

NHS



Cambridgeshire  
County Council

# ‘Creating mentally fit schools’: forums for mental health champions in schools October 2019

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# Partners

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Funding partners: The MindEd Trust



Implementation partners:



YMCA TRINITY GROUP



# Forums facilitated during the 2018 / 2019 academic year

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Forum	Number of sessions	Number of schools attended	Total number of attendees
Cambridge City	2	12	20
Cambridgeshire South (1)	4	14	19
Cambridgeshire South (2)	2	5	13
East Cambridgeshire	4	18	43
March, Chatteris & Whittlesey	2	13	21
Wisbech	2	6	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>130</b>

Note:

- 68 schools represents 27.2% of schools in Cambridgeshire.
- A further 19 schools attended the pilot of the link programme (<https://www.annafreud.org/linkprogramme/>).

# The sessions (within the forums)

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- ▶ Each session included elements of:
  - ▶ Psycho-education, with an emphasis on engagement and experiential learning.
  - ▶ Group / collective problem solving, with an emphasis on collaboration and providing support to one another.
  - ▶ Planning for, and effecting, change, with an emphasis on:
    - ▶ The practical implementation of ideas and resources.
    - ▶ Holding attendees to account for activity in between sessions.
    - ▶ Offering opportunities for structured reflection on experiences.
- ▶ The sessions aim to build capacity in schools:
  - ▶ ‘Building the professional’s capacity to make decisions that positively impact the entire school culture and the outcomes for students’ (Bloom et al., 2005).
  - ▶ The Blended Coaching model (Bloom et al., 2005) advocates coaches bringing skills, strategies and tools that support professionals in solving complex problems.

# Sample session content

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## Psycho-education

- ▶ Sharing an understanding of mental health.
- ▶ The role of a Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health.
- ▶ Cambridgeshire's whole school framework to promote emotional health and wellbeing.
- ▶ The evidence base for targeted interventions.
- ▶ Effecting, and measuring, change.
- ▶ Engaging students.

## Enablers

- ▶ PESTEL & SWOT analysis.
- ▶ A blueprint for mental health provision in schools.
- ▶ Review of universally available sources of information.
- ▶ Conversational guides.
- ▶ Tools for use with students.
- ▶ Models to access the 'voice of the child'.
- ▶ A graduated model for meeting the social and emotional needs of children and young people in school.
- ▶ Action planning template.

# A blueprint for mental health provision in schools

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- ▶ The blueprint for mental health provision in schools was designed in Cambridgeshire and introduced in the forums.
- ▶ It is a tool to aid schools to reflect on their existing provision and plan for improvement.
- ▶ The eight sections included in the blueprint are derived from:
  - ▶ The NCB's whole school framework for emotional wellbeing and mental health (Weare, 2015).
  - ▶ The principles defined within the PHE's whole school review tool to promote children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing (PHE, 2015).
- ▶ The blueprint contains 93 indicators across the eight sections, with respondents being asked to evaluate their existing provision (disagree, slightly disagree, slightly agree, agree).
- ▶ The schools that attended the forums were asked to complete the blueprint. 52 schools did so.

# The blueprint: reliability and validity checks

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## Inter-rater reliability

- ▶ This is a measure of reliability used to assess the degree to which different judges or raters agree in their assessment decisions.
- ▶ A vignette and the blueprint were sent to 12 schools to complete.
- ▶ 5 schools returned the blueprint based on their assessment of the provision in the school outlined in the vignette.
- ▶ In a basic statistical comparison of the five inter-rater reliability study responses that were received, there was a 36% exact agreement rate. The agreement rate increased to 73% when responses were considered 'agreed' if they were within one point on the four point rating scale.

## Concurrent validity

- ▶ This is a measure of how well a particular test correlates with a previously validated measure.
- ▶ The Survey of School Promotion of Emotional and Social Health (SSPESH\*) was used to measure the concurrent validity of the blueprint.
- ▶ 30 schools completed both the SSPESH and the blueprint.
- ▶ The R squared value (an indicator of correlation) was 0.65. This indicates there is a moderate to strong positive linear relationship between the two measures.

\* Dix, K. L., Green, M. J., Tzoumakis, S., Dean, K., Harris, F., Carr, V. J., & Laurens, K. R. (2019). The Survey of School Promotion of Emotional and Social Health (SSPESH): a brief measure of the implementation of whole-school mental health promotion. *School Mental Health*, 11(2), 294-308.

# The blueprint: feedback

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- ▶ ‘The blueprint represents a comprehensive framework, and feels coherent and safe to use’.
- ▶ The blueprint helps to define an action plan:
  - ▶ ‘The blueprint was very helpful. It shows gaps and where you can improve within your school’.
  - ▶ ‘The fantastic blueprint tool will inform next steps in whole school policy, continuing professional development and procedure’.
  - ▶ ‘[The blueprint] is an excellent framework for analysing where we are / what we do next’.

