

Transforming Children & Young Peoples' Mental Health

Welcome Pack

**For all schools and colleges working with Mental Health
Support Teams**

Issue date: June 2022

Introduction and contents

Welcome, and thank you for taking an important step to promote and support wellbeing and mental health in your organisation. Your school or college has signed up to work with a Mental Health Support Team (MHST). Once recruited, trained and fully operational, your MHST will help you to promote good mental health, introduce mental health expertise, strengthen your setting's existing support and bridge the gap between education and the NHS, enabling a more collaborative approach to tackling mental health issues in children and young people in a timely way. Your MHST lead will be there to guide you every step of the process.

This pack is provided to help you get ready to work with an MHST and includes information to help develop your wider approach to promoting and supporting good mental health.

If you are a placement school or college, you can refer to [EMHP trainee placement pack 2022 ppt version - Mental Health Support Teams \(MHST\) Community of Practice Workspace - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#)

Contents:

[Slide 3-14-Key functions of an MHST](#)

[Slide 15-19-Preparing for an MHST](#)

[Slide 20-24-Further support](#)

Contents

Context

Functions

Whole
School/college
Approach

Preparing for
an MHST

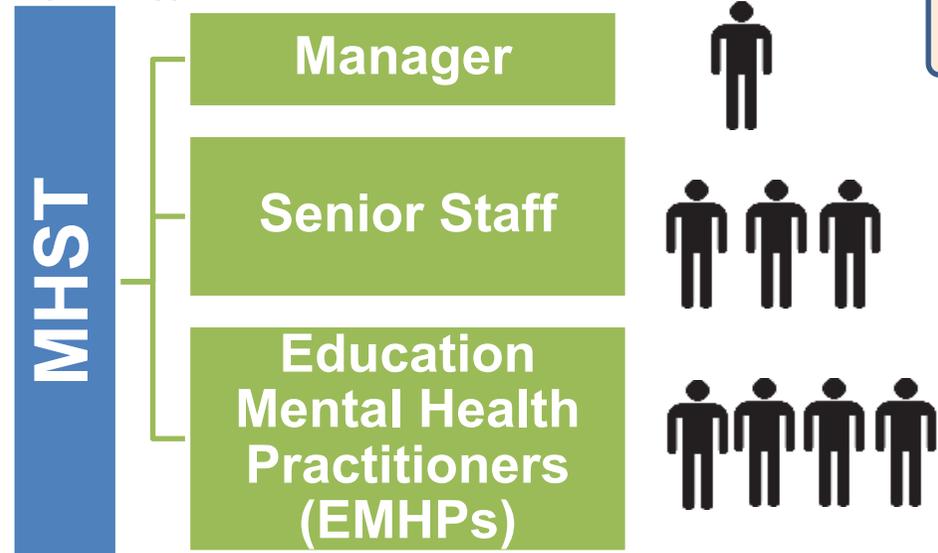
Promoting and supporting mental health and wellbeing for children and young people in schools and colleges: key functions of an MHST

Mental Health Support Teams

- Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) are **funded by and accountable** through the NHS. They are co-delivered by Department for Education and Health Education England. They work with, and in, schools and colleges.
- They can support you **with your whole school or college approach** to mental health and wellbeing and support children and young people experiencing mild to moderate mental health issues, such as anxiety or low mood. **Early intervention and prevention** is at the heart of the MHST approach, which is why they work with **mild to moderate mental health issues**.
- This partnership will help embed a culture of openness around mental health, forge stronger links between education settings and the NHS and ensure children and young people can access appropriate support and stay in education. The MHST programme is dependent on partnership working between health and education.

A typical MHST structure
(team structures will vary locally)

Each MHST will usually have four Education Mental Health Practitioners in each team, with the remainder of the team consisting of senior clinicians (some of whom are Education Mental Health Practitioners supervisors), a manager and administrative support.



