# Mental Health Training Competency Framework for School Staff

## 1. About this Framework

It is estimated that **one in eight** young people aged 5 to 19 years old has at least one diagnosable mental disorder[[1]](#footnote-1), therefore it is likely that there will be many more who struggle at one or more points in their academic journey with their mental health and emotional wellbeing.

Research tells us that there is a clear link between poor mental health and academic achievement. Whilst we acknowledge reasons for mental health issues vary greatly, often spilling outside of the school environment. It is vital, however, that everyone working within a school has a basic understanding of what mental health is and has the confidence to recognise and respond to common issues. This will help ensure that children and young people are equipped with the skills and strategies to manage their mental health and emotional wellbeing, including early access to any additional help they need.

This guidance and assessment framework has been developed by a range of agencies including Cambridgeshire County Council, local training providers and educational establishments. We know that the training landscape in relation to Mental Health and resilience can be tricky, therefore this resource aims to simplify the complex picture of mental health training available through a tiered and structured approach to training within the school or college environment to ensure the whole school community is equipped with the knowledge and skills to support young peoples’ mental health, as well as their own.

We do not intend for educational staff to diagnose or treat mental health problems, but instead support their pupils by identifying issues, offering low-level support strategies, knowing when and where to escalate concerns and adapting existing ways of working.

## 2. How to Use the Framework

This framework offers a clear structure which you may wish to adopt to aid the decision making process when thinking about the training needs of your school community. There are 3 stages allowing for different depths of knowledge and training for different roles within the school. It offers some considerations of how to identify what training is needed and a list of recommended competencies needed within each stage.

It also aligns with the THRIVE framework, the structure for services for children, young people, their families and carers in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. This measures the needs of children and young people under five categories; thriving; getting advice; getting help; getting more help; getting risk support.

For further information on local mental health services, the THRIVE framework, and training opportunities please visit the Keep Your Head professionals site at <https://www.keep-your-head.com/prof/cp-mhs>. There is also a range of information and resources available for schools to access directly through the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Healthy Schools Service - <https://healthyschoolscp.org.uk/>

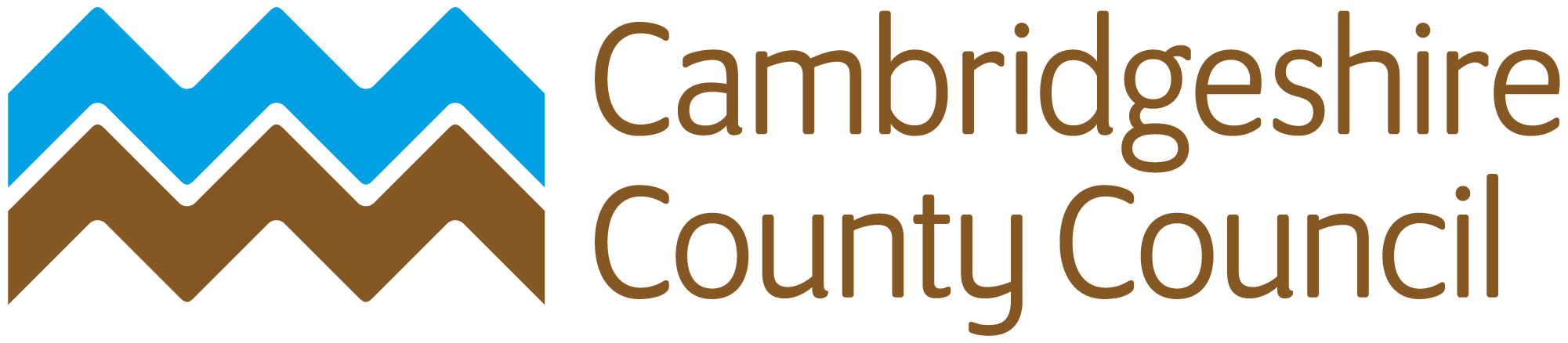
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| **Stages** | **Who?** | **Competencies** | |
| **1.**  **UNIVERSAL**  **CORE TRAINING** | Anybody working with children and young people, within a school this might be:   * Administrative staff * Lunchtime supervisors * Care taker * School governors * Teachers * Support Staff * Head Teacher * Parents   *NB. All staff will require a basic knowledge of mental health as a grounding to subsequent training levels.* | **All staff**:   * 1. *Have an understanding and awareness* *of what is meant by mental health and positive mental health:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Have an understanding and awareness* *of how to look after their own mental health (self-care):*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Have an understanding and awareness of how to identify children and young people who might be struggling with their mental health:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Have an understanding and awareness* of *factors that promote and protect mental health and build resilience:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Are able to identify factors that might increase the risk of developing a mental health problem:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Understand roles and responsibilities – their own and those of others – in meeting the mental health needs of children and young people:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Are able to consider their own values and attitudes about mental health and how these might influence your work:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Are aware of barriers that may exist for different minority groups in terms of accessing services:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Undertake regular mental health refresher training:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Know who they should speak to in the school/college if they identify a child or young person experiencing mental health difficulties (and what information to include within the conversation):*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Have an understanding of safeguarding issues and how to respond in your setting to a child in severe distress/ a mental health crisis including risk of suicide:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Have a general awareness of key local services and resources that can support better mental health in children and young people e.g.* [*www.keep-your-head.com*](http://www.keep-your-head.com)*:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident     * 1. *Are able to signpost children, young people or their parents/carers to sources of support:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Your school/setting has updated and readily available policies (e.g. mental health policy and anti-bullying policy) that link mental health, which outline staff roles and responsibilities within these:*   Yes  No | |
| **Examples of relevant training:**   * General introductory/awareness training covering mental health basics * Staff wellbeing /self-care * Basic resilience skills * Clear dissemination of internal processes | | **Strengths (based on the above findings):** | **Areas for development (based on the above findings):** |