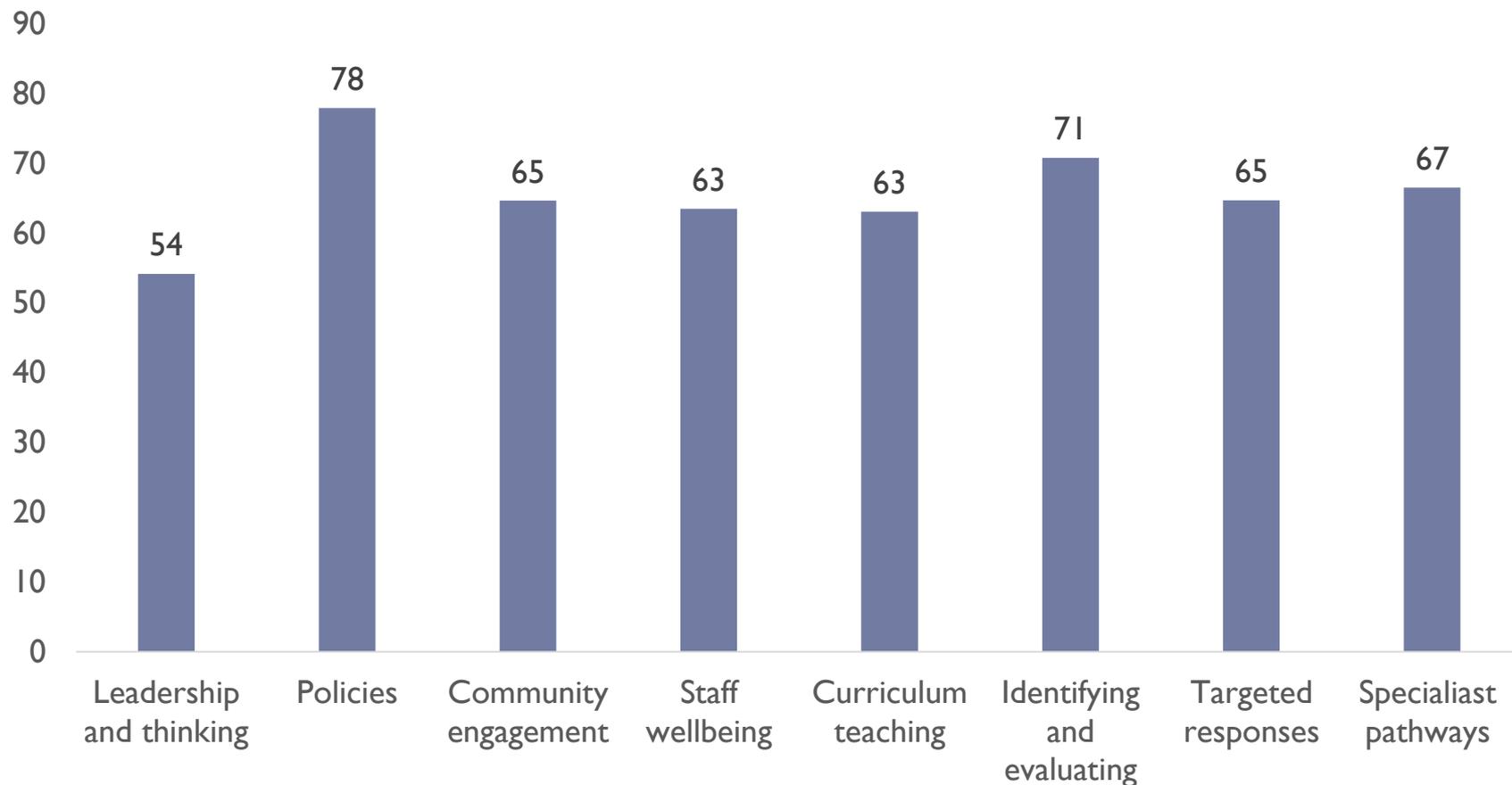


- ▶ The identity of the respondent(s) is important to the validity of the tool (it is best completed by more than one individual).
- ▶ Some indicators might be perceived as threatening.
- ▶ Not all indicators are relevant (or financially viable) for all schools, and the response turning red can feel punitive.
- ▶ There is not enough emphasis on routes to access the student voice.
- ▶ The blueprint might be accompanied by some signposting.

# Using the blueprint, how schools have assessed their provision

% scores, per section  
(n = 52 schools across Cambridgeshire, to date)

Note: this data is available at school and SEND district level.