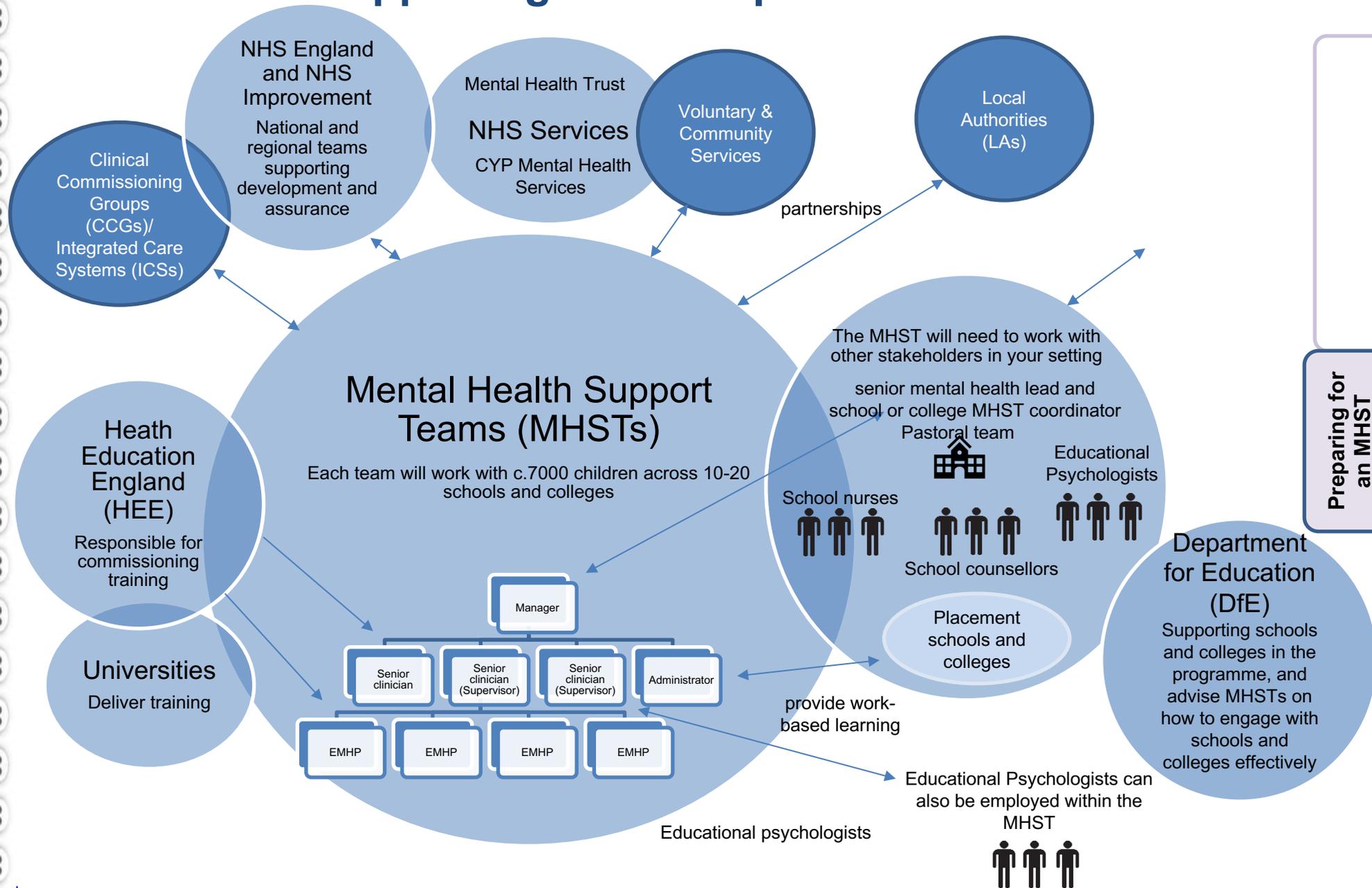
Components

MHSTs: Operating Principles

Seven core principles are in place to guide MHST delivery and operation:

- There should be clear and appropriate local governance involving health and education.
- MHSTs should be additional to, and integrated with, existing support.
- The approach to allocating MHST time and resources to schools and colleges should be transparent and agreed by the local governance board.
- MHST support should be responsive to individual schools' and colleges' needs, not 'one size fits all'. You can shape the service you receive by talking to your MHST about existing provision and the needs of your pupils and students.
- Children and young people should be able to access appropriate support all year - not just during term time.
- MHSTs should co-produce their approach and service offer with users.
- MHSTs should be delivered in a way to take account of disadvantage and seek to reduce health inequalities.

The Network Supporting MHST Implementation



The three core functions of a MHST

Each MHST is expected to cover a population of c.7,000 children and young people.

You and your MHST should work together to shape a service that reflects and meets your needs. Your MHST will support you in delivering each of the three functions into your setting.

The MHST has 3 core functions...

1. Delivering evidence-based interventions for mild to moderate mental health issues
2. Supporting the senior mental health lead in each school or college to introduce or develop their whole school or college approach
3. Giving timely advice to school and college staff, and liaising with external specialist services, to help children and young people to get the right support and stay in education

The next slides will detail each of the functions and how the MHST can support you in benefitting from these in your setting.

Function 1- Interventions

1. Delivering evidence-based interventions for mild to moderate mental health issues

The new teams will carry out interventions alongside established provision such as counselling, educational psychologists, and school nurses, building on the menu of support already available and not replacing it. The MHST will provide:

- **Individual face-to-face work:** for example, effective, brief, low-intensity interventions for children, young people and families experiencing **anxiety, low mood, friendship or behavioural difficulties**, based on up to date evidence.
- **Group work** for pupils or parents such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy for young people for conditions such as **anxiety**.
- **Group sessions for parents** to include issues around **conduct disorder and communication difficulties**.

What this will look like:

- Your mental health lead in your setting should speak to staff to help them understand the offer and identify potential pupils/students who would benefit.
- You will need to work with your MHST project lead to agree a process for referral of appropriate cases.
- You will likely have a lead practitioner who will be present in your setting for a day or two (dependent on need and local planning), which should help get them known by your staff and pupils/students. It is important to identify an appropriate space for the practitioner to work in in your setting.
- Case loads will vary locally, so please do clarify what this will look like in practice with your MHST Team Manager. However, an Educational Mental Health Practitioner will be allocated a case-load of children and young people with mild to moderate mental health issues.
- MHSTs typically work with the parents of primary school children, and for secondary schools they usually work with the students/pupils. However, this does vary locally.

