

MHST NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to the latest edition of the Mental Health Support Team's Newsletter. If you would like to make a suggestion or contribution, please contact: victoria.cooke8@nhs.net

SENIOR MENTAL HEALTH LEAD TRAINING GRANT

SMHL grant take-up

- Up to 31st March 2024, 16,700 schools and colleges had claimed a grant.
- The 16,700 settings that have claimed a grant up to 31st March 2024 represent 70% of the total number of settings that were eligible to apply and represents a DfE spend of £20.0m in grants

The DfE continues to encourage eligible schools and colleges to apply for a senior mental health lead training grant, which is part of the government's commitment to offer this training to all eligible schools and colleges by 2025. **The deadline for schools and colleges to claim a grant is 31 January 2025, and they must start their training by 31 March 2025.**

Future of the SMHL Grant

DfE are yet to receive any confirmation for the future of the grant, and they will confirm as soon as they know. As you will be aware the original grant commitment was to offer the opportunity for settings to take the grant until 2025 and a large proportion of settings have now taken the offer.

MENTALLY HEALTHY SCHOOLS RESOURCE HUB



The website provides toolkits for both primary and secondary schools, each designed with age-appropriate strategies that align with the school curriculum. By fostering a mentally healthy environment, we can help students and teachers feel more supported, understood, and ready to thrive. Explore the [Mentally Healthy Schools website](#) today to discover ways to make mental health a priority in your school community.

Anti-Bullying Week toolkit

A toolkit with lesson plans, guidance and supporting activities for Anti-Bullying Week.

[View resource](#)

[Save resource page](#)



Mental health and wellbeing calendar: autumn term 2024

A calendar of curriculum themes and occasions linked to mental health for the 2024 autumn term, with activity ideas and free resources for each theme.

[View resource](#)

[Save resource page](#)



By: [Anna Freud Mentally Healthy Schools](#)

FIREWISE SCHEME - BUCKS FIRE AND RESCUE



The Firewise programme provided by Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service is aimed at children and young people (and occasionally adults) who:

- have been involved in firesetting behaviour
- are at risk of becoming involved in firesetting behaviour
- are considered to have an 'unusual' or 'unhealthy' fascination with fire
- have any other specific issue related to fire or firesetting

MHST - DUTY WORKERS

As our service becomes bigger, we have been reviewing our processes and want to update you about the duty worker role. On each working day (Monday-Friday) 08:00-16:00 the MHST now has an allocated duty clinician made up of senior staff across the waves. Currently this includes Sarah, Vickie, Steph, Amy and Sally. The duty worker's role is:

- To support clinicians when their senior practitioner/supervisor is not available.
- Respond to any immediate concerns if the allocated worker or wave senior practitioner is not available.
- Screen and triage incoming referrals.

This means that you may receive communication requesting further information about new referrals or following up on a concern about an open referral from a senior practitioner whom you are less familiar with. We hope over time this process becomes more familiar and as a group of senior practitioners, we are looking forward to getting to know some of our mental health leads from outside of our waves. Thank you for your support with this in advance.

We are aware that there has been some confusion about whether you will receive a pdf copy of your referral after submitting it via our online platform. We wanted to confirm that you will not get a copy of the pdf as our online form cannot hold data due to the Trust's information governance guidelines. You will however receive a letter with the outcome via letter.

ALLIES (ALL INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SERVICES) TRAINING

ALLIES can provide training programmes specifically designed to cover key educational areas, with the flexibility to be adapted to suit your individual service requirements and delivered in any UK location.

This training event introduces the educational needs of children in care to professionals in education or care settings. It gives the participants an overview of the educational challenges for the children and education providers, plus it includes suggested measures to address these challenges. It includes:

- The background to Looked After Children, the national and local picture
- Barriers to learning, and how to overcome them
- The roles of professionals, involved in LAC
- The statutory role of the Designated teacher, for LAC
- The Personal Education Plan and processes
- Tools for the professional

For more info - [click here](#) for their webpage

THE DFE MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM SCHOOL AND COLLEGE SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the Department for Education's 2024 Mental Health Support Team (MHST) survey are in, providing valuable insights into the impact of MHSTs across Milton Keynes and beyond. Here's a closer look at the key findings for Milton Keynes and how they compare to regional and national outcomes.

