

# Ealing's emotional wellbeing and mental health information project

*Information for schools*

## **The aims of the project**

Following on from a stakeholder analysis conducted in 2021, several recommendations were made to reduce confusion within families, schools and community organisations regarding the services available to support children and young people experiencing emotional wellbeing and mental health difficulties in Ealing.

The aim of this project is to draw up a list of services that work in Ealing, clearly explaining what those services do, who can make use of them and how to sign up for them. As well as local services, the project will also identify suitable national or regional websites, resources and support services that are available to Ealing residents.

We want to work with schools to test out the language used and to produce simple flowcharts to help schools (and families and community groups) to better understand how to get the right support for children and young people who need it.

## **What schools will be required to do**

Co-production is a key concept on this project. The University wants to work with three primary and three high schools to ensure that the emotional wellbeing and mental health services identified, and the language used to describe them, are understood by schools.

The Department for Education's expectation is that mental health support services will be centred on schools as schools are the key setting in which children's needs are likely to be identified and could be supported. Schools can also provide access to both children and young people and their families who are also key to co-production.

We know that some schools are very advanced in their thinking and work with lots of services to support children and young people, while others are just starting out on this journey. For this project we want to work with schools who are at different stages in that journey. We also recognise the time and funding (and resource) constraints that schools operate under and how this can impact on the provision of services, so we want to ensure that the recommendations we come up with will work for schools.

The work will take place over this academic year and there will be milestones each term as shown below.

## **How schools will be recompensed for their involvement**

Schools that are selected for involvement in the project will be given a £1,000 payment to compensate them for their time. This will be paid in arrears each term provided key milestones are met, with £300 at the end of the autumn term, £300 at the end of the spring term and £400 at the end of the summer term.

### Milestone 1 – to be completed by 9th December 2022

Item	Description	Complete by
1.1	Appoint a senior member of staff within the school who will co-ordinate the work and report into the University on a regular basis	14 October
1.2	Attend a virtual orientation meeting to launch the project	21 October
1.3	Provide a comprehensive list of mental health/emotional wellbeing services/projects currently operating in their school, including whether it is for all children and young people (universal) or for certain children and young people (targeted). If it is a targeted service, which children is at targeted at; who delivers the service; how many children and young people is it for; how much does it cost; what is its impact etc. A template will be provided by the University for this that reflects the THRIVE model of support.	18 November
1.4	Identify known gaps in support, plus supports tried but abandoned (and reasons why) over the last three years.	18 November
1.5	Attend a virtual meeting to share learning thus far and identify next steps in the project.	9 December

### Milestone 2 – to be completed by 31 March 2023

Item	Description	Complete by
2.1	<p>Using their knowledge of their school, write up five separate case studies of children or young people (anonymised) who have experienced emotional wellbeing and mental health difficulties within the school and the care that they have received from one or more professionals (teachers, TAs, ELSAs, counsellors etc.). The case study does not have to be perfect but should be representative of a real-life situation, whether things have gone well or not. It should describe:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The age, gender and other relevant demographic detail of the person experiencing difficulties.</li> <li>• How their difficulties present in school and how the school became aware of them (e.g. direct observation by staff, concerns raised by parents/carers, information from peers)</li> <li>• The impact that those difficulties are having on their relationships with peers, teachers, parents, and on their academic progress</li> <li>• The sorts of support: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ already available to that person inside or outside of school e.g. friendship groups, parental support or support from significant other; use of Kooth or other online platforms/apps etc;</li> <li>○ support considered for that person e.g. counselling, referral to GP or West London NHS Trust CAMHS or the Mental Health Support Team, Educational Psychology etc;</li> <li>○ Support actually offered/received</li> </ul> </li> <li>• The outcome for that child or young person – what happened next (did they get support, are they on a waiting list, how are they now?)</li> </ul>	27 January

