**Green Paper: Transforming Children and Young People’s Mental Health Provision**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/664409/Transforming_children_and_young_people_s_mental_health_provision.pdf>

This Green Paper is a Consultation which was published on 4 December 2017. It invites views on proposed reforms by noon on 2 March 2018: <https://engage.dh.gov.uk/youngmentalhealth/children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-consultation/>

**Summary**

The Green Paper which comprises 50 pages, begins by stating that support for good mental health in schools and colleges is not consistently available. The paper sets out an ambition for earlier intervention and prevention, a boost in support for the role played by schools and colleges, and better, faster access to NHS services, in order to improve provision.

The paper acknowledges that schools and colleges can, and do, play a vital role in identifying mental health needs at an early stage, referring young people to specialist support and working jointly with others to support young people experiencing problems. Around half of schools and colleges already have a dedicated lead for mental health. 61% of schools currently offer counselling, and 90% of schools and colleges offer staff training on supporting pupils’ mental health and wellbeing.

The Government’s proposed approach has three key elements:

1. Incentivise every school and college to identify a **Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health** to oversee the approach to mental health and wellbeing. All children and young people’s mental health services should identify a link for schools and colleges. This link will provide rapid advice, consultation and signposting.
2. Fund **new Mental Health Support Teams**, supervised by NHS children and young people’s mental health staff, to provide specific extra capacity for early intervention and ongoing help. Their work will be managed jointly by schools, colleges and the NHS. These teams will be linked to groups of primary and secondary schools and to colleges, providing interventions to support those with mild to moderate needs and supporting the promotion of good mental health and wellbeing.
3. Roll out the new Support Teams and **trial a four week waiting time** for access to specialist NHS children and young people’s mental health services in the pilot areas.

The Government will roll out its new approach so that by the end of 2022-23, a fifth to a quarter of the country to be operating with these reforms. Trailblazer areas will be operational from 2019. There is no prescribed model of provision. It will be left to local areas to decide on their collaborative approach.

**Chapter 1** sets out the reason for reforms in terms of available evidence.

**Chapter 2** sets out: existing action already underway in terms of investment; new waiting time standards for mental health; improving specialist services; improving crisis care; a better journey through mental health services; support for children in need; support for children with SEND; better support for LGBT young people; better support for young offenders and improving data and tackling variations.

**Chapter 3** sets out the proposed reforms to promote good mental health for children and young people, provide effective early support and continue to improve access to specialist services.

**Chapter 4** details action the Government will take across a number of other fronts to support the core proposals detailed above. These include: teacher training changes; every child to learn about mental wellbeing through PHSE; recognising what schools do and measuring impact, including through Ofsted inspection; social media and internet proposals, linked to the Internet Safety Strategy Green Paper, to keep children and young people safe online; support for family interventions; support to transition from children’s to adult mental health services and wider support for the mental health of 16-25 year olds, including a proposal to set up a new national partnership to improve mental health services for young people aged 16-25.

**Appendix A** details the evidence that informed the Green Paper.

**Appendix B** details existing support for children and young people in schools and colleges.

**Core Green Paper Proposals**

1. Incentivise and support all schools to identify and train a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health with a new offer of training to help leads and staff to deliver whole school approaches to promoting better mental health.
2. Fund new Mental Health Support Teams to provide specific extra capacity for early intervention and ongoing help, supervised by NHS children and young people’s mental health staff, whose work will be jointly managed by schools and the NHS. These teams will be linked to groups of primary and secondary schools, and to colleges. They will provide interventions to support those with mild to moderate needs and support the promotion of good mental health and wellbeing. The Designated Senior Leads for Mental Health in schools will work closely with the new Support Teams, who, as part of their role, will provide a clear point of contact for schools and colleges.
3. Reduce waiting times for NHS services for those children and young people who need specialist help.

**i. A Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health in every school and college**

The first pillar of the new approach is to incentivise every school and college to identify and train a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health.

The core roles of leads are likely to be:

* Oversight of the whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing, including how it is reflected in the design of behaviour policies, curriculum and pastoral support, how staff are supported with their own mental wellbeing and how pupils and parents are engaged;
* Supporting the identification of at risk children and children exhibiting signs of mental ill health;
* Knowledge of the local mental health services and working with clear links into children and young people’s mental health services to refer children and young people into NHS services where it is appropriate to do so;
* Coordination of the mental health needs of young people within the school or college and oversight of the delivery of interventions where these are being delivered in the educational setting;
* Support to staff in contact with children with mental health needs to help raise awareness, and give all staff the confidence to work with young people;
* Overseeing the outcomes of interventions, on children and young people’s education and wellbeing.

To support every school and college to identify and train a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health, training will be rolled out to all areas by 2025. To provide further support for schools and colleges that have already put Designated Senior Leads for Mental Health in place and to incentivise others to do so, funding will be made available. This will be used to develop leads and their skills in leading mental health work in their institution, supporting colleagues and implementing whole school approaches. A training fund will be provided to allow schools to choose an appropriate training course, depending on the skills their lead already has. The Consultation invites views on the best way of distributing this funding.

Via the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund, the Government will confirm the amounts to be provided to schools and colleges once the cost of what is developed is clear. However, the Government aims to cover the costs of a significant training programme and provide up to £15-20 million each year from 2019 until all school and colleges have had chance to train a lead.

**ii Mental Health Support Teams to work with clusters of schools and colleges across the country**

The second part of the new model is the creation of new Mental Health Support Teams. Better collaboration between schools and mental health services can improve the mental health support available locally.

The Government proposes to establish new Mental Health Support Teams, supervised by NHS children and young people’s mental health staff and linked to groups of schools and colleges. These teams will work with the Designated Senior Leads for Mental Health in schools and colleges, and provide new capacity locally for addressing the needs of children with mild to moderate mental health issues. They will also provide the link with more specialist NHS mental health services so that children can more swiftly access help they need, if that is necessary.

This new collaborative service will comprise trained staff offering focused evidence-based interventions, with appropriate clinical supervision. This provision will be of particular benefit to children and young people who demonstrate mild or moderate conditions including: anxiety (primary and secondary school age), low mood (adolescents) and common behavioural difficulties.

Specific interventions could include:

* Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) in a school/college setting for adolescents at risk of depression;
* CBT in a school/college setting for young children and adolescents showing signs of anxiety;
* Family-based behaviour change, which can be successfully delivered by teachers and other non-clinical staff to help reduce child conduct problems;

Group-based intervention engaging participants in critiquing the ‘thin ideal’, which can be effective in reducing eating disorder symptoms and body image concerns, when targeted toward high-risk adolescent girls.

These new teams will support existing effective provision in the local area by training other professionals, including family workers, early help workers, social workers and teams who work with young offenders. They will also provide a specific assessment and referral function, and additional support during treatment, including supporting self-care. The teams will also support young people who have experienced trauma (such as bereavement) or traumatic incidents.

Such a team can be a valuable additional resource in and of itself, but can be even stronger when working closely with a range of other services. These other services include professionals who work closely with schools and colleges, such as educational psychologists, school nurses and counsellors, local authority troubled families teams, social services, peer networks, service user forums, and voluntary and community sector organisations. The Government expects school nurses to work very closely with the new teams, testing a range of collaborative models to support young people with mental health problems.

**iii A new waiting time standard**

The third pillar of the new approach is further action to reduce waiting times for specialist children’s and young people’s mental health services. The Government wants to ensure that the increased support for mental health linked to schools and colleges is complemented by swifter access to specialist NHS services for those who need it.

The latest data shows that in 2016-17 the average wait for treatment in a children’s and young people’s mental health service was 12 weeks.

As areas trial and roll out the new Mental Health Support Teams, the NHS will pilot implementing reduced waiting times for access to NHS-funded children and young people’s mental health services in some of the trailblazer areas. This will aim for children and young people in those areas to be able to access NHS-funded services within four weeks.

**Implementation of the proposals**

The new approach will be rolled out to at least a fifth to a quarter of the country by the end of 2022-23. We will start with a number of trailblazer areas, operational from 2019.

Government will invite a range of areas to develop and evaluate different models of delivering the teams. This will include different lead bodies and funding mechanisms, for example approaches could be led by health, schools/colleges or a local authority. The aim will be for trailblazers to provide implementation support to other areas as the additional resource rolls out.

The Consultation seeks views on the criteria that should be used to choose the trailblazer areas.

The trailblazers will examine how the support teams can best support children and young people who are not in school, including those affiliated with gangs or youth violence, who are less likely to benefit from school-based provision.

Trailblazer areas will test how teams can effectively link to social care services, youth offending teams and troubled families teams, to provide alternative points of entry and better continuity of support to the most vulnerable, as well as how provision might extend to secure children’s homes, secure training centres, young offender institutions, residential special schools, and residential units for looked after children.

From 2018 the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund will support training providers to develop training packages to build the skills of Designated Senior Leads for Mental Health in schools and support the delivery of whole school approaches. Access to funding for the training for the Designated Senior Leads would start in financial year 2019-20, once the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund provision has been tested, and will continue as teams roll out nationally.

Preparation for the rollout of the new Mental Health Support Teams will start from 2018, expanding training provision for the new mental health workforce, recruiting initial trailblazer areas and recruiting the first group of trainees to staff the new teams. The first wave of training will begin from September 2018. Trailblazers would begin delivering in 2019.

KCC will be responding to this Green Paper. Schools are encouraged to provide individual responses.