

Mental Health Training Competency Framework for School Staff

1. About this Framework

It is estimated that one in six young people aged 5 to 19 years old has at least one diagnosable mental disorder, 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 Local Authority Public Health, YMCA Trinity Group, educational establishments, and local NHS Services. 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 use 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. In answering questions, we appreciate that responses may be around individuals' perceptions of confidence not necessarily knowledge. Therefore, the toolkit should be used as a supporting tool rather than the sole source of identifying needs.

Section 1 is a universal whole school assessment, however, sections 2 and 3 are aimed at those staff members who have greater responsibilities for supporting mental health. Therefore, those roles in Section 3 should also complete Sections 1 and 2; and those in Section 2, should also complete Section 1.

For more information about training that might meet some of the competency criteria, visit our local website [here](#)

<p>Stage1. Universal Core Training</p>	<p>Who? Everyone working with children and young people within a school requires a basic knowledge of mental health and completion of this survey will identify areas for subsequent training.</p> <p>All staff should, therefore, complete this section, which includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative staff • Lunchtime supervisors • Caretaker/s • School governors • Teachers • Support staff • Head Teacher • Parent helpers 	<p>Competencies All Staff:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How confident are you of your understanding and awareness of what is meant by mental health and positive mental health? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident 2. How confident are you in your understanding and awareness of how to look after your own mental health (self-care)? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident 3. How confident are you in your understanding and awareness of how to identify children and young people who might be struggling with their mental health? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident 4. How confident are you in your awareness and understanding of factors that promote and protect mental health and build resilience? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident 5. How confident are you in being able to identify factors that might increase the risk of developing a mental health problem? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident
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- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Not Sure
- ☐ Unconfident
- ☐ Very Unconfident

6. Do you understand the roles and responsibilities (your own and those of others) in meeting the mental health needs of children and young people?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

7. Are you able to consider your own values and attitudes about mental health and how these might influence your work?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

8. Are you aware of barriers that may exist for different minority groups in terms of accessing services?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

9. Do you undertake regular (at least yearly) mental health refresher training?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

10. Do you know who you should speak to in the school/college if you identify a child or young person experiencing mental health difficulties (and what information to include within the conversation)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

11. How confident are you that you have an understanding of safeguarding issues and know how to respond in your setting to a child who is at immediate risk of harm?

- ☐ Very Confident
- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Not Sure

- ☐ Unconfident
- ☐ Very Unconfident

12. Are you aware of key local services and resources that can support better mental health in children and young people e.g. www.keep-your-head.com (Cambridgeshire & Peterborough)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

13. How confident are you that you are able to signpost children, young people or their parents/carers to sources of support?

- ☐ Very Confident
- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Not Sure
- ☐ Unconfident
- ☐ Very Unconfident

14. Does your school/setting have updated and readily available policies (e.g. mental health policy and anti-bullying policy) that link to mental health and which outline staff roles and responsibilities within these?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

15. Have you completed any Mental Health training in the last 12 months?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not Sure

Reflections on this section (strengths and gaps):

<p>Stage 2 Enhanced Training</p>	<p>Who?</p> <p>This section is aimed at those who play a significant role in a pupil's "educational journey" and who are working directly with children and young people on a daily basis. These staff will be expected to be responsible for identifying and supporting the needs of pupils on a general level. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headteacher • Deputy Headteacher • SLT Member • Designated Senior Mental Health Lead • Safeguarding Lead • Head of Year/House • SENCO, Inclusion Manager • Teacher • NQT • HLTA and TA • Pastoral Support/Student Support Assistant • Family Liaison/Attendance Officer <p><i>The Enhanced Stage is about taking the knowledge and awareness from the core training and then being competent in applying this to your direct work with children and young people e.g. strategies and tools to embed learning in the classroom</i></p>	<p>Competencies</p> <p>1. How confident are you that you have a deeper understanding and practical application of a range of relevant mental health problems (e.g. anxiety, depression, self-harm, suicide and eating disorders)?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident <p>2. How confident are you that you have a deeper understanding and practical application of factors that make a young person more vulnerable to poor mental health?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident <p>3. How confident are you that you have a deeper understanding of the services and pathways that are able to support children, young people and families who are struggling, and how to access them?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident <p>4. How confident are you that you have a deeper understanding and practical application of how to build emotional literacy in children and young people through PSHE, and how to deliver these sessions confidently? (for those who will be required to deliver PSHE sessions):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident <p>5. How confident are you that you have a deeper understanding and practical application of the impact of attachment, adverse childhood experiences, trauma and loss?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident
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- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Not Sure
- ☐ Unconfident
- ☐ Very Unconfident

6. How confident are you that you have a deeper understanding and practical application of the value of active listening and communication skills?

- ☐ Very Confident
- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Not Sure
- ☐ Unconfident
- ☐ Very Unconfident

7. How confident are you that you have a deeper understanding and practical application of how to assess basic mental health needs?

- ☐ Very confident
- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Not Sure
- ☐ Unconfident
- ☐ Very Unconfident

8. How confident are you that you have a deeper understanding and practical application of solution focused/restorative approaches to behaviour?

- ☐ Very Confident
- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Not Sure
- ☐ Unconfident
- ☐ Very Unconfident

9. How confident are you that you have a deeper understanding and practical application of the ability to reflect and use supervision for support and advice?

- ☐ Very Confident
- ☐ Confident
- ☐ Not Sure
- ☐ Unconfident
- ☐ Very Unconfident

		Reflections on this section (strengths and gaps):
Stage 3 Targeted Training	<p>Who? This section is aimed at those who have specific roles/responsibility in relation to staff training and 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. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Designated Senior Mental Health Lead • Safeguarding Lead • SENCO • Inclusion Manager 	<p>Competencies</p> <p>1. How confident are you that you have the skills to cascade knowledge of basic mental health awareness to other staff and parents/carers?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident <p>2. How confident are you that you have the skills to cascade knowledge of local services and care pathways to the staff team?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident <p>3. How confident are you that you have the ability to assess needs and identify suitable interventions or programmes including early identification of needs and use of approved tools?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident <p>4. How confident are you that you have a thorough understanding of the thresholds for non-clinical and clinical needs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Very Confident ○ Confident ○ Not Sure ○ Unconfident ○ Very Unconfident

		<p>4. How confident are you that you have the ability to deliver non-clinical interventions e.g. group programmes and practical approaches that are preventative?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Very Confident<input type="radio"/> Confident<input type="radio"/> Not Sure<input type="radio"/> Unconfident<input type="radio"/> Very Unconfident <p>5. How confident are you that you have the ability to measure the impact of interventions using approved outcome measures?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Very Confident<input type="radio"/> Confident<input type="radio"/> Not Sure<input type="radio"/> Unconfident<input type="radio"/> Very Unconfident <p>6. How confident are you that you have the ability to lead on policy development, implementation and regular review within the setting?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Very Confident<input type="radio"/> Confident<input type="radio"/> Not Sure<input type="radio"/> Unconfident<input type="radio"/> Very Unconfident <p>7. Do you champion mental health and a positive whole setting approach to well-being including staff wellbeing?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Yes<input type="radio"/> No <p>8. Do you lead on parental and student engagement in policy development and awareness?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Yes<input type="radio"/> No <p>9. Do you attend regular local networking events and lead training / forums?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><input type="radio"/> Yes<input type="radio"/> No <p>10. Do you regularly review and self-assesses current whole school approaches to wellbeing?</p>
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- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

11. Do you ensure that staff are kept up to date with local provision and research/resources?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

12. Are you the point of contact for local service providers?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

13. Do you attend/receive regular supervision and signpost support for other staff?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

14. Do you co-ordinate CPD and refresher training for yourself and others?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Reflections on this section (strengths and gaps):

Actions I will take as a result of completing this framework:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.