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| **2.**  **ENHANCED TRAINING** | Those who play a significant role in a pupils ‘educational journey’ and who are working directly with children and young people on a daily basis. These staff would be expected to be responsible for identifying and supporting the needs of pupils on a general level, e.g.   * Teaching staff * Teaching Assistants * Leadership team | It is recommended this assessment is completed individually with identified staff members as part of supervision/Continuous Professional Development.  A deeper **understanding** and **practical application** of:   * 1. *A range of relevant mental health problems e.g. anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicide and eating disorders:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Factors that make a young person more vulnerable to poor mental health:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Services and care pathways that are able to support children, young people and families who are struggling, and how to access them:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Strategies to help build resilience and improve the mental health of children and young people:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *How to build emotional literacy in children and young people through PSHE, and how to deliver these sessions confidently (for those that will be required to deliver PSHE sessions):*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Impact of attachment, adverse childhood experiences, trauma and loss:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Value of active listening and communication skills:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Knowledge of how to assess basic mental health needs:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Solution focused/restorative approaches to behaviour:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Ability to reflect and use supervision for support and advice:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident | |
| **Examples of relevant training:**  Topic specific workshops or training programmes i.e:   * self-harm * resilience * anxiety & depression * body confidence * risk taking behaviour * substance misuse * attachment * trauma * bereavement * bullying * eating disorders * diversity and gender   Managing mental health / behaviour  Mental health strategies for the classroom  Mentoring  Peer mentoring/champion schemes | | **Strengths (based on above findings):** | **Areas for development (based on above findings):** |
| **3.**  **TARGETED TRAINING** | Those who have a specific role/responsibility in relation to the mental health and emotional wellbeing needs of pupils and are likely to have regular contact with children and young people with mental health difficulties as part of their role, e.g.:   * SEND Coordinators * Mental Health Champions / Designated Mental Health Lead * Safeguarding Lead * Inclusion Manager | It is recommended this assessment is completed individually with identified staff members as part of supervision/Continuous Professional Development.   * 1. *Completion of the Designated Mental Health Lead Training through the DfE (due to be announced in 2020)*   Yes  No   * 1. *Has the skills to cascade knowledge of basic mental health awareness to other staff and parents:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Has the skills to cascade knowledge of local services and care pathways to the staff team:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Has the ability to assess needs and identify suitable interventions or programmes including early identification of needs and use of approved tools:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Has a thorough understanding of the thresholds for non-clinical and clinical needs:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Has the ability to deliver non-clinical interventions e.g. group programmes and practical approaches that are preventative:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Has the ability to measure the impact of interventions using approved outcome measures:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Leads on policy development, implementation, and regular review within the setting:*   Yes  No   * 1. *Champions mental health and a positive whole setting approach to well-being including staff well-being:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Leads on parental and student engagement in policy development and awareness:*   Yes  No   * 1. *Attends regular local networking events and lead training / forums:*   Yes  No  3.11 *Regularly reviews and self-assesses current whole school approaches to well-being:*  Yes  No   * 1. *Ensures they are kept up to date with local provision and research/resources:*   Very Confident  Confident  Not Sure  Unconfident  Very Unconfident   * 1. *Is the point of contact for local service providers:*   Yes  No   * 1. *Attend/receive regular supervision and signpost support for other staff:*   Yes  No   * 1. *Co-ordinates CPD and refresher training for self and others using the competency framework as a guide:*   Yes  No | |
| **Examples of relevant training:**   * National guidance – Mental Health Support Lead training (provider to be announced in 2020) * Train The Trainer courses to cascade knowledge / resources to other staff members * Attendance at your local Schools Mental Health Forum | | **Strengths (based on above findings):** | **Areas for development (based on above findings):** |

**Clinical Interventions**

None of the stages of training would expect the education workforce to deliver clinical interventions. If a clinical/therapeutic intervention is required for a child you should access appropriate professional support, for example via the **Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service** (<https://www.keep-your-head.com/prof/cp-mhs/getting-advice-early-intervention/emotional-health-1>) or your Educational Psychologist in SEND services, who will be able to provide advice on suitable interventions or services (available to Cambridgeshire and Peterborough schools/colleges only).

We also know that many schools/settings purchase their own training and support. If you would like further information on core aspects to consider when purchasing mental health training or interventions, please visit our ‘Quality Assurance Checklist’, available at [https://healthyschoolscp.org.uk/about-us/our-work/](https://smex12-5-en-ctp.trendmicro.com:443/wis/clicktime/v1/query?url=https%3a%2f%2fhealthyschoolscp.org.uk%2fabout%2dus%2four%2dwork%2f&umid=28d2e223-f257-46ae-b8e1-547b75c1d818&auth=4a2bbcc2425ffeef152e13e9358d4feaab359b42-ac000c2301d9490a0dd89871948e49e7164eeb10)

1. NHS Digital, Mental Health of Children and Young People in England, 2017 (<https://digital.nhs.uk/data-and-information/publications/statistical/mental-health-of-children-and-young-people-in-england/2017/2017>) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)