

# Mental Health Support Team

In your primary school



**We are the Mental Health Support Team (MHST) and we work in your school to promote good emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people.**

**We endeavour to support children and their families through prevention, early intervention and education.**

**Our team consist of Educational Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs), Child Wellbeing Practitioners (CWPs), Infant Mental Health Practitioners (IMHP) and Whole School Approach Advisors who are based in your child's school.**



## WE WORK WITH PARENTS OF CHILDREN WHO:

- show early signs of anxiety
- are worried
- are stressed
- are fearful
- get easily overwhelmed
- get easily frustrated
- have behavioural difficulties
- have frequent tantrums
- have difficulty following routines

## WHAT DO WE OFFER?

For children in primary school, the evidence base suggests that working with parents, with some contact with children, rather than working directly with the child is more effective for making changes and improvements in children's mental health, wellbeing and behaviour.

We assess all referrals on an individual basis, however as a majority the interventions we offer to primary school children are done through parents/carers, so as to equip the parents/carers with supporting the children with their needs.

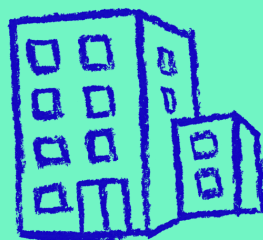
## THE AIMS OF PARENTING SUPPORT:

- Guided self-help aims to empower you to develop the tools and skills necessary to help tackle the difficulties your child is experiencing as a family
- We work together with parents to develop coping strategies to manage your child's distressing thoughts and increase resilience to future problems
- You as a parent will play an active part; reading materials before each session, practicing strategies at home and problem-solving with the practitioner's support



# IN YOUR SCHOOL OUR TEAM PROVIDES:

- 1:1 work with parents providing guided self-help to support challenging behaviour or anxiety
- Groups and workshops for children on topics such as transitions from primary to secondary school, bullying, anxiety, mental health awareness, mindfulness and how to look after your emotional wellbeing
- Parent coffee mornings and psychoeducational workshops on topics such as behaviour, anxiety, transition to secondary school etc.
- Mental health assemblies



## OUR 1:1 SESSIONS ARE

- 6-8 weeks long and delivered on a weekly basis
- 20-50 minutes long and take place in school/via ZOOM or MS Teams digital platform

## READ JP'S STORY:

My name is JP (Pseudonym) and I attend a Primary school in Central London.

What I usually struggle with:

- Attending history classes.
- Going out at night when it is dark.
- Public performance such as swimming.
- Completing sleepovers at my friends' house.

Here is the type of work the Education Mental Health Practitioner (EMHP) did with my parents:

- 8 week guided-self-help based on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy principles. These suggest that our behaviour, feelings and thoughts are interlinked.
- The EMHP supported my parents in developing skills that they could then use to help me manage my anxiety.
- The EMHP explained to my parents the importance of supporting me in gradually exposing myself to a mild anxiety provoking situations, such as sleepovers.
- My parents encouraged me to fall asleep on my own and then spend longer hours playing at my friends' house and cousins.
- My ultimate goal was to complete a sleepover at my best friend's house!



How do we know that this works?

According to Creswell and Willets (2019), in order to overcome their fears, children are to face situations that trigger anxiety in them, so that they can gather new information that can challenge the extent to which they believe they can cope with their worries. Evidence shows that exposure is effective in reducing anxiety in children.

Outcome:

"By the end of the sessions that my parents had with the EMHP, I have learnt what anxiety is, how I experience it and that it is a normal part of life. My parents have been able to teach me useful strategies to manage my anxiety and I have learnt that the best way to deal with it is to expose myself to the situation and learn from it!"

## HOW TO REFER:

To refer your child to our service speak to your child's teacher or Designated Mental Health Lead in school and they will be able to assist you further. Once the referral is made the EMHP will contact you for more information and schedule the first session.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION:

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Visit our website: <https://www.bwwmind.org.uk>