

Know Yourself, Grow Yourself

In the fast-paced environment of schools, where the focus is often on supporting pupils, school staff can sometimes overlook their own mental health. However, prioritizing your mental well-being is crucial to maintaining resilience and being an effective educator. Taking time to understand yourself is a cornerstone of mental health. It allows you to:

Recognize Triggers: Identifying what causes stress helps you prepare and respond proactively.

Build Emotional Awareness: Understanding and recognising your emotions enables you to manage them more effectively. It also helps you to develop coping strategies that work for you.

Set Meaningful Goals: When you know what truly matters to you, you can align your actions with your values, creating a greater sense of purpose and satisfaction.

Here are a few things you could try in 2025 if you don't do them already.

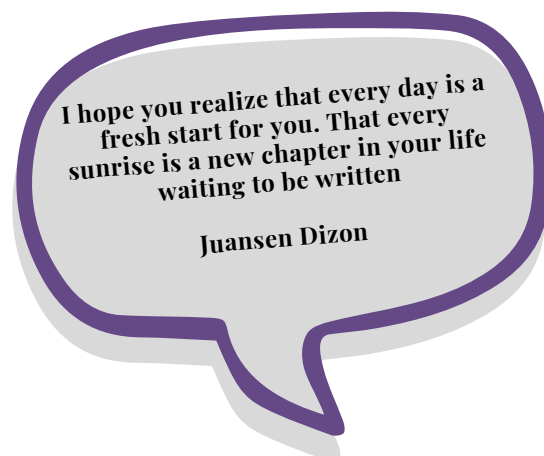
Reflect Regularly. Spend a few minutes at the end of each day journaling about your thoughts, feelings, and experiences. Reflection deepens your understanding of your patterns and preferences.

Try New Things. Experimenting with hobbies or activities can reveal new interests and strengths you didn't know you had.

Seek Feedback. Ask trusted colleagues or friends for their perspectives on your strengths and areas for growth. Their insights can offer valuable clarity.

Termly Event Calendar

The Whole School Approach Partnership have collaborated to produce a termly overview calendar, outlining the key events taking place across the city. Most of the entries have booking links embedded, so you just need to click on them. You can access a copy of the calendar [here](#).

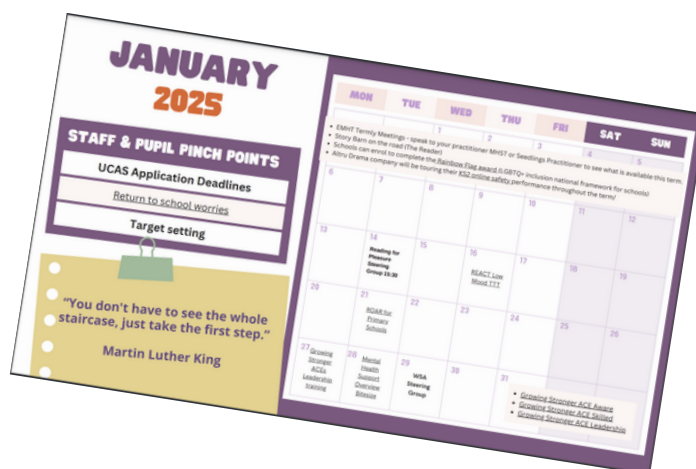


Practice Mindfulness. Mindfulness helps you stay present and tune into your inner world. Apps like Headspace or Calm can guide you through the process.

Your mental health is integral to your ability to support others. By adopting positive coping strategies and getting to know yourself, you can create a foundation for resilience and well-being. Remember, taking care of yourself is not a luxury but a necessity—and it ultimately benefits everyone around you.

This is also the theme for Children's Mental Health Week 2025 (3rd-9th February). We have put together a dedicated page of information for this week, along with booking links for the session.

You can access it [here](#).





WSA Termly Networks

Our termly WSA networks will take place on the 4th (Secondary) and 6th (Primary) of March. Networks offer a valuable opportunity to meet with other Mental Health Leads, share best practice, meet with representatives from our Schools' Teams and receive service updates.

Our primary networks will be in-person and our secondary online. There will be a lunchtime online catch-up for those who can't attend the primary sessions in person. **Please book using the following links:**

[4th March, 15:30, Secondary schools](#)

[6th March, 09:00, Primary South/Central @ Hunts Cross Primary School](#)

[6th March, 14:30, Primary North/Central @ Whitefield Primary School](#)

[6th March, 12:00-13:00, Online Lunchtime Catch-up](#)



Children's Mental Health Week 2025 will take place from 3-9 February. Place2Be's Children's Mental Health Week is joining forces with Here4You to explore the importance of self-awareness and expressing emotions.

Here4You is supported by The Walt Disney Company, and through the characters of Pixar's Inside Out and Inside Out 2, the resources encourage children and young people across the UK to discover how getting to know who they are can help them build resilience, grow and develop.

There are activities and resources on the [Place2Be website](#).



Livestream Events

Liverpool Schools' Mental Health Teams are working with several partners to deliver a series of interactive Livestream events for Children and Young People's Mental Health Week 2025:

Monday 3rd February, 10:00-10:30 – Daily Xpress Livestream session (KS1) delivered by LLP & Schools' MH Teams)

Tuesday 4th February, 09:15-09:30 – Daily Xpress Livestream session (EYFS delivered by LLP)

Wednesday 5th February 13:00-13:30 – Daily Xpress Livestream session (KS2 & Year 7, delivered by LLP)

Thursday 6th February 09:30-10:00 – Daily Xpress Livestream session (KS1&KS2 delivered by LFC Foundation)

Thursday 6th February 13:30-14:00 – Daily Xpress Livestream session (KS3 delivered by LFC Foundation)

Friday 7th February, 09:30-10:00 – Daily Xpress Livestream session (Year 6 & KS3 delivered by Edgehill University Students)

Information, along with booking links for the session can be found [here](#).

Staff from the Schools' Mental Health Teams will also be providing some workshops and recorded material for you to use throughout the week. You can find out more on the [information page](#).

LGBT+ History Month

February is LGBT+ History Month. The theme this year is Activism and Social Change. If you are aged between Yr 7 and Year 12 and want to find out more or get involved in some LGBT+ activities you can attend a YPAS LGBT+ group through the month of February. Activities will include - creating social media content, creating a living LGBT+ timeline, visiting the Holly Johnson Story at Museum of Liverpool. As Liverpool ½ term also falls in February we will be doing some extra queericular activities with our friends at LJMU like Kinball and will be learning some skills as to how to engage with the deaf community.

PS we also offer activities and a group for young people 16-25 years old.

For more information about how, where and when to access our activities (All free!) please email gyro@ypas.org.uk, follow us on Instagram @gyroliverpool or just pop along.

The dates and times are found on the [YPAS What's On calendar](#) on the website.



“Owning our story and loving ourself through that process is the bravest thing we’ll ever do.”

Brene Brown

Transition Research

Over the last year, Whitefield primary school, in addition to several other primary and secondary schools in Liverpool have been working with Dr Charlotte Bagnall and her research team at the University of Manchester to develop and pilot a scale which can be used in schools to support children's emotional wellbeing over the transition from primary school to secondary school. This scale is called the Primary-Secondary School Transitions Emotional Wellbeing Scale ([P-S WELLS](#)) and will provide schools with insight into (1) which aspects of moving to secondary school children are experiencing emotional difficulties with, (2) who might be particularly vulnerable and (3) what support could be useful, on a universal, whole-class basis, but also on a targeted 1:1 or group basis.

The research team are now signing up schools to participate in the validation of [P-S WELLS](#), which will involve current Year 6 children completing a questionnaire (hosted on Qualtrics) in March 2025, June 2025 and July 2025 in primary school, and again in September 2025, December 2025 and March 2026 in secondary school. It takes the children approximately 15-minutes to complete the survey and they can do it on a laptop, computer or an ipad in school (most are doing it during form time or PSHE).

As a thank you for participating in the research study, each school will receive £250, a certificate of data collection completion that they can use within DfE Ofsted inspections evidencing contiguous emotional wellbeing provision over primary-secondary school transitions, and some useful data on their pupils' emotional wellbeing, in a personalised school report. Here is the link to sign-up: <https://www.p-s-wells.org/phase-4-signup>

For any further questions, please contact Dr Charlotte Bagnall via email: charlotte.bagnall@manchester.ac.uk

Transition Curriculum

Whitefield Primary have been developing a curriculum to be delivered in Summer 2 in year 6 and then at the start of year 7 by Secondary Schools. This has been funded by Shine Trust, and the school are keen to share and develop further, particularly working with Secondary Schools.

If you would like to be involved please contact Marie Beale via email mbeale@whitefieldprimarieschool.co.uk to set up a conversation.

