

Press release: PM: mental health training for teachers will “make a real difference to children’s lives”

The government’s pledge to transform mental health services for young people has taken an important step forward with teachers and staff across the country starting training to identify and respond to early signs of mental health problems among pupils.

Delivered by the [social enterprise organisation Mental Health First Aid \(MHFA\) England](#), the training was originally announced by the Prime Minister in January as part of a series of measures to address the “hidden injustice” of poor mental health across society.

Around one in 10 children are believed to have a diagnosable mental health disorder, with half of all mental health conditions begin before the age of 14, making it vital that children with early symptoms receive the support they need.

However, research by the National Association of Schoolmasters Union of Women Teachers (NASUWT) found that 98% of teachers had come into contact with pupils who were experiencing mental health issues, but only 46% reported receiving training on children’s mental health.

The programme, backed by £200,000 in government funding, will start with 3,000 staff covering every secondary school in England over the next three years and will be extended to primary schools by the end of this Parliament. They will receive practical advice on how to deal with issues such as depression and anxiety, suicide and psychosis, self-harm, and eating disorders.

Participants in the training programme will be invited to become a Youth Mental Health First Aid Champion, and will help to share their knowledge and understanding of mental health across the school and wider community.

It is hoped that this will mean more young people will get fast and appropriate support for emerging mental health problems, and that all children will receive the highest quality pastoral care through their adolescence.

Prime Minister Theresa May said:

When I stood on the steps of Downing Street on my first day as Prime Minister, I said that the disparity in mental health services was one of the burning injustices our country faces.

Since then we have announced real progress in tackling this unfairness, and this training will make a real difference to

children's lives by ensuring they have access to sensitive and swift support.

Tackling poor mental health is a huge challenge, and we will keep our promises and meet that challenge with the comprehensive cross-society response that is required.

Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt, said:

Teachers provide outstanding pastoral care and support for their pupils, but many have said that they would appreciate more formal training on how to understand and respond to acute mental distress.

We know that identifying symptoms of mental illness in their early stages can help put young people on the road to recovery. This initiative will mean more children can get the fast and sensitive support they need to stay well, and help build a society with far better understanding of mental ill health.

Education Secretary Justine Greening said:

Growing up in today's world is not always easy and for some young people the problems can be acute. That's why we are stepping up our support for children with mental illness to help them become resilient, confident adults who can go as far as their talents will take them.

This new training will give teachers more confidence in tackling mental health issues and build on the fantastic support we know they already give their pupils. It's great that so many schools are taking part and I'd encourage others to follow their lead.

Caroline Hounsell, MHFA England Director and lead of the Youth MHFA in Schools programme, commented, saying:

Mental ill health in young people is a growing health concern, with half of all lifetime cases of mental health issues starting by the age of 14. It's therefore vital that we put the right measures in place to ensure that young people get the help they need and at the earliest possible stage.

We are really pleased to be involved in this government-backed programme and supporting our instructors to deliver this important schools-focused training.

John McKee, Headteacher, Patcham High School, Brighton, commented:

We are delighted to be one of the first schools in the country to be involved in the Youth MHFA in Schools programme.

Around one in 10 children have a diagnosable mental health issue – roughly three children in every classroom – so upskilling frontline school staff to be able to support these children is crucially important.

Sarah Brennan, Chief Executive of YoungMinds, said:

Children and young people today are facing a huge range of pressures, from exam stress to online bullying, which inevitably take a toll on their mental health. Many of these pressures become particularly intense during secondary school so it is important and welcome that mental health first aid training will be available for secondary schools.

This training is a move in the right direction and will help give staff the opportunity to gain confidence and understand mental health better. We hope it will encourage more leadership teams to put student wellbeing at the heart of their school which will benefit both students and schools alike.

Young people need to learn about wellbeing and resilience from a young age, so when they leave school they are equipped to deal with problems and have the confidence to seek help. It is vital that this work is part of a whole-school approach to wellbeing, and that mental health is made a priority across the education system.