The next slide shows an example of issues pupils present with and the referral process.

Robyn Ideal Case for Trainee EMHP

What are Robyn's main issues?

Anxiety	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Low Mood/Depression	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Phobias	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

How strong is this feeling on the ROAR thermometer ? (On average)

6-8

On a scale of 1-10 how much do you think these issues are affecting Robyn at home/school?

5-7

What concerns do you have about Robyn?

Robyn is showing early signs of low-mood/depression, worry/anxiety, or has a phobia. They are easily scared, lose confidence easily, seem nervous or clingy in new situations, often unhappy or tearful, seem downhearted, may often complain of stomach-aches, headaches or sickness and may have lots of worries. Some of this may be presenting as poor behaviour, anger or under performing academically. Their issues will be having some impact on their school work, peer relationships, home life and participation in leisure activities. Robyn won't have raised any significant concerns around ASD or ADHD. Robyn will want to get support.

Give a brief summary of Robyn's background/family situation, risk factors and protective factors.

Robyn will have minimal (no more than 1-2) adverse childhood experiences, and they will not have significant impact on Robyn's emotional state. Robyn's parent/carer will be supportive of the therapeutic intervention and will engage in the process. Robyn will not have any major risk factors or safeguarding concerns. Robyn's school attendance is not significantly affected. Robyn has not had a recent (in the last 6 months) significant life event such as a bereavement. Any factors at school or home that are having a negative impact on how Robyn is feeling are, where possible and reasonable, being addressed.

What help/support has Robyn already received?

Robyn may have accessed some of the interventions provide in the ROAR toolkit and may have been supported by school-based staff. Robyn won't have accessed CAMHS services before in the immediate time preceding this referral.



Robyn's age

8-11

Are parents/carers engaged to support Robyn with this intervention?

Yes

Is Robyn low risk to self?

Yes

Does Robyn have diagnosed ASD/ADHD?

No

Does Robyn have an SEN statement?

No

An example guide from Liverpool. Your MHST can provide further guidance and examples of children who would be suitable for an EMHP referral.

MHST Core Function 2

2. Supporting the senior mental health lead in each school or college to introduce or develop their whole school or college approach:

- Work with the senior mental health lead and existing service providers, to map what provision is already in place in settings and where the gaps are.
- Provide targeted help as agreed with the lead, e.g. to support monitoring of well-being across the schools and colleges, teaching about mental health as appropriate.