Wellbeing Story Sacks

Working in partnership with Alder Hey Mental Health Support Teams, Liverpool Learning Partnership have recently launched the 3rd of their Wellbeing Story Sacks. The sacks have been developed to guide parents/carers in supporting their children's mental health and wellbeing. They consist of a relevant story book, themed activities/resources and links to further support.

The sacks have been co-developed with children, parents/carers and mental health practitioners. They are designed to complement any interventions offered by the School Mental Health Teams. Sacks have been developed around the following themes:

Managing Worry

KS1 - Themed around the book 'Ruby's Worry'

KS2 - Themed around the book 'What If?'

Emotional Regulation

KS1 - Themed around the book 'Ravi's ROAR'

KS2 - Themed around the book 'Colour Monster goes to the Doctor'

Sleep

KS1 & 2 - Themed around the book 'Down the Sleepy River'

How to use the story sacks:

- Share them with parents/carers of children waiting to be seen by mental health services. Carers can often feel helpless during this period. Reading a relatable story together and opening up conversation through the activities could bring about some positive change whilst children are waiting. We would suggest giving them a week to work through the book and activities.
- Share them with your school pastoral team to read with children as an in-school intervention - especially where children are unlikely to get the support from home.
- Invite parents/carers to come and read with their child during the school day. They could also have time to complete some of the activities with their child.

Each sack has a Padlet of related resources and sign-posting. These have been designed to be replenishable at a low cost.

If you are not sure how to access your wellbeing story sacks please speak to your Mental Health Lead or Head.



Bitesize Training

Members of Liverpool's Mental Health Support for Children and Young People Partnership design and deliver an ongoing programme of training opportunities to equip school staff to support their pupils' mental health and wellbeing. The rolling programme of bitesize training can be found [here](#).



Growing Stronger

Are you ACE-aware?

Adults in Liverpool who want to learn about Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) can attend this FREE Growing Stronger training. There are three levels to choose from.

- ✓ACE-Aware (virtual, one-hour session).
- ✓ACE-Skilled (face-to-face, half-day).
- ✓ACE-Leadership

See this [link](#) for more information.

A Day in the Life of a Mental Health Lead

Observations of Senior Mental Health Leads (SMHLs) across Liverpool schools have highlighted the incredible work being done to support the mental health and wellbeing of students, staff, and the wider school community. From one-on-one student support to influencing school policy, your efforts ensure that mental health remains a priority amidst competing demands. Many of you manage these responsibilities while juggling multiple roles, going above and beyond for your children and young people.

To strengthen your role and broaden its reach, consider these strategies:

1. **Secure Senior Leadership Support:**

- Advocate for your role to be strategically positioned within the school's Senior Leadership Team (SLT).
- Highlight the value of mental health in achieving broader school goals, such as attendance and academic success.
- Work collaboratively with SLT to integrate mental health into whole-school policies and practices.

2. **Clarify Roles and Boundaries:**

- Clearly define the scope of your role within the school to prevent overlap or confusion with other positions.
- Advocate for dedicated time and resources to focus on mental health initiatives.

3. **Leverage Observations and Feedback:**

- Use data from school audits, feedback from students, and observations to inform your strategies.
- Regularly review and adapt your approaches to align with evolving needs.

4. **Develop Partnerships:**

- Build strong links with external mental health agencies to expand the range of services available to your school community.
- Work collaboratively with these partners to address complex cases more effectively. Holding termly Schools' Team meetings are a good way to bring everyone together.

5. **Foster Staff and Student Engagement:**

- Encourage student voice by establishing accessible self-referral systems and peer mentoring programs.
- Promote staff wellbeing through initiatives like supervision, wellness activities, and opportunities for professional development.

6. **Embrace Evidence-Based Practices:**

- Incorporate trauma-informed approaches, sensory spaces, and structured intervention pathways into your work.
- Use monitoring tools to track the effectiveness of interventions and make data-driven decisions.

Despite the significant challenges, SMHLs are creating



safer, more inclusive school environments. From running lunchtime wellbeing clubs to offering vital support during crises, your work is transformative. Observers noted how SMHLs' efforts have led to the development of clear referral pathways, improved relationships across school communities, and increased access to mental health support for students and staff.

Your role is essential to fostering resilience and wellbeing within schools. To maximize your impact, make sure you remember to take time to look after your own mental health. Challenge yourself to make time in the day to eat lunch and have a non-work related chat with a colleague.

