Health First Aid training in secondary schools** Training sessions were delivered during late 2018 for secondary schools in North Tyneside. This was focused on teaching staff rather than the strategic leads within schools and did not reference individual school circumstances. It is currently unclear how many staff who undertook the training are still working within our school, but in Autumn term the school improvement Health and Wellbeing officer will audit schools.
- **Schools Link Programme** North Tyneside took part in the Mental Health Services and Schools Link Programme ran by the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families and the DfE. A series of workshops brought together Children and Young People's Mental Health Services (CYPMHS), schools and colleges to strengthen communication and joint working arrangements between schools and mental health professionals. Throughout the period of extended school closure this aspect was strengthened further by creating an easily accessible 'one-stop' for those families most in need.

This approach will also complement the initiatives funded via Barnardo's Strategic Alliance (on hold due to Covid-19) such as FRIENDS resilience and Adolescent THRIVE training that secondary schools are signed up to and which would continue to strengthen and provide additionality to the work proposed.

Building on and creating a culture of positive mental health and wellbeing in education settings is a key part of the overall system wide approach to improving outcomes for children and young people. It will be supported further by a simultaneous review of behaviour approaches and relationships policies and curriculum plans in schools.

We will also ensure we link to and complement the other workstreams ongoing at the current time. The table below provides an easy reference across the four strands. Additional detail is recorded below the table.

The table below shows how the MHFA proposed programme links and complements to other streams of work.

	Mental Health First Aid	Wellbeing for Return Project	Every Mind Matters	Statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education
What is it?	A locally driven, long term project to enhance the universal mental health offer for all children and young people.	A nationally funded project to support schools in the short term with welcoming back children and young people into full time education.	A set of virtual resources from Public Health England for schools to access encouraging good mental health- includes resources for parents	A statutory curriculum to improve the quality, consistency and effectiveness of the teaching of these subjects as part of PSHE education. All schools have been sent information and offers of support and training via their PSHE lead.
Who is involved?	16 schools currently taking part with a roll out that aims to include all schools over the next 18-24 months following the pilot.	All schools invited to access the training over the next 2 terms	All educational professionals- resources have been shared with heads, SENDCos and Pupil Premium Leads	All schools must now teach Health Education which includes mental wellbeing, Primary schools must teach Relationships Education and secondary schools Relationships and Sex Education.

Mental Health First Aid

Some initial work has already taken place.

- Schools were invited to take part in project with the long-term aim to enhance the mental health provision for all children and young people in the borough.
- 16 schools were identified, and the initial 2-day training has been undertaken for two senior members of staff from each of the identified schools. This means we now have 32 trained 'Mental Health First Aiders' in our schools.
- The schools are now carrying out their baseline audits of provision to establish next steps, actions and roll out of further training.
- 30 local authority staff have undertaken the 'Mental Health Awareness Training' and 15 have also been trained as 'Mental Health First Aiders' with the aim of enhancing our direct work and training with aspects of mental health and wellbeing good practice.
- Once the initial phase is evaluated, we will be inviting all schools to develop their own universal offer.

Wellbeing for Education Return

- All schools have been invited to attend a nationally funded but locally delivered training package considering the impact of lockdown and return to education on our children and young people
- This will be delivered over the coming months by a team of LA officers.
- **All schools** are encouraged to access this series of 2 sessions.

Every Mind Matters

- A package of online resources for schools and settings to access and signpost to that focus on mental health and wellbeing developed by Public Health England.
- Schools can access these as and when they need them.
- These have been highlighted and signposted through Local authority networks and training events.

Statutory Relationships, Sex and Health Education

- It became statutory to teach Relationships, Sex and Health Education from September 2020
- Due to the coronavirus and closures, schools who were not in a position to implement fully from September have been granted some flexibility and now have until Summer term 2021 to do so but must be able to demonstrate the steps they are taking to do this.

- Health Education includes the teaching of mental wellbeing and schools have been encouraged to prioritise this subject first. To support schools the DfE provided a training module for school staff titled **Teaching Mental Wellbeing**. The EYSIS adapted this training module and have shared it with PSHE leads through a number of sessions. This training is still available on request and focuses on what to teach about mental wellbeing.
- The link with mental health and relationships runs throughout the RSHE curriculum and this is highlighted in the Wellbeing for Education Return project.