# Impact of the capacity building sessions

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- ▶ 10 questions were posed to the mental health champions prior to the first session (n= 65) and at the end of the second session (n = 23).
- ▶ The questions related to how the mental health champions perceived their knowledge and awareness regarding mental health.
- ▶ The questions required response on a five point scale:

1	2	3	4	5
No need for development	Little need for development	Some need for development	Substantial need for development	Urgent attention required

- ▶ By the end of the second session:
  - ▶ There was a 10.96% improvement (across all respondents) in how the mental health champions perceived their knowledge and awareness.
  - ▶ This went down to 8.06% when only the respondents (n=16) who had a matching pre and post assessment were considered.

# Action planning

Session content and completion of the blueprints have been used to aid schools in their action planning. Sample planning templates are below:

Target	Target date	Responsible person	Progress made
Should be specific, measurable, achievable and realistic.	Estimated completion date.		Note enablers, barriers and how they have affected progress towards target completion.
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			

Proposed action	Milestone tasks	Responsible person	Partners	Target date	Success indicator	Progress
Include what will happen, and which target the action is aligned to.	Steps along the way in order to implement actions.		Others that need to be consulted or engaged.		Evidence that the action is complete.	As above.
1.						
2.						
3.						
4.						
5.						

# Outcomes

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- ▶ **‘Interim’ outcomes that have been achieved:**
  - ▶ Cross sector (health, education and voluntary) collaboration when engaging with schools about their mental health provision.
  - ▶ +750 hours of contact time with 130 individuals from 70+ schools and agencies.
  - ▶ Increased knowledge and awareness of mental health in the mental health champions.
  - ▶ Build of a database that includes names and contact details of 198 mental health champions from 143 schools across Cambridgeshire. The database details attendance at / contribution to 20+ events over the last 2 – 3 years.
  - ▶ Design, testing and implementation of a blueprint for mental health provision in schools.
  - ▶ Design of a graduated model for meeting the social and emotional needs of children and young people in school.
- ▶ **Longer-term (anticipated) outcomes:**
  - ▶ An improvement in general wellbeing.
  - ▶ A reduction in acute mental health problems.
  - ▶ Improved academic outcomes for vulnerable populations.

# Conclusions

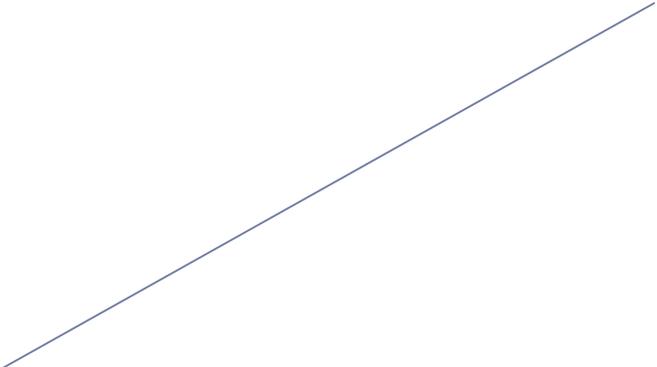
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- ▶ This initiative represents a continuation of efforts to engage with mental health champions in school in a more consistent and coordinated fashion.
- ▶ The cross sector nature of the implementation partners is a welcome strength. The implementation partners that were able to support the initiative were able to do so because:
  - ▶ Either, facilitating the forums was deemed to be part of services they have already been commissioned for.
  - ▶ Or, funding was received from local charitable organisations.
  - ▶ Or, they found the time ‘in the margins’ (i.e. without cost).
- ▶ The mental health champions report the project is valuable for them to participate in.
- ▶ It seems likely the forums are valuable as they are built upon action-research principles (including the provision of feedback) and theories of adult learning (learning that is experiential, collaborative and job-relevant).
- ▶ Information, research and resources are evidence-based and there is a clear focus on tracking progress and identifying change (using success criteria).
- ▶ Our experiences are consistent with those documented in the British Psychological Society (BPS) response to the ‘Transforming children and young people’s mental health’ green paper. The BPS stated: ‘providing teachers with training in mental health first aid is a welcome first step but on its own, we believe that this will not address the scale of need. Training is not enough – ongoing supervision and consultation for school staff is an essential requirement’.

# Next steps

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- ▶ Two national initiatives are consistent with the forums for mental health champions we have been delivering locally:
  - ▶ DfE funded Designated Senior Leads for Mental Health training is due to be in place in 2020 / 2021.
  - ▶ It is hoped we will continue with delivery of the ‘Mental Health Services and Schools and Colleges Link Programme’ (<https://www.annafreud.org/linkprogramme/>) locally, with the number of cohorts (each receiving two full day sessions) to be agreed.
- ▶ In the meantime, forums for mental health champions to attend this academic year are being set up and delivered by the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service in Peterborough (\*3), East Cambridgeshire (\*1) and Fenland (\*2).
- ▶ Forums in Cambridge City, South Cambridgeshire (\*2) and Huntingdonshire (\*2) are under discussion.
- ▶ Further funding is likely to be required to cover cross sector involvement (in addition to that provided by the Emotional Health and Wellbeing Service) as well as central coordination and research.



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