Your dedication is inspiring. Keep championing mental health and wellbeing, making mental health everyone's business in your school community.

**The full report from our 'Day in the life/ observations can be found [here](#).*

MHSTs in Liverpool

Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) were first introduced to Liverpool schools in 2019, as part of a national pilot. We secured 3 teams that were rolled out across primary schools. Over the subsequent 2 years we successfully bid for 2 further teams to provide coverage over all primary schools and extend some support into secondary schools around Transition. In 2024 we gained our 6th team that is currently working across 8 secondary schools - with the aim to secure another team from future funding waves.

The primary mission of MHSTs is to provide accessible, effective mental health support for students. Teams consist of Education Mental Health Practitioners (EMHPs), along with Mental Health Practitioners and Senior Practitioners trained in specific mental health modalities.

Key objectives include:

1. Early Intervention: Identifying and addressing mental health challenges before they escalate.
2. Reducing Stigma: Creating a culture where seeking mental health support is normalized and encouraged.
3. Empowering the School Community: Supporting staff, students, and families with knowledge, tools, and strategies to promote mental well-being.

MHSTs operate at the heart of school communities, fulfilling three critical functions to support students:

Function 1: Direct Support for Students

MHSTs work closely with students to address a range of mental health concerns, such as stress, anxiety, or low mood. This includes offering evidence-based individual or group sessions that help to develop coping skills, resilience, and emotional regulation. This often includes working with parents and carers.

Function 2: Whole School Approach guidance & development

MHSTs provide workshops and support to help schools & families to identify early signs of mental health issues, respond effectively, and create nurturing environments that promote mental well-being.

Function 3: Facilitating Access to Services

When students require additional care, MHSTs act as a bridge to external mental health services. This includes making referrals, coordinating care, and ensuring that students get the right support at the right time.

Integrating mental health services into the school system helps to create a culture of care and understanding. This not only enhances students' emotional well-being but also improves their engagement, attendance, and academic performance.



Wave 11 update

All the team are now officially started and the EMHP trainees have commenced their training at the HEI (Health Education Institution). Clinical work is being delivered across all the pilot schools and the team have undertaken WSA Mental Health Training delivered weekly by Kath Fraser. They are also all signed up for the ROAR secondary and completed ACES training delivered by MYA.

We are still experiencing some challenges with using the digital platform as we requested a name change and YPAS Clinical Admin have now escalated this. However, we have a temporary referral pathway in place to ensure we can deliver operationally.

We have held two welcome sessions with the WAVE 11 Schools introducing the team, trainee criteria and the referral process - with a 'how to guide' to support the new referral process. These have been well received and feedback is that they have really supported the transition from Well Being Clinics to MHST delivery. Strategic meetings are being held fortnightly between LLP, Alder Hey and YPAS. We continue to work collaboratively, actively problem solve and consider how to work smarter with the provision that we have across Liverpool Schools.

As a WAVE 11 Leadership Team we have met with programme lead from HEI to understand the training criteria to allow us to effectively plan training cases and group delivery. We also meet on a Monday as a full WAVE 11 team which is really working well and supporting the operational development.

In regards to the timeline of the project plan we are meeting all targets and feel confident moving forward with operational delivery.

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TEN YEARS of
NOW Festivals**

NOW 2025
YOUNG PEOPLE'S
MENTAL HEALTH FESTIVAL
10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY

LIPA
PRIMARY
SCHOOL

Photograph: Dave Brownlee Photography

4th, 5th 6th Feb 2025

**St George's Hall
Concert Room**

**Amplifying children &
young people's voices**

Engaging mental health themes

During Children's Mental Health Week, hundreds of young people across Merseyside will take the stage at the iconic St George's Hall to mark a decade of creative conversations about mental health. Organised by MYA's RAISE team, this year's festival revisits ten years of powerful themes that relate to children and young people's mental health, including violence prevention, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) and belonging.

Get your tickets [here](#).

Let's support our young people as they share their voices and raise awareness of issues that matter to them.
#NOWFestLiv #MentalHealthMatters #YouthVoices #Liverpool

Spotting the Signs

The primary schools' MHST are taking bookings for their Spotting the Signs workshop. This workshop has been designed to support schools to identify emerging anxiety and low-mood. Staff will be equipped to spot early signs of the common mental health difficulties and make appropriate referrals to the Mental Health Support Teams.

For further information and to book the workshop, please speak to your Education Mental Health Practitioner. Or you can email mhstclinicaladmin@alderhey.nhs.uk

