

# MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM (MHST) IN SCHOOLS

NEWSLETTER



**NHS**  
Dorset HealthCare  
University  
NHS Foundation Trust

Welcome to the third MHST Newsletter which aims to keep you updated on significant developments in the MHST in Schools project as well as facilitate regular communication between participating pilot schools and other agencies who may become more actively involved with the team in the future.

## WHAT ARE MHST IN SCHOOLS?

Mental Health Support in Schools Teams (MHST) are part of a joint national initiative between the Department of Education and NHS England to improve access to psychological therapies for children and young people presenting with emerging low mood and mild to moderate anxiety within an educational environment.

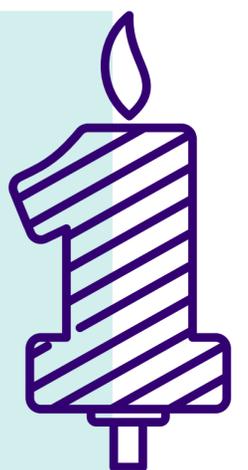
The 3 core functions of the teams are:

1. Delivering evidence based interventions for mild to moderate mental health issues through individual face to face work, group work for pupils or parents and group parenting.
2. Supporting the school's mental health lead to introduce or develop their Whole School Approach to mental wellbeing.
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.



## OUR PILOT ONE YEAR ON

The local MHST pilot started in January 2020 with 3 teams covering BCP, North Dorset and Weymouth and Portland, working with between 15 – 18 educational settings. Along with three senior clinicians, each of the teams has 4 EMHPs who have been training with University of Exeter during this last year. The original trainees, who started with us in January 2020 are now beginning to qualify as Low Intensity CBT practitioners, and the 3 who joined in September will qualify in November 2021.



## A BIG THANK YOU!

Rolling out a new school based service in the middle of a global pandemic has been a huge challenge and would not have been possible without the amazing support given from all of the participating schools who agreed to work with us as placement for the trainees. Thank you so much for helping them gain the experience and develop the clinical skills they have needed to get to this point.



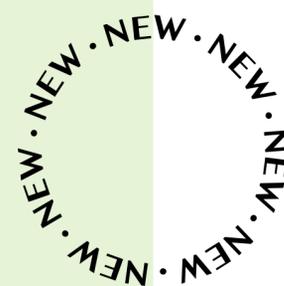
## SO WHAT'S NEXT?

Because of the pandemic we have not been able to develop the work with the schools in the way we had originally expected to, therefore, over the coming year we will seek to rectify this and begin to build the wellbeing model for the service in conjunction with the school communities.

Prevention and early intervention is the ethos and key principle of MHSTs. To maximise our effectiveness we will be seeking to focus the impact of our wellbeing work on the largest number of children and young people through our Whole School Approach interventions and activities. By doing this we will be seeking to increase understanding of what good mental wellbeing is, and teaching children and young people the skills to help improve it.

Transition to secondary school is an important time for children in Year 6 and this can be worrying for many. Helping schools support children as they think about moving on is something the MHSTs can help with. Over the summer term we will be seeking to deliver wellbeing sessions to as many Year 6 classes as we can, helping to explore feelings and build skills and confidence to help manage worries and the transition to their new secondary schools. We have created a new short video that gives some handy hints for parents to support their children during the return to school. We will then be seeking to pick this work up again in year 7 by delivering wellbeing sessions during the autumn term to help new students settle into their respective secondary schools.

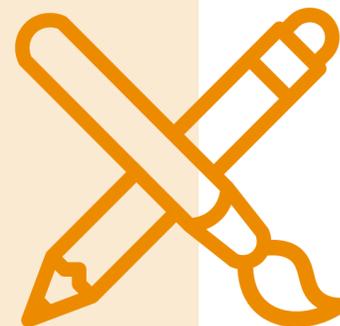
Evidencing the impact we are making as MHSTs is an intrinsic part of the project's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies (IAPT) ethos, and therefore bench marking with school leaders the wellbeing work being undertaken is an important starting point. We have developed a Wellbeing Audit tool which, when completed, can help school leaders identify the areas they want to priorities and where the MHSTs can offer to help them develop this.



*Wellbeing  
Audit Tool  
is now live!*

## LOGO COMPETITION!

We are asking our pilot schools for their support over this summer term by giving some time to pupils and students so that they can take part in a competition to help design a logo for the MHST service. We have produced a short video for teachers to show at the start of any class or activity which explains just what we need. The final entry date is the 27th July and the winner will receive a £25 prize. Getting the voice of children and young people into the service is something we really want as we go forward and this, we hope, will be a good start. Watch the video here: [youtu.be/zkes8jE4AX0](https://youtu.be/zkes8jE4AX0)



## SOCIAL MEDIA

We now have social media accounts! Be sure to follow us on our journey where you can meet our amazing team, hear more about what we get up to, have access to our resources and get ideas on how to look after yourself and boost your wellbeing. Do feel free to share our posts but please make sure to tag us! @dorsetmhst



ICYMI: For #StressAwarenessMonth in April, the EMHPs created a calendar which has 30 ways for children, young people and their families to manage stress, stay connected and promote good physical and mental health. You can download the calendar for free: [bit.ly/stressdorsetmhst](https://bit.ly/stressdorsetmhst)

Your local team emails are:

**Bournemouth, Christchurch & Poole (BCP):** [dhc.mhsteam.bcp@nhs.net](mailto:dhc.mhsteam.bcp@nhs.net)

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**Weymouth & Portland:** [dhc.mhsteam.weymouthandportland@nhs.net](mailto:dhc.mhsteam.weymouthandportland@nhs.net)

