



Welcome to the Schools Mental Health Service

Who We Are and What We Do

The Brighton and Hove Schools Mental Health Service works in and with all maintained schools and colleges across the City to support Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing.

We are a team of over 30 practitioners and therapists, with a wide range of specialisms, including Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), psychotherapy, play therapy, art therapy and Family Support. By supporting a whole school approach and offering early intervention when mental health needs are mild to moderate, the service can help young people develop the tools they need for good mental health throughout their lives.

The service's work with schools to support children and young people's (CYP) mental health and emotional wellbeing includes:

- Whole school work like **staff training**, such as accredited Mental Health First Aid
- **Providing resources** to help tackle stigma
- **Supporting school triage** to ensure CYP and parents are directed to the most appropriate services for their need. In secondary schools an embedded Primary Mental Health Worker attends and supports school triage. Primary schools can choose to attend triage as a cluster group to discuss themes, support needs and cases.
- **Group work** for parents and pupils on issues like anxiety and resilience
- Supporting with **signposting** school staff and parents to activities and services
- Offering **1-1 interventions for mild to moderate difficulties, including CBT, art therapy and play therapy**
- Offering **group therapeutic interventions**, like Forest School, bouldering and creative therapies
- Providing **reflective spaces for staff**
- **Family Support**, either alongside the work of a Primary mental health worker or as a stand alone service
- Helping schools to develop and integrate **pupil voice** into the whole school approach to mental health

Referrals are made by schools/ colleges and sent to SchoolsMentalHealthService@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Referrals will be triaged by the service before deciding on the most appropriate support. You can discuss a referral before making it with your school's Primary Mental Health Worker. If you would like the referral to be considered for specific support, such as a Family Support Worker, CBT or a group, please note that on the form.

What is a Mild or Moderate Mental Health Difficulty?

Mild mental health difficulties means that your mental health has some impact on day-to-day life and moderate means there is a fairly significant impact on your day-to-day life. This could mean that you're sometimes finding it difficult to engage positively with things like school/work, friendships, family etc, maybe because you are feeling...

- Sad, depressed or bad about yourself,
- Worried, anxious or panicky,
- Afraid (fears or phobias).



Meet the team

Primary Mental Health Workers (PMHWs) work in specific schools as well as holding parent consultations and running groups off school sites. They come from a variety of specialisms. Our play therapists work 1 to 1 and also run a creative group for primary age neurodiverse children. In addition to their schools based therapeutic work, other PMHWs offer mindfulness for parents, Mental Health First Aid training for education staff, Forest School groups, Art therapy for young people not attending school, mountain biking and bouldering groups and more. They can also develop staff training and offer support when a new need is identified.

Family Support Workers work directly with parents and carers to support them with practical and emotional support for their child's or their own mental health. The team have a lot of experience working positively with young people who are neuro diverse and supporting young people who are not in school and their families. They offer 6 sessions with the family and can refer on to further support if it's needed.



Our Mental Health Support Team is made up of Low Intensity Cognitive Behaviour Therapy Practitioners, otherwise known as **EMHPs** (Education Mental Health Practitioners). They work with

students to identify and work towards goals to manage difficulties with things like anxiety, phobias or sleep. They are assigned to specific schools.

What service users say

"Thank you!" to [trainers] for your kindness, empathy and knowledge during the course over the last two days... It was such a lovely course to attend, despite it being very delicate and potentially triggering subjects." (MHFA training)

'I firmly believe that the recent improvement of my overall mental health is due to participating in the course.'
Parent

'Now in Year 6 I feel more energetic and more happy. I still have those worries but they don't stop me doing anything. In the future, if it bubbles up again, I will use tools to tell my brain not to get into that thought cycle and I will talk to someone because it fixed it last time.' Young Person

Brighton and Hove Mental Health Services - how we fit in

The [Brighton and Hove Helping Children and Young People Mental Health Threshold Framework](#) (click [the link](#) to see the document) describes the following thresholds for mental health:

- **Healthy** We work with school to support a whole school approach for good mental health
- **Struggling** We provide targeted support such as 1-1 or group therapeutic work
- **Unwell** We provide some targeted support (e.g. groups for young people not attending school and support with onward referrals to specialist services such as CAMHS)
- **In Crisis** We support onward referrals, liaise with other services and may provide support for school staff and families

Outside schools there are a number of ways to get support for children and young people's mental health. The [Brighton and Hove Wellbeing Service](#) can provide therapeutic support and triage for CAMHS interventions. Professionals, parents/carers and young people can refer directly to them.

There are many other services across Brighton and Hove and Sussex, including support for specific groups or needs. A directory of services can be found at <https://e-wellbeing.co.uk/services/>