



DEBATE PACK

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Mental health and wellbeing in schools

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Summary

On 4 December 2018, there will be a Westminster Hall debate on Mental health and wellbeing in schools, sponsored by Layla Moran MP. It is scheduled to begin at 2:30pm.

This debate pack explains recent Government policy announcements and brings together related parliamentary material, news articles and further reading.

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1. Background

England

Overview

Schools in England are able to decide on the provision of mental health support for their pupils. Schools are not required to report centrally on the services they provide, but it has been [estimated](#) that 70% of secondary schools and 52% of primary schools in England offer counselling services.¹

The Schools Minister, Nick Gibb, has stated that the Government “want to ensure every child is taught about mental wellbeing”, including being taught about the risks of the internet and its potential impact on mental health.² The Government has reiterated that although schools play an important part in promoting mental wellbeing, teachers are not mental health professionals, and need backing from a range of specialised services.³

A new pilot is taking place linking schools with single points of contact in child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). The Government has said the pilot has led to improvements in higher quality and more timely referrals to specialist services for pupils.⁴ The pilot initially reached 255 schools, and will be extended to 1,200 schools.

Green paper: Impact on schools

The Green Paper consultation [Transforming children and young people’s mental health provision](#), was published by the Department for Education and the Department of Health in December 2017.

The Green Paper included several proposals to improve support for mental health in schools, including:

- To incentivise every school and college to identify and train a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health, with relevant training rolled out to all areas by 2025
- To create new Mental Health Support Teams to work with groups of schools and colleges, and work with Designated Senior Leads in addressing the problems of children with mild to moderate mental health problems, and provide a link to services for children with severe problems
- Updating existing mental health and behaviour guidance (subsequently [updated in November 2018](#))
- Building on existing mental health awareness training so that a member of staff in every primary and secondary school in England receives mental health awareness training
- Adding a mental health-specific strand within the Teaching and Leadership Innovation Fund

¹ Care Quality Commission, [Review of children and young people’s mental health services: Phase one report](#), October 2017, p23

² [HC Deb 4 July 2017 c1036](#)

³ [PQ 501, 4 July 2017](#)

⁴ As above

- Further the aim that all children will learn about mental well-being through consultations on PSHE and Relationships and Sex Education
- Reviewing whether existing requirements on schools on publishing policies and information for parents and carers, including behaviour, safeguarding and SEND policies are adequate
- Working with Ofsted on how inspection can be used as a force for improvement in addressing mental health needs

The [Government's response to the Green Paper consultation](#), published in July 2018, committed to taking forward all proposals in the Green Paper.

Government announcement on suicide prevention

The Government made an [announcement on suicide prevention](#) in October 2018 which included further measures on support for children and young people. The announcement stated that:

- Recruitment has now begun for new mental health support teams who will work with schools to ensure young people with mental health issues get the help they need – trainees will begin studying in January and join schools across England next year
- Starting in 2019, the government will publish a 'State of the Nation' report every year on World Mental Health Day, highlighting the trends and issues in young people's mental well-being – the first time children's mental health will be reported in this way, alongside their physical health and academic attainment
- The government will provide tools to help schools measure their students' health, including their mental wellbeing – building on the commitment to make education in mental health and resilience a compulsory part of the curriculum⁵

Mental health education on the curriculum: 2020 reforms

Alongside changes to Relationships and Sex Education, the Government [announced](#) the introduction of statutory health education in July 2018. [Draft statutory guidance](#) on RSE and health education was published, with a [consultation](#) on the guidance that was open until 7 November 2018. The statutory guidance is intended to come into force in September 2020, with schools able to implement the changes from September 2019 if they wish.

If the draft guidance was adopted as it stands, at **primary** level children would study issues including:

- the importance of mental well-being alongside physical health
- understanding and discussing emotions
- benefits of physical exercise
- loneliness
- where to seek support
- that it is common to have mental health problems and that these can be resolved with support

At **secondary** level, children would study issues including:

⁵ Prime Minister's Office, [PM pledges action on suicide to mark World Mental Health Day](#), 9 October 2018

- how to talk about emotions
- that happiness is linked to being connected to others
- how to recognise the early signs of mental wellbeing problems
- common types of mental ill health
- the positive and negative impact of various activities on mental health

Scotland

Counselling services

The Scottish Government's [Mental Health Strategy 2017-2027](#) includes as one of its main ambitions that every child and young person should have appropriate access to emotional and mental well-being support in school. There are two 'actions' attached to this aim:

- **Action 1:** Review Personal and Social Education (PSE), the role of **pastoral guidance** in local authority schools, and services for counselling for children and young people.
- **Action 2:** Roll out **mental health training** for those who support young people in educational settings

The [2018-19 Programme for Government](#) includes a commitment to invest in school counselling services across education in Scotland. The Scottish Government states that this will create around 350 counsellor positions, ensuring that every secondary school has access to counselling services, and availability to local primary and special schools.

Teachers are currently supported through a range of materials provided by Education Scotland and through [Scottish Mental Health First Aid](#) training programme which is in the process of being delivered across Scotland.

Personal and Social Education (PSE)

As noted above, the Scottish Government is undertaking a [review of PSE](#).

This review includes consideration of pastoral care and guidance as well as school counselling, and is currently in progress and in its third and final stage, with recommendations being developed. The review is expected to be completed by the end of 2018.

Currently, the [Health and Wellbeing](#) strand of the [Curriculum for Excellence](#) includes education about Mental, Emotional, Social and Physical Wellbeing.

The PSHE Association has published [support documents for schools in Scotland](#), including guidance on preparing to teach about mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Wales

Counselling services

The Welsh Government has published [Statutory guidance to Welsh local authorities on the provision of independent counselling services](#), which sets out the responsibilities of local authorities to provide counselling services for children from Year 6 of their education onwards:

An LA must provide an independent counselling service for:

- registered pupils who receive secondary education at:
 - a school maintained by the authority
 - other schools in its area (e.g. independent schools)
- registered pupils who are in Year 6 of their primary education at:
 - a school maintained by the authority
 - other schools in its area
- young people in its area between the ages of 11 and 18 who are not being educated at school.

As not all of the children and young people who are eligible to receive independent counselling attend maintained schools, LAs should consider how they can raise the profile of independent counselling for children and young people outside maintained schools. This could include making links with independent schools, further education institutions and the home education community, and through having information on the service available in youth centres, libraries and GPs' surgeries.

The Welsh Government has also published a [School-based counselling toolkit](#) for those setting up services on-site.

Personal and social education (PSE)

The Welsh Government's [Personal and social education framework for 7 to 19-year-olds in Wales](#) sets out that it is the responsibility of schools to plan and deliver a broad, balanced programme of PSE to meet the specific needs of learners, and provides a basis for this to be done. PSE is part of the basic curriculum for pupils aged 7 to 16 at maintained schools in Wales.

Emotional intelligence' involves the successful management of feelings and emotions and has a great impact upon personal and social effectiveness. Self-esteem affects learners' confidence, ambition and ability to deal with life generally. Understanding and managing emotions improves mental health by increasing learners' ability to cope with conflict, stress, loss and change.

At Key Stage 4, the framework includes education about the factors that affect mental health and the ways in which emotional well-being can be fostered.

The PSHE Association has published [support documents for schools in Wales](#), including teaching about self-esteem and mental health issues.

Northern Ireland Counselling services

The Department of Education in Northern Ireland has funded an independent counselling service for post-primary aged pupils' in grant-aided schools since 2007, the [Independent Counselling Service for Schools](#).

A young person can decide to go to counselling and request it in school, or a parent can refer their child to counselling.

As part of the Department of Education's I-Matter Programme, Guidance ([Circular 2018/07](#)) provides a self-assessment audit tool to support school development planning in the area of emotional health and well-being.

Curriculum

The [curriculum in Northern Ireland](#) includes 'personal development' teaching at the various stages of schooling. This includes, for example, teaching on 'Learning for Life and Work' that at [Key Stage 4](#) requires teaching of pupils to "reflect on, and respond to, their developing concept of self, including managing emotions and reactions to on-going life experiences."

2. Press Articles

[I know the dread and helplessness parents feel when their child struggles with mental health](#) *Daily Telegraph* 28 November 2018

[One toddler in 18 suffers a mental health disorder](#), *Times*, 23 November 2018

[What is happening with children's mental health?; We look at the state of services and demand for them after first new data for 13 years is published](#) *Guardian* 22 November 2018

[Mental health disorders on rise among children](#), *Guardian*, 22 November 2018

[One in eight children in England have a mental health disorder, NHS report reveals](#), *Independent*, 22 November 2018

[All schools should have counsellors to address the increase in children with mental health issues](#), *Daily Telegraph* 22 November 2018

[Lessons in life Wellbeing 'should be on curriculum'](#), *Daily Telegraph* 19 November 2018

[Don't diagnose pupils' stress as a mental health issue, schools told](#) *Daily Telegraph*, 13 November 2018

[Mental health plans must address staff shortages](#), *Times*, 29 October 2018

[Spending watchdog warns of lack of data on pupil mental health support](#), *Schools Week*, 9 October 2018