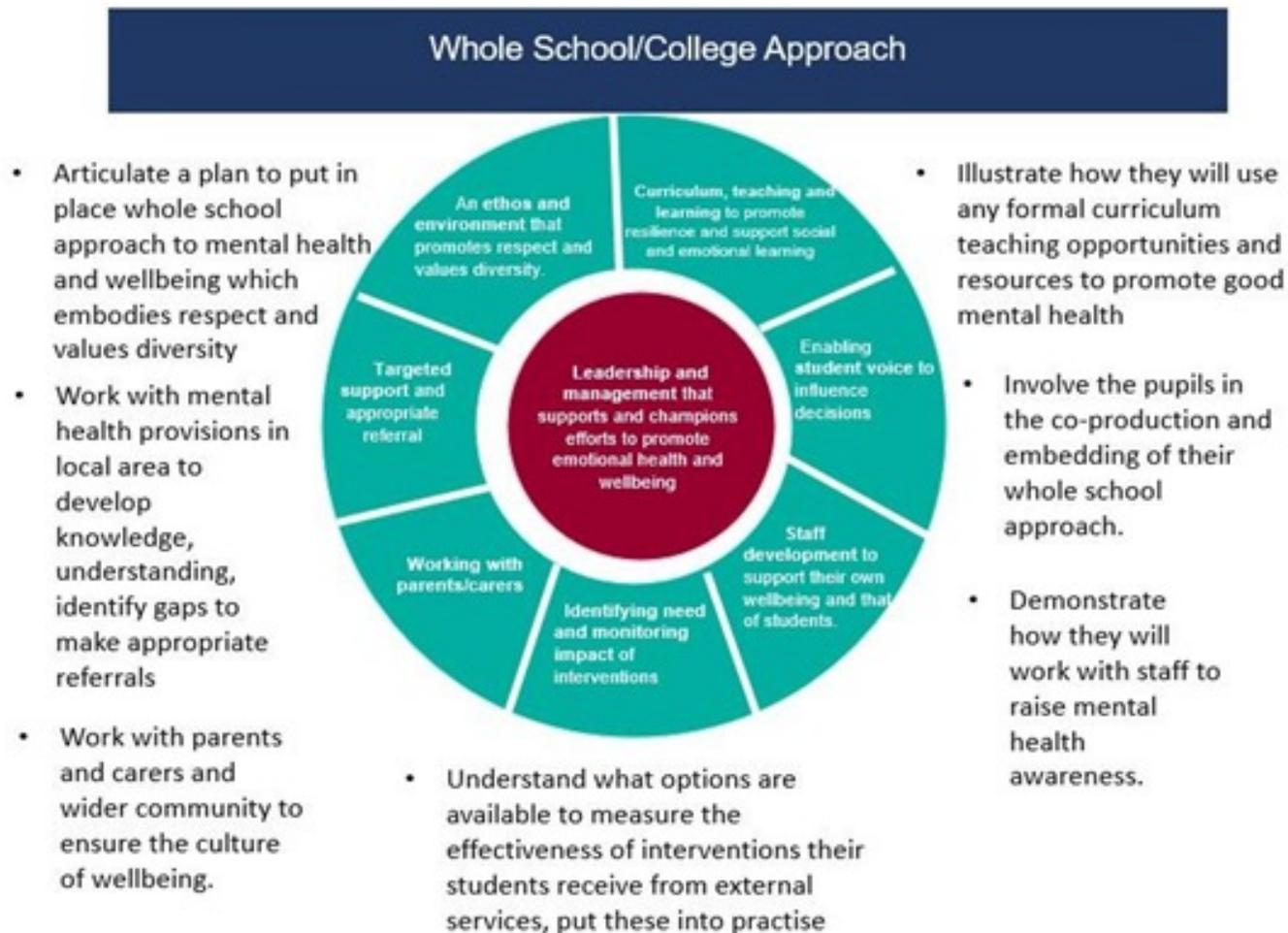


What this looks like:

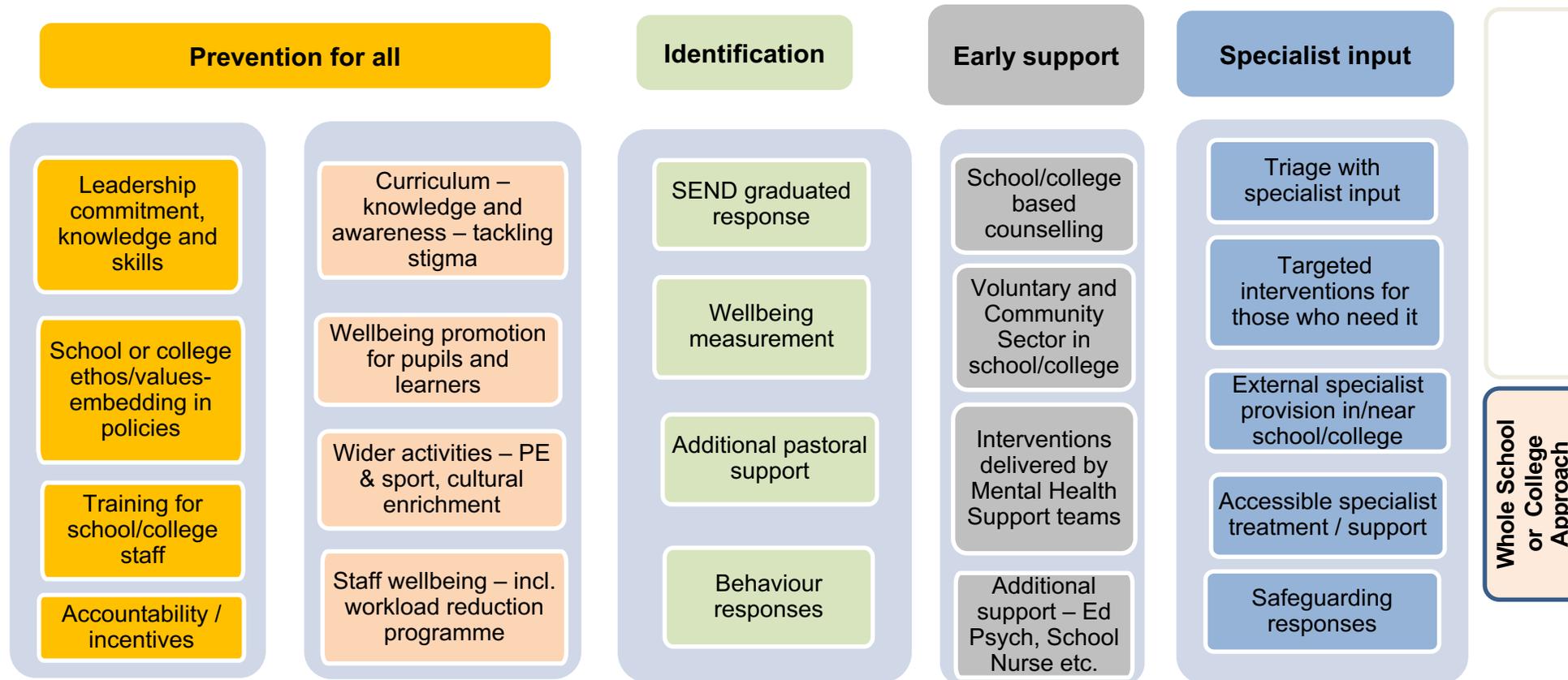
- Your setting should agree your overall approach to mental health and wellbeing.
- The Department for Education is offering funding to enable school and college senior mental health leads to develop their skills and knowledge across the eight principles of a whole school/college approach. [Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/671112/promoting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing.pdf)
- The EMHPs are trained to help a school/college, and the senior mental health lead assess how the school/college is doing, and address gaps. This could look like:
 - 1) Supporting peer mentoring, providing staff training or running a psycho-education workshop.
 - 2) Conducting group work (with children and young people or parents) or providing a piece of consultation work.
 - 3) Holding workshops for parents and holding school assemblies to talk about the whole school or college approach.