Understanding and Satisfaction

Milton Keynes schools demonstrated high levels of clarity and satisfaction regarding the MHST program:

- **Understanding the Program:** 100% of respondents from Milton Keynes understood the scope of mental health needs that the MHST can support, outperforming regional (92%) and national (89%) averages.
- **Satisfaction with Direct Interventions:** 94% of schools expressed satisfaction with MHST direct interventions, above the national average of 82%.

These results underline the strong alignment between the MHSTs' goals and the needs of local schools.

Impact Highlights

The survey highlights the program's positive influence on school mental health initiatives:

- **Improved Support:** 88% of Milton Keynes respondents agreed that MHSTs provided better mental health support than would have otherwise been available, above the national average of 85%.
- **Stronger Collaboration:** 82% agreed that MHSTs improved their understanding of how to access external support, surpassing the national average of 74%.

However, there's room for improvement in areas like engagement with senior leadership, where only 76% in Milton Keynes reported improved buy-in.

Attendance Improvements

One area of focus was attendance, though this is not a core function of MHSTs:

- **Direct Interventions:** 59% of respondents in Milton Keynes reported that MHST interventions improved attendance—a leading score compared to the East of England (39%) and the national average (46%).

Engagement and Responsiveness

Milton Keynes schools also showed robust engagement with MHSTs:

- **Responsiveness to Feedback:** 88% of respondents found the MHSTs responsive to their feedback, closely aligning with the regional (89%) and national (86%) averages.
- **Parent Awareness:** 88% of schools ensured parents were aware of the MHST offer, slightly below the regional average (93%).

MESSAGE FROM SIMONE BAYES (DEPUTY DIRECTOR, PUPIL WELLBEING AND SAFETY AT DEPARTMENT FOR EDUCATION) AT THE DFE

I'm writing to update you on changes to DfE's approach to supporting pupil and student mental health and wellbeing and, in particular, to highlight a change to our regional presence.

We have achieved a huge amount together over the past few years: MHSTs are well established with an active learning community sharing learning; pilots of four week waits have long since reported and informed MHSDS data collection to support monitoring and improvement; and over three quarters of state-funded schools and colleges have trained a senior mental health lead through DfE's offer, which includes a [resources hub](#) and [toolkit](#).

With this success - which we've achieved through strong local partnership working - and the shift to ICSs leading on MHSTs, the DfE is moving away from having a bespoke DfE regional team for MHSTs and a named DfE contact for each NHS region. Our DfE national team will continue working on pupil mental health and wellbeing, in partnership with DHSC and NHSE colleagues, to build on these achievements and deliver the government's manifesto commitment on mental health professionals in schools, as well as linking in with DfE's regions group. We will give key updates through our work with NHSE nationally and, to support ICSs and MHSTs with this transition, there is a central email address RegionalTeam.MHDD@education.gov.uk: please do contact us if you have issues or queries and feel you want or need DfE input.

Under the new government, there is much greater DfE focus on schools' role in supporting children and young people to thrive, as well as to achieve, as highlighted in the Education Secretary's recent speech (available [here](#)). We are working with others to support this broadening of DfE's focus in wider education reforms, including: Ofsted developing a broader School Report Card; the [Curriculum and assessment review - GOV.UK](#); improving inclusivity in mainstream education settings and tackling absence; and the introduction of new Regional Improvement for Standards and Excellence teams that will work with schools and trusts to spread good practice.

I wanted to finish by giving an enormous personal thank you for all that has been achieved, and the personal efforts you have made to create, manage and oversee MHSTs so that they work in, with and for schools and colleges and their staff, rather than as a routine NHS service for children and young people.

COMPLIMENT STAR JAR

"It shifted my perspective as it helped me to find a positive in situations I've struggled in."

"I enjoyed having the goal to work towards as it made me push myself to improve."

"It has been incredibly helpful to me and I've learnt many different ways to help me cope with things especially if things got bad again."

"She helped me achieve my goals by teaching me the calm kit"

