

Thought-Full: Mental Health Support Teams in Schools

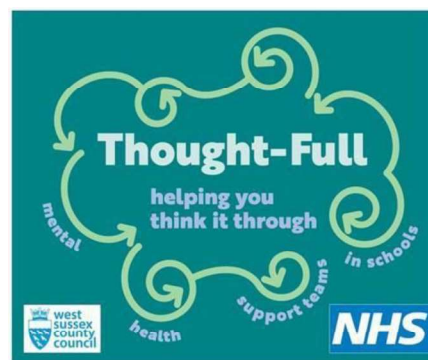
A guide for school staff and professionals

If you are unsure if a referral is appropriate, please do feel free to contact us for guidance and advice, we will be happy to talk this through.

Referrals to Thought-Full can be made via the following link:

www.westsussex.gov.uk/Thought-Full

Or contact us by email: Thought-Full@westsussex.gov.uk



We will continue to work with schools to embed and support the ethos of the Whole School Approaches to emotional health and wellbeing. We may require school feedback on your experiences of Thought-Full and its effectiveness in order to inform future reports and service development.

Who are Thought-Full?

Thought-Full are The Mental Health Support Team in Schools in West Sussex. We are a team of practitioners working in primary and secondary schools, including Special Schools and the Alternative Provision College. We support school aged children up to 18 years old with mild to moderate mental health difficulties.

What do Thought-Full offer?

We work across selected primary and secondary schools in Bognor and Felpham, Worthing, Mid-Sussex and Crawley. We can support children and young people who are experiencing the following: mild to moderate low mood and/or anxiety, fears, worry, low self-esteem, sleep difficulties, eating problems (linked to mood and emotional issues) and young children with behavioural issues. We use Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) informed interventions.

Who is in the team?

There are a variety of roles in Thought-Full. These include: A Clinical Psychologist, Assistant Psychologists, Educational Psychologists, Children's Wellbeing Practitioners, An Advisory Teacher, Educational Mental Health Practitioners (Trainee's), Senior Mental Health Practitioners, Mental Health Practitioners, a Team leader and a Programme Support Assistant. All practitioners in the team are trained to support children, young people and their families

What is Cognitive Behavioural Therapy? (CBT)

CBT is an evidenced based intervention proven effective in helping children and young people to cope with, and manage the difficulties they are experiencing. It is a psychological therapy that is based on the concept that emotional issues are caused and kept going by unhelpful patterns of thoughts and behaviours. CBT focuses on a thoughts, feelings and behaviours cycle. It helps identify these unhelpful cycles of thinking and behaving, so that with help, a child or young person can build a more helpful belief and improve their problem-solving skills which will then reduce emotional difficulties.

What does CBT include?

- **Graded Exposure** which aims to reduce phobias, fear and anxiety.
- **Behavioural Activation** which aims to improve low mood.
- **Unhelpful thoughts and worry management** which aims to reduce anxiety.
- **Parent guided intervention** which aims to help parents manage difficult behaviour or to give parents tools to help their child with anxiety.

How are sessions delivered?	We offer up to 10 sessions, which may be delivered either face to face or virtually. Generally, sessions take place in school hours, and are usually the duration of a school lesson. Sessions are delivered on a 1:1 basis, between the MHST worker and the child or young person (with parent/carer when appropriate). Interventions delivered rely on a collaborative, goals-based approach so it is important that the young person/parent is motivated to talk about, and work on difficulties they are experiencing.
Supporting a whole school approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health	You are already doing great stuff in schools. There are a number of ways that we can support you with the development of your whole school approach and here are a few examples: • We have developed a whole school approach reflective tool. The tool is designed to help you to look at how your school is doing in each of the 8 areas of a whole school approach to emotional wellbeing and mental health. It is easy to use and will help you to identify what is already working well in school and areas that you would like to develop. • Staff training and development in areas of emotional wellbeing and mental health including monthly interactive workshops and recorded webinars. We can also provide INSET training for the whole school or groups of staff. • Peer group supervision for mental health leads to provide a safe supportive space to share practice and problem solve together. • Promoting staff wellbeing – we offer a range of activities for schools including staff wellbeing sessions for staff, senior leadership team and governors, we can support with the setting up of working groups and identifying resources and signposting; and personal flexibility peer supervision groups. • Working with parents/carers, e.g. psychoeducational workshops—recorded and interactive, coffee mornings. • Working with children and young people, e.g. psychoeducational workshops, assemblies. • Student-led approaches e.g. co-production of resources for CYP by CYP. • Training students as mental health ambassadors. • Developing peer mentoring in your school. • Creating a safe and supportive ethos and environment in schools which respects diversity and inclusion, including supporting schools to support LGBTQ+, BAME and autistic pupils. • Promoting quality assured resources around emotional wellbeing and mental health. • EBSA refresher training and consultations.
Frequently asked questions	Is the service confidential? Confidentiality is an important part of building trust between a child/ young person and their allocated practitioner from the MHST. What we discuss within these sessions stays with the MHST and is not shared with the school unless permission is given by the child/parent. However, if there is a current risk or safeguarding concern, this will be shared directly with the school safeguarding lead. Why are sessions sometimes recorded? Some of our practitioners are currently training at the University of Sussex. The sessions are recorded so that the University and supervisor can support their training. These may be used within supervision sessions with a supervisor in order to reflect on practice and support future learning. Recordings are kept confidential. Consent is always requested before any session is recorded. Does the service continue to run over school holidays periods? We are an all year-round service, Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm (excluding public holidays). Practitioners can still meet with young people over school holiday periods using video technology and/or phone calls.
Other useful resources	E-wellbeing: www.e-wellbeing.co.uk Providing support to young people around their mental health and wellbeing. Sussex CAMHS: www.sussexcamhs.nhs.uk Provides information on the Sussex CAMHS service for children and young people, parents and carers and professionals, including tips and information about mental health conditions and some of the life difficulties that children and young people can experience. West Sussex Mind: www.westsussexmind.org Support for 16-25-year olds in various locations across West Sussex with their mental health, offering one-to one support or group support. Also offer parent and carer support for those worried about their child. Anna Freud: www.annafreud.org/schools-and-colleges/resources Mentally Healthy Schools: www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk