

# Services for schools

## Clinical professionals in schools

### 2024-25

#### More detailed information

The Clinical Professionals in Schools (CliPS) project originated from the former DCSF and was initially funded by the Targeted Mental Health in Schools (TaMHS) grant. The grant has now ended but the service has continued to be offered and is funded by schools on a buy back basis. CLIPS currently operates in 6 schools across the borough.

#### **The project today**

CliPS is managed by a senior clinical psychologist from Ealing Primary Centre. The clinical psychologist provides clinical supervision and professional management to staff delivering the service.

Each school that buys into the project has a named child and family specialist in their school for one day a week – all year round. The staff are employed by the Anna Freud Centre, a children's mental health charity which provides good clinical governance of the service and an infrastructure to deal with management and professional issues.

Interventions provided by the Child & Family specialists are as follows:-

#### **Direct work with children and families**

- Individual mental health assessment and formulation
- Individual therapeutic work
- Behaviour management advice and support to parents
- Cognitive behavioural interventions for children and families
- Group interventions which could be small group or whole class interventions and may centre around issues such as Problem Solving Skills training, Social Skills training or transition to high school
- Family interventions
- Multi-Family Groups, for parents and children to attend together in school
- Parenting programme interventions e.g. Supporting Your Child's Education (Webster- Stratton 2007)

## **Indirect work**

- Consultation to school staff on mental health issues and multi-factorial formulation of a child's behaviour and management of children referred
- Consultation to school staff on behavioural management and understanding and formulation of a child's difficulties. Cognitive behavioural and systemic approaches may also be used in providing consultation and training of school professionals
- Teaching and training

By intervening with evidence-based therapeutic approaches, together with practice-based knowledge of each school's setting, the expectation is that:

- children's emotional health and well-being will be enhanced
- children's behaviour and engagement in school life and learning will improve
- the capacity of school staff to identify and manage mental health issues will be increased
- Following assessment of the presenting issues by the Child & Family specialist, children and families can be referred on and supported in accessing other relevant services such as social services or CAMHS where appropriate.

There is strong evidence to suggest that CLiPS is making an important contribution and positive impact on the lives of children and their families as an early intervention, school-based service. Evaluation reports on this evidence are available on request.

## **Values and aims**

As Child & Family specialists in CLiPS, we believe that children should always be considered in the context of their family, school, community, cultural and social contexts. Positive change is best supported and maintained when interventions are focused at change in these systems as well as change in the child themselves. We aim to work collaboratively and in partnership with children, families and schools to build resilience, enhance positive strengths and to empower those we work with.

## **What CLIPS offers**

- The sessions are delivered at school by experienced therapists, who have expertise in delivering specialist and innovative therapeutic interventions across both Primary and Secondary settings.
- We can provide a range of types of intervention; individual child work, family sessions, parenting, group work and consultation.
- We aim to share formulations to increase understanding around a particular child and for us to learn from children, families and school staff and be responsive to their understanding also.
- All interventions undertaken by the project are evidence-based and evaluated according to NHS mental health standards (NICE guidelines).

- Outcomes are measured using the following – Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire (SDQ), Child Outcome Rating Scale (CORS), GOALS based outcome and RCADS and the ESQ.
- Clinical leads are trained in research methods and so can support and develop the ongoing evaluation and audit of the service provision.

### **Why CliPS is different**

- CliPS fill a vital gap by providing support to children and families who would not normally meet the thresholds of current mental health services. By intervening at an early stage and with a high level of clinical practice, children's concerns can be identified more quickly and acted upon more effectively. This aims to prevent escalating these concerns to a more entrenched part of the children and families' lives.
- By hosting the service in school, children and families feel more confident in taking up the service as the school environment is familiar, trusted and non-stigmatising. This has been borne out by the project's high engagement rate with a non-engagement rate of just 0.8% that is much lower than figures reported by off-site mental health services.
- CliPS enable close partnership working with schools where we are able to work on the schools' priorities and provide an accessible, responsive and flexible service.
- By increasing the schools' capacity to identify and manage the mental health needs of children within school, staff have benefited not only by having regular support when managing challenging classroom dynamics but also by raising their awareness in how children can exhibit mental health concerns.
- CliPS acts as an effective conduit between schools and other support agencies to improve communication and ensure on-going referrals are acted upon quickly with minimum repetition of assessment and easier access for families.