2.1. What is the aim of the proposal to roll out MHFA across education settings?

We are looking to embed a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing for our schools and communities by creating emotionally healthy schools across the borough. There are key milestones and impacts we would aim to see over the next 4 years, which are:

- North Tyneside Early Years School Improvement Service are trained to an appropriate level so that mental health and wellbeing is front and centre in all aspects of our offer and an intrinsic part of our training for schools. Officers are mental health first aid trainers to enable future sustainability.
- All staff in our schools and settings are appropriately trained in mental health first aid.
- All schools have a mental health champion and a team of mental health first aiders within the staff cohort, the leadership team and the governing body or local board and are signed up to embedding a whole school approach.
- Staff in schools will train children and young people in mental health awareness with identified peer to peer support available. Such training opportunities will subsequently extend to parents and the wider community.
- This enhanced universal offer within school has a positive impact on children young people and their families.
- Curriculum develops and changes considering national guidance, the local context and as an impact of the training so that mental health is treated as part of everyday life.
- Undertake appropriate action research methodologies to capture the impact of this approach for wider dissemination.

2.2. Why have we chosen this approach?

We wanted to use an approach that we were confident would work well in schools. In identifying Mental Health First Aid we looked for approaches that had supported schools to have a positive impact on their young people and communities. We wanted to ensure that we built resilience, prevention and early intervention into our drive for emotionally healthy schools' so that all children are well prepared for transition onto their next stage of education.

We have sourced serving credible school leaders who are highly successful mental health trainers. The trainers can offer a more bespoke approach to their training, delivering relevant school-based scenarios and considerations to their training programme. Their work in their own school has led to improved staff attendance and has increased staff confidence in tackling and discussing mental health concerns by a third. Anecdotal evidence suggested fewer referrals to outside agencies, for example referrals to CAMHS have dropped by 60%, and as a result of extended mental health awareness for parents there is increased parental confidence to talk about mental health.

We want to focus our approach on children and young people to have a greater understanding about their own mental health, their resilience and their coping strategies. Ultimately this will lead a reduction in the need for more formalised mental health support.

It is our ambition to replicate this success across all North Tyneside schools. Thus, enabling meaningful support and challenge to embed the essential elements of the training into school practice.

This will dovetail with Barnardo's Strategic Alliance approach of improving peer support, participation of children and young people and co-production of approaches. Thus, leading to children and young people better able to speak to their peers, family members and professionals with assurance and a commonly shared language.

2.3. How will we know our approach is working? (Key Performance Indicators)

We will see:

- Young people report increased resilience and improved mental wellbeing via schools' surveys delivered through the Barnardo's strategic alliance
- Pre and post audit outcomes will show:
 - Schools confidence supporting early intervention and prevention around mental health and wellbeing increases
 - Parental confidence in schools to support early intervention and prevention around mental health and wellbeing increases, they also report better experience of the support and challenge they have received
 - Children and young people report better experiences and can identify using coping strategies and say how they have been supported
- The rapid increase in the number of children and young people with emotional and mental health issues being noted as their primary need will slow and the proportion will be closer to that seen nationally.
- The number of children and young people with issues around mental health and wellbeing noted as their primary need who are excluded from schools and settings reduces.
- The number of children and young people with issues around mental health and wellbeing noted as their primary need who are subject to managed moves reduces.
- % of schools with trained Mental Health First Aiders increasing towards an aspiration of 100%
- Number of schools with at least 10% of the staff trained as Mental Health First Aiders will increase with an aspiration for all schools to have this level of capacity
- % of education staff trained to at least the level of Mental Health Awareness Training increasing towards an aspiration of 100% of those who are not trained to the higher level

3. Project plan

3.1. *Training for Local Authority staff in the school improvement service*

- A cohort of 30 key staff from across the service to be trained as Mental Health Aware
- A cohort of 16 key staff from across the service to be trained in the equivalent of the 2-day Mental Health First Aider programme
- Key staff use messages from training to feed into the Local Authority training offer and school support work to begin to raise the profile and raise awareness of mental health and wellbeing over several platforms.
- Where issues are raised within a school or setting, officers can offer support with auditing provision and specific support packages.
- Smaller cohort of officers (5) are identified as potential trainers and undergo 7-day accredited training so that they can offer mental health first aid training within the Local Authority to reduce costs and increase sustainability. Due to current restriction this training is not currently available. It is not expected to be available before 2021.
- We will also identify a Mental Health First and Wellbeing lead officer who will coordinate and support the implementation plan to deliver this piece of work.