[News story: DVLA publishes new IT Strategy](#)

The DVLA published its IT strategy today outlining its focus and priorities for the next three years.

The agency, which has some of the government's flagship digital services, is committed to using advances in technology to make things simpler, better and safer for its customers.

The [IT strategy](#) will enable the DVLA to deliver its recently published [three year strategic plan](#), which focuses on uniting business, digital and technology with a goal to build dynamic online services with unrivalled safety and security.

Dave Perry, DVLA Chief Technology Officer, said:

Our aim is to become a hub for digital motoring. We are transforming our IT estate to deliver our digital transformation ambitions and create the best online services for customers.

Our services are at the forefront of technology and our organisation design will be optimised to deliver migration from our legacy IT platforms. Our IT strategy will ensure we continue to deliver systems that are fit for the digital age in which we live.

Keep up to date

Subscribe to our DVLA Digital Services [blog](#) to keep up to date with the latest developments on our [IT strategy](#).

[News story: Justice for All? David Lammy MP to speak at Royal Society of Arts](#)

David Lammy MP to speak at Royal Society of Arts, Monday 3 July 2017 12:30pm to 1:30pm.

The Rt Hon David Lammy MP's pioneering review of racial disparity in the criminal justice system is exposing levels of potential bias that are cause for serious concerns.

The review's interim findings, published last November, came with in-depth analysis to help identify the stages of the system at which disproportionality is most pronounced. It also evidenced that black men and women continue to be sentenced more harshly than white men and women for committing the same type of crime; over 40% of prisoners under the age of 18 are BAME; and that the number of Muslim prisoners has almost doubled in the last decade.

Having illustrated the huge challenge government faces in tackling what could be institutionalised inequalities in the criminal justice system, David Lammy is now in the final stages of completing his report. He will be sharing some of the in-depth, real-life insights this review has uncovered; and setting the scene for a national, political debate on these issues.

[To register](#) please visit the RSA website.

News story: Secondary school staff get mental health 'first aid' training

From June 2017, teachers in secondary schools around the country will take part in a new training programme to help them identify and respond to early signs of mental health issues in children.

The programme, backed by £200,000 government funding, and delivered by the charity Mental Health First Aid, will eventually cover every secondary school in England, as part of a government commitment to improve support for children and young people.

Teachers and other school staff will receive practical advice on how to recognise issues including depression and anxiety, self-harm, and eating disorders.

They will also be invited to become 'first aid champions', sharing their knowledge and experiences across schools and communities to raise awareness and break down stigma and discrimination.

Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt said:

Teachers already provide outstanding pastoral care and support for their pupils, but many have said that they would appreciate more training on how to understand and respond to mental health issues.

We know that identifying symptoms of mental illness early can help young people on the road to recovery. This training will mean more children receive the timely and sensitive support they need to stay well.

One in 10 school-aged children will have a mental health condition at any time, with half of all mental health conditions beginning before the age of 14, making early intervention and support vital.

The introduction of Mental Health First Aid training supports the government's pledge in the Queen's Speech to improve mental health services and protect those living with mental health problems from unfair treatment and discrimination.

Earlier this year, the prime minister announced that every secondary school in the country would be offered the training, as part of a comprehensive set of messages to transform mental health support for children and young people.

[News story: Voluntary sector's contribution to the Lammy Review event](#)

Community event to explore the voluntary sector's contribution to the Lammy Review, Friday 14 July 2017 9:00am to 1:00pm.

Learning from each other to improve outcomes for BAME people in the criminal justice system.

Supported by Clinks, this half day event explores how the voluntary sector has contributed to David Lammy's Independent Review into race in the criminal justice system.

Delegates will hear from David Lammy about how his review is progressing, and will also hear from organisations about the work they are doing to address some of the disproportionalities identified.

This will be an opportunity to discuss the review's interim findings and consider how we can work together to build on the progress made.

[To register](#) please visits the Clinks website.