Whole school or college approach: key principles

- DfE and Public Health England (now the Office for Health Inequalities and Disparities, OHID) have published updated [Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing](#) guidance (2008; 2021). This sets out eight principles of a whole school or college approach to promoting mental health and wellbeing, as seen below.



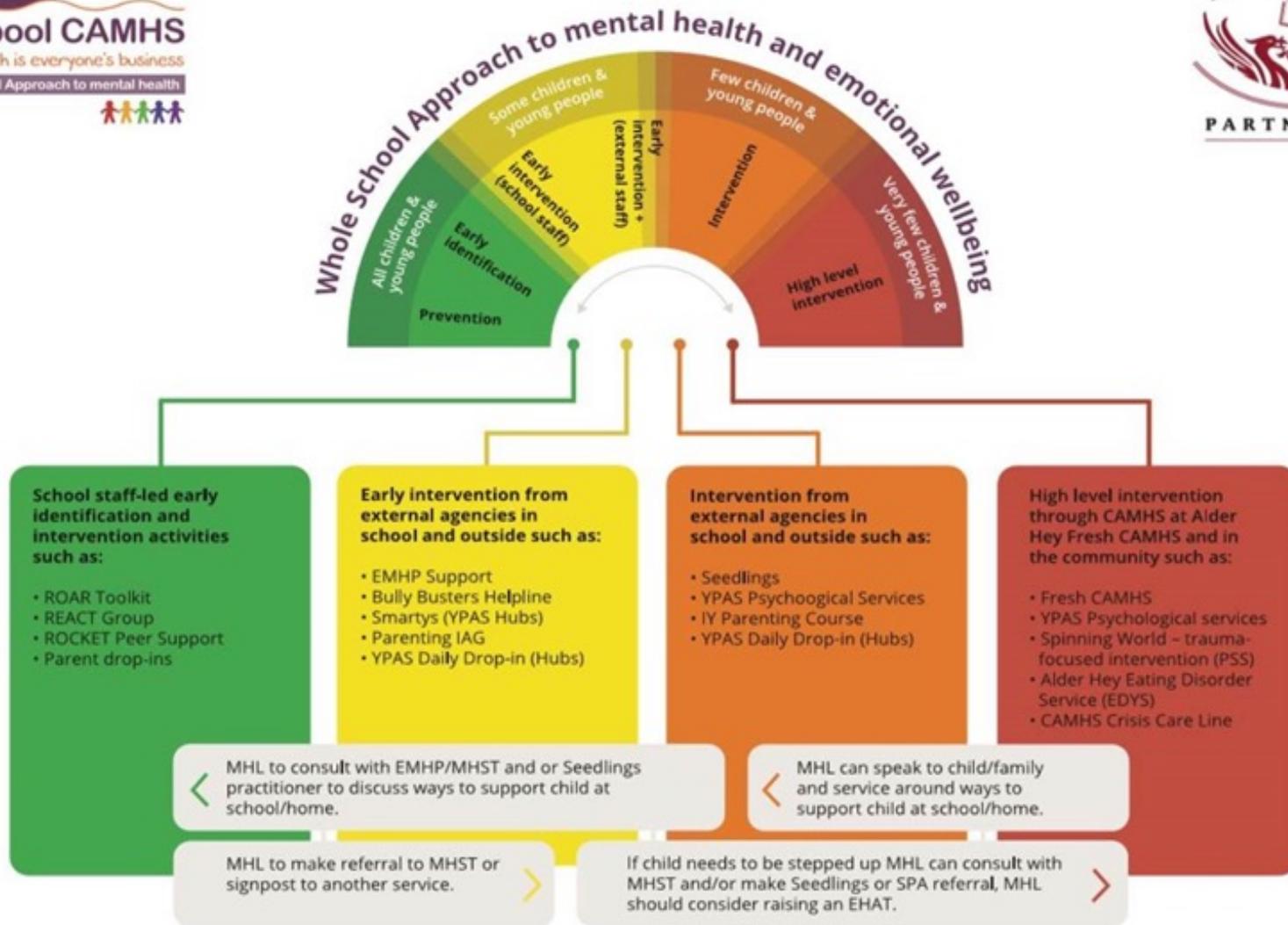
The role of schools and colleges to promote and support mental health and wellbeing



Mapping to the [eight principles in OHID/DfE guidance, to promote emotional health and wellbeing in schools & colleges](#):

- Creating an ethos and environment
- Curriculum, teaching and learning
- Identifying need & monitoring impact of interventions
- Targeted support & appropriate referral
- Leadership and management
- Staff development
- Enabling the student voice
- Working with parents, families and carers

Whole School or College Approach example: Liverpool



Whole School or College Approach

MHST Core Function 3

3. Giving timely advice to school and college staff, and liaising with external specialist services, to help children and young people to get the right support and stay in education:

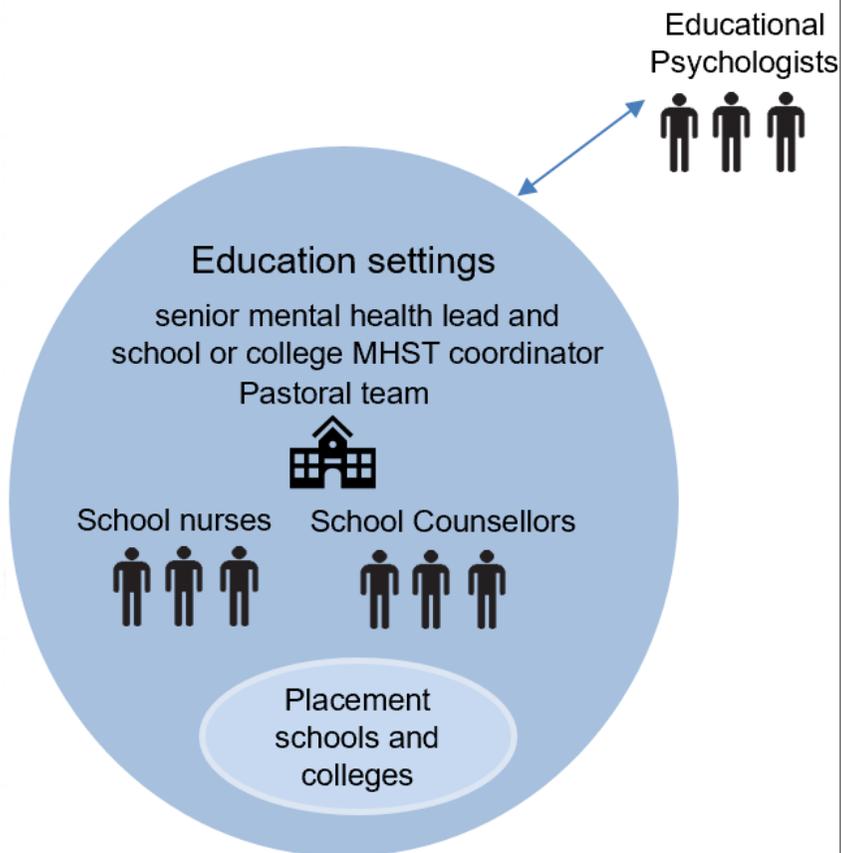
- Work as part of an integrated referral system with community services to ensure that children and young people who need it receive appropriate support as quickly as possible.
- External support could include more specialist NHS mental health support, support for autism spectrum disorder, learning difficulties or physical needs, or for issues such as substance misuse.
- Ensure smooth transition from specialist services.



What this looks like:

- Where a child or young person falls outside of the mild-to-moderate Education Mental Health Practitioner remit, the Practitioner will work with their MHST supervisor and the school/college to appropriately signpost or refer on to local services.
- The EMHP/MHST may work with the triage team based in a school in terms of liaising with external support services and will continue to work with the school in terms of supporting the pupils whilst they wait for their referrals.
- This will vary locally, but MHSTs can support attendance officers within schools to help with getting children and young people get back into school as part of recovery.

What are the roles needed within your school or college?



Your school or college will need to assign a lead, or leads, to engage with the MHST and develop your organisation's whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. This can include: promoting positive mental health, identifying and referring pupils/students who may need early support, and signposting to specialist services. These should be individual(s) who are part of your senior leadership team or have their express endorsement. They should also work closely with the school or college pastoral team, and others (e.g. school nurses, educational psychologists, any counselling or other support provided) so that work with the Education Mental Health Practitioner (EMHP) within the MHST builds on wider support already in place.

School or college MHST coordinator is the senior point of contact in a school or college for liaising with the MHST. This is primarily a logistical and collaborative role, involving planning for MHST implementation and managing interactions with statutory roles. This could be the **same person** as the senior mental health lead. It is important that the MHST coordinator has the capacity to support the EMHP trainee, meet with them regularly and build close links with the MHST team and HEI to effectively support the EMHP with regards to their placement experience.

The **senior mental health lead** has the strategic oversight of the whole school and college approach to mental health (further information can be found [here](#)) to enable settings to make best use of existing resources and efforts to help improve the wellbeing and mental health of pupils and students. The DfE are offering training to one person in every school and college to support this role. They will work with the MHST to build on and complement existing initiatives within the setting.

A school senior mental health lead's perspective - Reading

“Our involvement in the MHST is integral to the school ethos and a key component of our Corporate Plan.”

The mental health and wellbeing of our students is a key priority now more than ever. Blessed Hugh Faringdon Catholic School is delighted to have played a key role, from the start, in shaping local MHST provision by sitting on and contributing to the work of the Reading Partnership Project Board and in defining the role the EMHP should play in our school.