3.2. *Timeline for Pilot Schools*

- **Planned roll out for schools.** It should be noted that in the current context this is an aspiration as it may not be possible for all schools to enable all staff sufficient time out of school to achieve this in the time available. The aim is for 10% of staff to be trained as Mental Health First Aiders and for all staff to access the Awareness training. There is likely to be a need to offer additional sessions to our initial 16 schools to enable us to meet our aspiration. These five steps cover October 2020 to July 2021 in the 16 identified schools.



- Once the process is completed for the first 16 schools we will review this process to ensure that the wider roll out from October 2021 to July 2023 is as effective as possible.

3.3 Detail of the Programme Content Sept to July – 16 schools.

- Group of 16 schools identified to complete Mental Health First Aid training.
- Two key staff from each school will then be trained in Mental Health First Aid, one of who must be a member of the senior leadership team. They will become the mental health leads for their schools.
- Identified staff will be supported to undertake auditing of their provision, this would include baseline information to support in the measuring of impact. They will produce an action plan which will feed into wider school improvement planning.
- Regular networks will be facilitated by Local Authority officers, to support pilot schools to develop and strengthen their universal offer and to access relevant ongoing training
- Wider School staff from each of the 16 schools will access mental health champion training, which will extend to pupils and then interested parents. Thus, facilitating an ‘open door’ policy and approach to mental health and wellbeing, and supporting an emotionally healthy schools’ agenda. Wider training will be delivered in the first instance by external school-based trainers and subsequently by Local Authority officers once they become accredited as Mental Health First Aid trainers.
- We intend the process to be supported by action research methodologies to better disseminate the project findings. Opportunities to check progress and measure impact taken at regular points through surveys and audits.
- It is our intention that the 16 schools become centres of excellence, offering a hub model of support to locality schools.

3.4 How will we know if the initial phase is successful?

In this strand of our work to develop the universal offer for mental and health and wellbeing we are clear in what we are hoping to achieve.

We want school communities to have a shared language around mental health and wellbeing, we want school staff to confident in recognising and being able to support their mental health and that of others. We also want children, young people and their families to share that language and be able to understand mental health.

We will measure the progress in the following ways

- % of schools with trained Mental Health First Aiders
- Number of schools with at least 10% of the staff trained as Mental Health First Aiders
- % of education staff trained to at least the level of Mental Health Awareness Training

We want the impact to be across staff, children, young people and their families and as a result we need to explore the qualitative impact of the work not just engagement.

To enable us to do that the 16 schools are trialling two mechanisms by which we will gather the wider impact.

The first is a self-facilitated audit. This audit covers:

- Positive Mental Health Approaches
- Engagement
- Relationships
- Identity
- Equality and Diversity
- Environment
- Leadership

This offers a scoring and RAG rating that we can use as a baseline prior to schools implementing learning from the Mental Health First Aider training. This audit will be revisited by at the end of the initial 6 month and 12-month period of phase 1. This will enable us to not where the most impact has been seen, help us maintain momentum and highlight and address barriers to success.

The second mechanism is a set of surveys by which schools can gather information about staff, children, young people and families this will collect and collate understanding feelings and perceptions. We are looking for a positive shift in respondents' confidence in managing their own mental health and the confidence they have in the institution to meet needs.

The potential survey questions are being developed and refined with the support of the wider team and the 16 schools.

The current iteration of these questions are recorded in the table below. These questions help to refine what we choosing to value in this work and what impact we want to see. Following the initial phase, we will further refine the questions to ensure they are effective in the gathering the information we need to check and challenge the impact we are having within our school communities.