[Schools left to pick up the pieces as 1 in 4 pupils turned away from mental health services](#), *Schools Week*, 7 October 2018

[Calls for action over UK's 'intolerable' child mental health crisis](#), *Guardian*, 31 August 2018

[Nearly one in four girls aged 14 self-harmed in past year, study shows](#)
Independent, 29 August 2018

[Mental health reforms don't realise school is source of poor well-being, say pupils](#), *Schools Week*, 9 August 2018

[Schools buckle under 70,000 self-harm cases](#), *Times*, 9 June 2018

[Almost 200 pupils a day referred for mental care](#), *Times*, 14 May 2018

[Almost half of headteachers find it difficult to commission mental health services for pupils](#), *Independent*, 9 February 2018

[Exclusion from school is a mental health issue that we must tackle](#),
Times, 23 May 2017

3. Parliamentary material

3.1 Written Parliamentary Questions

[Mental Health Services: Schools: Written question - 188023](#)

Asked by: Norman Lamb (North Norfolk) 05 November 2018

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, pursuant to the announcement in Budget 2018, what his Department's timescale is for implementing school-based mental health support teams; and by what date he plans for mental health support teams to be extended across the country.

Answered by: Jackie Doyle-Price, 12 November 2018

Work on developing mental health support teams for school's forms part of the work to implement the proposals set out in the Green Paper, 'Transforming children and young people's mental health provision'. The first wave of recruitment for the Educational Mental Health Practitioners who will form part of these teams is now under way and 210 people will take their places on specialist training courses from January 2019. These trainees will start working in schools during 2019. The initial local areas, or trailblazer sites, that will trial the Green Paper proposals will be announced by the end of the year. As stated in the Green Paper, we plan to roll out the teams to between a fifth and a quarter of the country by 2022/23.

[Mental Health Services: Schools: Written question - 186280](#)

Asked by: Adam Afriyie (Windsor), 31 October 2018

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, how many additional schools he estimates will have mental health support teams and specialist crisis teams in (a) Windsor, (b) the South East and (c) the UK by 2023-24.

Answered by: Jackie Doyle-Price, 07 November 2018

The Government announced its long term financial settlement for the National Health Service in June. This will represent an increase of £20.5 billion in real terms by 2023/24. The Government has asked the NHS to develop a long-term plan which will set out a vision for the health service. The Government has been clear that better access to mental health services, to help achieve the Government's commitment to parity of esteem between mental and physical health, is one of the principles which must underpin the plan.

The 2018 Budget set out some of aspects of what the long-term plan will contain, and further details will follow when the plan is published in due course.

Work on developing mental health support teams for school's forms part of the work to implement the proposals set out in the Green Paper, transforming children and young people's mental health provision. The first wave of recruitment for the Educational Mental Health Practitioners who will form part of these teams is now under way, and 210 people will take their places on specialist

training courses from January. The intention is that these trainees will start working in schools during 2019. The initial local areas, or trailblazer sites, that will trial the Green Paper proposals will be announced in due course.

[Schools: Mental Health Services: Written question – 176298](#)

Asked by Julie Elliott (Sunderland Central), 08 October 2018

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps the Government is taking to encourage schools to create designated senior leads for mental health.

Answered by: Nick Gibb, 16 October 2018

The Department for Education's 'Supporting Mental Health in Schools and Colleges' survey showed that 49% of all schools and colleges already have a dedicated lead for mental health.

To support these schools, and provide an incentive for more schools to adopt a Designated Senior Lead for mental health, the Government has committed to funding training for a lead in every school over five years, starting from the 2019/20 academic year. The Department is currently assessing the options for providing sufficient high quality training.

The training will be supported by the other proposals set out in the green paper Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision. The Department's pilot of training to improve joint working between schools and NHS mental health services has been a success, and will be rolled out nationally. This scheme has already helped around 1,000 schools build better links to specialist services through named points of contact in health and education.

The Government is also funding new Mental Health Support Teams working in or near schools to provide earlier access to a wider range of support and treatments and help reduce mental health problems worsening or developing in the first place. These teams will provide school leads with the specialist support they need from qualified mental health professionals.

[Children: Obesity: Written question - HL9686](#)

Asked by Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe, 19 July 2018

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the role of the designated senior lead on mental health in schools will cover child obesity.

Answered by: Lord Agnew of Oulton, 26 July 2018

It will be for schools to decide whether to put a designated senior lead for mental health in place and what responsibilities they should cover. The Government is not introducing new responsibilities and is not planning to stipulate what the role should be.