Even at the early stages, **our EMHPs played a fundamental role in providing support and guidance for a range of students** from across the year groups who are experiencing **low level anxiety**, with the focus being on addressing the concerns and minimising the risk of an increase in the level of anxiety experienced. Our EMHPs fill an important gap between in-school provision and specialist support whilst complementing the work of our trained Counsellor. **EMHPs come from a variety of backgrounds** with varying levels of experience of working with children so the provision of a high quality, comprehensive and bespoke training package is vital. As such, strong, clear and focused leadership from the senior mental health lead, a member of the Leadership Team, and backed by the Headmaster, is essential and reflects our approach.



Mrs S Matthews
Assistant Headteacher

In terms of EMHP professional development, the first stage was to identify the start point of the EMHP, **discuss their development needs**, those of their programme of study and establish an action plan to address these. In terms of identifying students for them to work with, we are careful to identify those who we know **would benefit from the offer and would be confident to work with someone from outside the school**. We ensure support, guidance and a dialogue with the EMHP throughout whilst also respecting the confidentiality of discussions with the student assigned to them.

To date, our trainee EMHPs have successfully supported a small number of students and, as we move into 2020 – 21, we look to develop this in line with the EMHPs level of confidence and expertise as they complete their training and develop further into their roles.”

Mrs S Matthews, Assistant Headteacher, Blessed Hugh Faringdon Catholic School

Preparing to work with your MHST- action checklist

Here is an indicative checklist to support your school and college as you get ready to work with your MHST.

Short term actions

- Provide a **named MHST coordinator or mental health lead** to work with the incoming MHST.
- Ensure the MHST knows **your setting's context, structure, environment and specific needs**-every setting is different.
- Complete **DBS checks as necessary** and ensure EMHPs/MHST are familiar with local safety, safeguarding, mental health and other relevant policies and procedures (for schools and colleges hosting EMHP trainees only at this stage).
- Discuss with the MHST how you will involve children and young people and their families or carers in **developing the service offer** for your school or college.
- Make sure you work with your MHST to understand what **defines mild to moderate needs**, and consider which pupils may fall into scope of this.
- Confirm the commitment within your school or college that your MHST will be **additional to your existing provision**. MHSTs are working with
- Clarify with the MHST how your school or college **will be involved in MHST governance** and what arrangements the MHST will make to provide regular updates and opportunities for your school or college to contribute or provide feedback.

Preparing to work with your MHST – action checklist

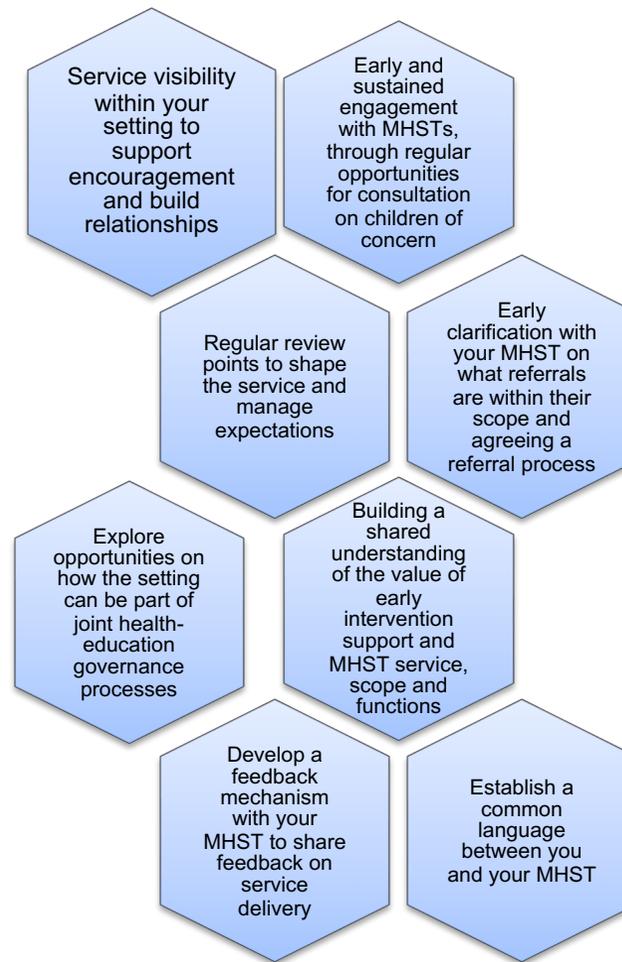
Here is an indicative checklist to support your school and college as you get ready to work with your MHST.

Medium term
actions

- Identify an appropriate, private space within your school or college** for EMHPs/MHST to work with children and young people and their families. Having an appropriate space will ensure that the pupils/students feel comfortable to talk in an open environment and help foster closer connections.
- Be prepared to share information held by your school or college on its current mental health and wellbeing provision and feedback on your experiences of working with the MHST.
- Consider what to include in your school or college development plan with regards to **whole school or college work around mental health and wellbeing**, as led by your senior mental health lead. This could include, for example, support in developing mental health lessons as part of the mandatory Relationships, Sex and Health Education curriculum.
- Working with the MHST, **establish and agree a process for identifying and referring pupils** or students for additional support.
- Share your experience and explore how to support your students and help them benefit from the MHSTs support.

Partnership working

The most effective MHST relationships are those where the MHST and setting work together in tandem build effective relationships and invest time to engage and work with the MHST. The below examples set out some practical things you could do to work with them:



Where to go for further support

Please sign up to the Future Collaboration Platform for access to further support materials and discussion forums – for further instructions [see slide 21](#).