Children and Young People	Parents and Carers	Staff
1. There are people who listen if I have worries	1. My child has someone they trust at school	1. If a child tells me about their worries, I know what to do
2. There are places to go to talk	2. The school listens to my concerns	2. I'm confident that all the children I work with have a voice.
3. I can spend time in quiet places	3. I know what my child is good at	3. I recognise if my own wellbeing is suffering and know what to do
4. I can tell people what I think	4. If my child tells me their worries, I know what to do	4. I know how to spot signs that a child is struggling with their mental health
5. When I talk people listen	5. I know what my child needs to do to improve	5. As a school we make sure all children feel safe and happy
6. I can tell you what I'm good at	6. There are people in school to help my child when things go wrong	
7. I know what I need to get better at	7. I'm confident my child is safe in school	
8. It's OK to get things wrong	8. I'm confident my child is happy in school	
9. If things go wrong someone will help me		

10. If I lose my temper, I know what to do	9. I know how to spot the signs that my child is struggling with their mental health 10. School helps my child deal with setbacks	6. As a school we all work in the same way to support vulnerable children 7. As a school we offer a safe environment- there is no where children feel unsafe 8. I plan for opportunities to increase resilience and wellbeing when working with children 9. If a colleague was struggling with their wellbeing, I would know what to do 10. As a school we offer good support to parents
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3.5 Initial phase: 16 schools Programme Costs: Sept 2020 to March 2021

Officer Time for co-ordination (2 days a week over 6 months) approx. costs **£11,087**

LA Cohort Training

- LA officer Mental Health Awareness training £1,500
- LA officer Mental Health First Aider training £1,500

£3,000

Schools Cohort Training

- **Group 1 (8 schools)**
- Mental Health First Aider training £1,500 x 4

£6,000

- Mental Health Awareness training 30 staff per school £1,500 x 8

£12,000

- **Group 2 (8 schools)**

- Mental Health First Aider training £1,500 x 4

£6,000

- Mental Health Awareness training 30 staff per school £1,500 x 8

£12,000

Total costs **£50,087**

4. Wider Roll Out of the MHFA programme

4.1 How will this develop?

Based upon the findings from the initial programme, we will embark upon an all schools wider roll out, shaping the programme to meet the needs of all schools. Our ultimate goal is to have all staff in all schools appropriately trained within three years and having an impact on the wider school community. While we build towards that goal, we will continue to engage in ongoing and short-term projects so that we consistently enhancing the universal offer.

Once we have our own staff trained as accredited trainers the costs will reduce and enable us to build a sustainable programme of training, updating and enhancing. This will also help us to secure the intention that schools will be supported to extend their mental health awareness training to their pupils and parents.

We will need to run 8 additional phases of training with 8 schools accessing each phase. We expect to follow the steps as seen in the pilot however the nature of the pilot is to enable us to adapt and develop this approach based on what we have learnt.

Wider roll out (Sept 2021 – Jan 2022)



The time scale for the wider roll out will be informed by the initial 16 schools. Our initial intention is that we will aim to run one training programme for 16 schools per half term. This suggests the wider training roll out will run from September 2021 to January 2022. Given that some half terms within the period run to only 4-5 weeks we have thought about building some additional time in this timescale. Therefore, the aim would be to complete the training rollout for all schools by April 2022- this allows for 10 half-terms. The capacity provided by the Local Authority officer will be initially planned to continue up to September 2022 to support the embedding and enhancing of the universal offer.

4.2 Wider Roll Sept 21- April 2022

Option 1

Use external trainers

Mental Health First Aider 10 staff per school at £93.75 per person **£937.50**

Mental Health Awareness Training approx. 30 staff per school **£1,500.00**

Cost per school £2,437.50

58 remaining schools **£141,346**

Officer Time 8 days a month over 18 months **£33,261**

TOTAL £174,607

Option 2

Use LA internal trainer

Five trainers trained plus annual membership **£14,750**

Officer Time 8 days a month over 18 months **£33,261**

TOTAL £48,011

Option 3

Blended approach using some external trainers for 29 schools and internal capacity to provide for a further 29 schools

29 schools external trainers **£70,673**

29 schools internal trainers **£14,750**

Officer Time 8 days a month over 18 months **£33,261**

TOTAL £118,684

Option 3 is the preferred option due to limited capacity within School Improvement and that of the external providers.