The 'Supporting Mental Health in Schools and Colleges' survey published in 2017 suggested that around half of schools already have a mental health lead in place. The Government will provide all schools with the opportunity to train a lead in how to put in

place a whole school approach to mental health. Given the links between obesity and both physical and mental health, whole school approaches can include activity to tackle obesity such as that set out by the Government in the attached document, 'Childhood obesity: a plan for action'.

The qualitative research accompanying the survey indicates that some schools already include both physical and mental health in such approaches, and make links to the teaching of personal, social, health and economic education. On 19 July, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State launched a consultation on proposals to make health education compulsory in schools. Under these proposals pupils will be taught about the benefits of a healthier lifestyle for both their physical and mental wellbeing. We expect that many schools will choose to make the teaching of health education part of a whole school approach to mental health overseen by a designated senior lead.

[Pupils: Mental Health: Written question - 134851](#)

Asked by Preet Kaur Gill (Birmingham, Edgbaston)

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, with reference to the recommendation of the Centre for Mental Health's report of July 2017 entitled *Against the Odds*, if he will make an assessment of the potential merits of implementing a Concordat for Black and Minority Ethnic Mental Health to ensure that schools prioritise young people's mental health and well-being.

Answered by: Nick Gibb, 16 April 2018

The survey 'Supporting mental health in schools and colleges'[1] shows the extensive help that schools provide for their pupils at present.

In December 2017 the Government published the green paper 'Transforming children and young people's mental health provision',[2] which sets out further support, including designated senior leads for mental health in schools and colleges, and a significant increase in the number of early intervention practitioners

The Department is considering how mental health and wellbeing should be covered in the curriculum, as part of a process to determine the content of Relationships education and Relationships and Sex Education, and the future status of Personal, Social, Health and Economic education. In providing education and support, schools and colleges must have regard to their equalities duties, including ensuring that they meet the needs of Black and Minority Ethnic (BAME) pupils.

As the *Against the Odds* report suggests, behaviour management and exclusions practice in schools is an important factor. The Department has announced a review of exclusions which will focus on those pupils more likely to be excluded from school, including pupils from BAME groups.

[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/supporting-mental-health-in-schools-and-colleges>

[2] <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-provision-a-green-paper>

[Children: Mental Health: Written question - 125964](#)

Asked by Richard Burden (Birmingham, Northfield), 31 January 2018

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking to tackle loneliness and social isolation among school-aged children.

Answered by: Nick Gibb, 08 February 2018

On 17 January the Government announced that my hon. Friend, the Minister for Sport and Civil Society will lead a cross-government group which will take responsibility for driving action on loneliness. The Department will work as part of the group looking at what can be done to tackle loneliness and social isolation, especially for the most vulnerable children.

The Department is funding a £700,000 pilot investigating ways to set up effective peer support for mental health and wellbeing in schools, and is also providing £1.5 million to support anti-bullying projects, such as the Diana Award Ambassador programme.

The Department is currently conducting a thorough engagement process on the scope and content of Relationships Education and Relationships and Sex Education, which will be made statutory in primary and secondary schools respectively.

The Government is also consulting on the green paper 'Transforming children and young people's mental health provision' which includes further proposals to support children and young people's mental health and wellbeing, supported by over £300 million of funding. The green paper is available to view here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-provision>

3.2 Oral questions

[Schools: Mental Health Support](#), HL deb 27 November 2018, volume 794, cc.535-6

3.3 Debates

[Anti-bullying Week](#) HC deb 15 Nov 2018 vol649 181-194WH

[Children's Wellbeing and Mental Health: Schools](#) HC deb 10 Jan 2017, volume 619, cc23-5WH

4. Further reading

4.1 Library publications

[Children and young people's mental health – policy, CAMHS services, funding and education](#) (August 2018)

[Personal, social, health and economic education in schools \(England\)](#) (August 2018)

[Suicide Prevention: Policy and Strategy](#) (September 2018)

Debate pack: [E-petition 176555 relating to mental health education in schools](#) (November 2017)

4.2 Sector publications

Closer, an organisation that brings together longitudinal studies, has published a [Mental health and wellbeing hub](#). This includes some of the risk factors associated with childhood.

[Improving wellbeing in schools](#), Nuffield Health, November 2018

[Youth in crisis? a survey of wellbeing and self harm among 13 to 17 years olds report](#), MIND / Addaction, November 2018

[Mental health of Children and Young People in England 2017 report](#)
NHS Digital, November 2018

[Improving children and young people's mental health services](#), National Audit Office, October 2018

Making The Difference: [Breaking the link between school exclusion and social exclusion](#), IPPR, October 2017 (focus on mental health and school exclusions)

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