I have a question about the MHST set up / service my EMHP trainee provides

Your first point of contact should be the day-to-day manager of the MHST.

MHST to include details of key contacts here:

I would like advice about education involvement in the programme

The Department for Education has a dedicated regional team. If you would like further information about them, or are interested in engaging further with the programme, please email the team's mailbox.

DfE MH regional team mailbox:
MHGP.DELIVERY@education.gov.uk

I want to talk to other people from my region who are involved / I want to see further advice and guidance

Please register via the NHS Futures Collaboration Platform.
<https://future.nhs.uk/>

On the FutureNHS Platform, a new workspace called MHST Community of Practice has been set up to distribute key information, resources, enable discussion between sites across the country and announcements to help you establish and deliver MHSTs. You can register by clicking on the link provided:
[https://future.nhs.uk/CYPMH_GrP/gro
uphome](https://future.nhs.uk/CYPMH_GrP/grouphome)

Community of Practice Collaboration Platform

What is the Community of Practice Platform?

The **MHST Community of Practice workspace** has been established to distribute **key information and resources**, flag announcements and **enable conversations** between sites and setting across the country to help you establish and deliver MHST support.

The platform can **support collaboration and learning** through the discussion forums, allowing sites and settings to **share emerging practice and materials**. You can also find dedicated space containing programme guidance, **examples of whole school and college approach activities**, and useful updates.

How do I access the workspace?

To access the workspace, **register via [this link](#)**. Once you've signed in, you'll be directed to the Future NHS landing page. Make sure to click on 'my workspaces' in the blue bar at the top of the screen, and select 'Mental Health Support Teams Community of Practice'. Then feel free to explore the site!

Community of Practice Collaboration Platform



Future NHS Landing Page



Community of Practice Home Page



Preparing for an MHST

Community of Practice Collaboration Platform

Examples of how you can use the platform to access useful materials, guidance and discussion boards

School and College Information and Resources

An area for schools and colleges to access useful guidance, information and communications, regionally and nationally. Here you will find key education updates communicated by the Department for Education, folders for sharing resources, and discussion forums for building support with other schools and colleges in your MHST areas. You can also contact your Department for Education Regional Lead with any queries or concerns via the School and College discussion forums in your region.

This site also provides an opportunity for you to get:

Access to the latest news and updates: including opportunities and developments that will affect what you are doing

Discussion Forum where you can raise particular issues or ask for advice / examples from other sites and education settings

An introduction to MHSTs



- DIE Contact Details
- Talk to other MHST Schools and Colleges
- Hosting an EMHP trainee
- Working with an MHST
- Mental Health & Wellbeing Resources
- Useful resources to support your settings
- The whole school or college approach (WSCA) to mental health and wellbeing

Talk to other MHST Schools and Colleges

An area for schools and colleges to contact other settings within their region and provide a point of contact with their DIE regional lead.

Regional Conversations

North West

Midlands

North East, Yorkshire and Humber

South West

East of England

South East

London

Phase-based Conversations

Primary

Secondary

Colleges



Preparing for an MHST

Wider training and support for schools and colleges

- [Senior mental health lead training - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk): Grants of £1,200 are available to eligible state schools and colleges in England. This is part of the government's commitment to offer this training to all eligible schools and colleges by 2025.
- Wellbeing for Education Return and Recovery local and national materials for staff dealing with children and young people experiencing additional pressures from the coronavirus pandemic. These include a short ['every interaction matters' webinar](#) for education staff and more in-depth [content](#)* covering wellbeing and resilience, bereavement and loss, stress, trauma, anxiety and low mood. Some Local Authorities are continuing to offer expert training, advice and support, signposting to local services and/or resources as part of their ongoing health promotion, SEND and safeguarding roles.
- The [RSHE Hub](#) hosts training materials for teachers on how to implement the new RSHE curriculum, online training materials for teachers, signposting to quality assured resources and good practice case studies.
- [Psychological first aid training](#) which supports children and young people's mental health during emergencies and crisis situations.
- [Mental Health and Behaviour Guidance](#) to help schools or colleges to identify pupils or students whose behaviour may indicate an underlying mental health difficulty; and advise on how they may support these pupils in the context of clear expectations of behaviour.
- [Respectful schools](#) tool to support schools or colleges to develop a whole-school or college approach which promotes respect and discipline. This can help combat bullying, harassment and prejudice of any kind.
- [Guidance on effective school-based counselling](#) which provides schools and colleges with practical, evidence-based advice, informed by school, college and counselling experts, on how to deliver high quality school or college-based counselling.
- [Mental health resources for pupils, parents and school staff](#) which signposts resources to support children, parents and school staff.
- [Top tips on working with education - Mental Health Support Teams \(MHST\) Community of Practice Workspace - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#) which sets out how best to engage and work with schools.
- [Useful resources to support your settings - Mental Health Support Teams \(MHST\) Community of Practice Workspace - FutureNHS Collaboration Platform](#) an area on the NHS Platform with dedicated resources for schools and colleges