Item	Description	Complete by
2.2	Attend a meeting of the services working in that school to review the case study to see whether a different approach to the support offered was possible.	3 February
2.3	Attend a virtual meeting to agree a set of case studies to be used across the project, covering a range of different issues, age groups etc.	10 February
2.4	Based on information provided by the University, test out the language to describe support services available in Ealing and how to access them on staff in school who are involved in supporting children's mental health. A sample from different levels of staff within the school should be approached with a view to finding out: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are support services sufficiently well-defined and differentiated?</li> <li>• Is it clear which services might support different children or different types of difficulty?</li> <li>• Are the referral criteria and thresholds easily understood?</li> </ul> Report back any problems or suggestions for improvement to the University by email or phone or through a face-to-face meeting.	10 February
2.5	Recruit parent/carer participants to test out that same language. These might be parents/carers of children already or previously experiencing mental health difficulties and ideally there would be 10 of them. The University will run a focus group, either in-person (in which case a school venue would be needed) or virtually with these parents.	18 March
2.6	Recruit children (Year 6 in primary, any age in high school) to test out the language of support services. The group should have between six and 10 participants and reflect the demographics of the school, although it may be targeted at one particular year group if that would make it easier for the children or young people. The school will obtain the necessary parental consents using forms supplied by the University. These may be children and young people who have experienced difficulties themselves, but only if taking part would not put them at risk of reopening or exacerbating their difficulties. The University will run a focus group on the school site with these children and young people. For children and young people participating there will be a token thank-you gift of £10 which the University will organise.	18 March

### Milestone 3 – to be completed by 21 July 2023

Item	Description	Complete by
3.1	Using flow charts developed by the University, test out the response of staff to the suggested way of handling the situations described in the different case studies. This could be done in a staff meeting or in a special meeting of those staff likely to be involved in identifying and supporting children and young people experiencing mental health difficulties. Similarly to the consultation on the language used, we need to know: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are the flow charts easy to follow and intuitive?</li> <li>• Do they cover most situations that are likely to arise in school?</li> </ul>	28 April

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Would staff use the flow charts?</li> <li>• How could we manage the flow charts to keep them up to date, add new ones etc over time?</li> </ul>	
3.2	Recruit parent/carer participants to test out the case studies and the flow charts. These might be parents/carers of children already or previously experiencing mental health difficulties and ideally there would be 10 of them. They could be the same parents who attended the focus group on the language used to describe interventions and services, or a different group of people. The University will run a focus group, either in-person (in which case a school venue would be needed) or virtually with these parents to check that the case studies and recommended support make sense to them as parents/carers.	19 May
3.3	Recruit children (Year 6 in primary, any age in secondary) to test out the case studies and the flow charts. The group should have between six and 10 participants and reflect the demographics of the school, although it may be targeted at one particular year group if that would make it easier for the children or young people. It could be the same group of children and young people who reviewed the language of interventions and services, or a different group. The school will obtain the necessary parental consents using forms supplied by the University. Again, these may be children and young people who have experienced difficulties themselves, but only if taking part would not put them at risk of reopening or exacerbating their difficulties. The University will run a focus group on the school site with these children and young people. For children and young people participating there will be a token thank-you gift of £10 which the University will organise.	19 May
3.4	Attend a meeting, virtual or in-person, to review their involvement in the project and to provide any feedback or additional suggestions to improve the outcomes of the project.	17 June
3.5	Attend a schools' conference in Ealing to share the outcomes of the project with other schools. Support will be provided by the project team to participate at the conference.	21 July

## How to get involved

Schools that feel they could contribute to this project, whether because they feel they have a lot of the answers already or whether they feel they are only starting out but are keen to learn and develop their offer to children and families, should contact Bronach Hughes (bronach.hughes@uwl.ac.uk or 07810 853561) to register their interest and to explain what they feel they could contribute.

The aim is to have a mix of primary and secondary schools, at least some of which are already working with the Ealing Mental Health Support in Schools service (MHST).

Please make your interest known by **Friday 7 October**. Successful schools will be advised by **Wednesday 12 October** so that an orientation meeting can be held before the October half-term, with the first phase of data collection completed during the second half of the autumn term.