

Children's mental health and emotional wellbeing - examples of services and support offered directly by schools

Betws Primary School

In Betws Primary School, they employ a full time Wellbeing Officer. The role includes working closely with pupils, parents and staff to ensure excellent communication between school and home. The role includes providing ELSA support to pupils who have been identified as requiring additional support and work with pupils on friendship groups, social skills, playground issues, bereavement and parent separation. In addition, the officer works closely with young carers and is able to support these pupils in school.

The Wellbeing Officer runs a weekly coffee morning in school providing an informal and comfortable environment for parents and carers to attend, make friends and discuss any concerns they may have. These are then passed to the Additional Learning Needs Coordinator (ALNCo), and any support and information can be shared.

The Wellbeing Officer also plays a key role in monitoring attendance within the school and works closely with families to address and support any issues that may be impacting on attendance and punctuality.

Corneli Primary School

At Corneli Primary School they are developing the role of one of the Learning Support Officers (LSO) to deal primarily with pupil wellbeing issues. They have constructed a timetable for the LSO that has limited class structured times. The LSO is ELSA trained and where a concern is raised about the wellbeing of a pupil by staff or the pupil's family the officer then becomes the first point of contact. The LSO has built up relationships with families of vulnerable pupils, linked and supported pupils and families with external agencies including attendance officers and social services and is increasingly approached directly by parents and pupils. This role is having a positive impact on pupils and the school in general.

Ysgol Cynwyd Sant

They have recently established a nurture provision at the school, which is named 'The Hafan' (The Haven). The aim is to provide support for pupils that would benefit from additional personal and emotional support, in a small group environment. Activities are focused on emotional wellbeing and aim to build self-confidence, self-esteem and provide pupils with opportunities to develop their social skills through speech and play activities. Prior to establishing the Hafan, members of the school staff visited a nurture class in another Welsh-medium school to discuss methods and good practice, and also received training by The Nurture Group Network. The nurture group is now entering its third term, and the sessions are evolving in order to support the pupils that attend and their needs.

The school have a member of teaching staff who is responsible for wellbeing and sits on the leadership team, the Hafan is overseen by this member of staff and a higher learning support officer is responsible for the practical activities and also attends multi-agency meetings to discuss the progress of these pupils.

The school was recently involved in a school improvement group (SIG) project focusing on wellbeing in conjunction with seven other Welsh primary schools across the consortium. The project provided the school with an opportunity to network and share ideas and good practice with other schools. The main focus of the project was to improve the children's wellbeing by providing them with activities and strategies to focus on during the lunch hour. The SIG joined The Welsh headteachers annual conference in July to share their findings and good practice.

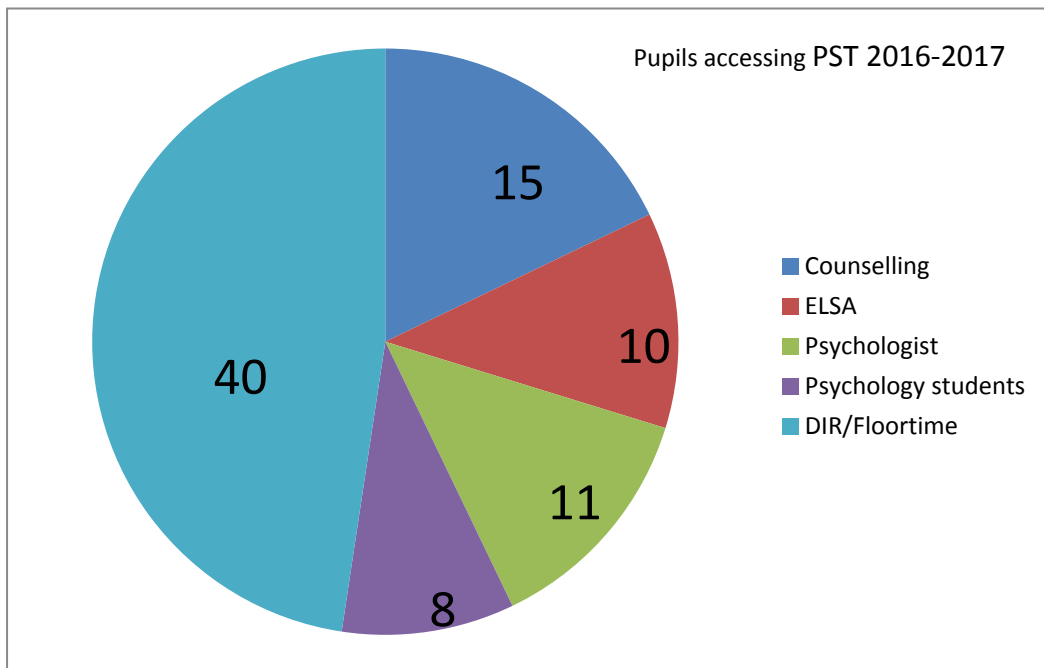
Héronsbridge School

A Pupil Support Team was established in 2014 to provide extra support for pupils who are having specific or general difficulties at home or school. The team is led by the head of behaviour support and consists of a counsellor, assistant psychologist, two undergraduate psychology students and members of staff trained in ELSA and THRIVE as well as a family liaison officer.

A pupil may be referred to the team by the class teacher, parents, social worker or anyone who feels a pupil needs additional support. Referrals are discussed at weekly team meetings where the group decide on which provision they feel will be of most benefit for the pupil. This may take the form of counselling, speech and language support, occupational therapy, floor time therapy, emotional literacy

(ELSA), or psychology support, covering difficulties such as relationships, bereavement, self-esteem, bullying and anger management. Counselling is also available to parents and families. Progress is monitored and discussed by the team to ensure pupils receive the support they need.

Pupils look forward to working with the staff and it plays an important role in improving pupil and family mental health and wellbeing.



Tondu Primary School

Current baseline scores show that the majority of pupils enter school at least 12 months behind the expectations in terms of their personal and social development. Only 2.9% are at expected levels, with 61% two stages below expected levels. Currently 6.5% of the school population are looked after (with a further three applications to be admitted). Three of these pupils have had serial placements which brings its own challenge. This has meant that the school has to focus on wellbeing and mental health issues in order to support pupil development and in order to secure learning for such pupils.

- emotional Literacy Support Assistants offer support from nursery to Year 6 for a range of needs;
- nurture group with interventions for social and emotional needs;

- key workers allocated to vulnerable pupils who carry out interventions and ensure that there is support in mainstream classrooms for these pupils;
- personal and social education based on social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) well established;
- the use of vulnerability assessment profile being used across the school following the introduction last year;
- Rights Respecting School initial award applied for.

Support for vulnerable pupils (LAC, EBSD) through working with local authority support/Achievement for All. This has led to training for staff in attachment, structured conversations etc.

Use of EVOLVE Health mentor to support pupils; Wake and Shake, individual mentoring, aspirational interviews, after school club.

Parents support the group looking at variety of aspects to assist their child's wellbeing. Feedback is very positive. Involvement of parents in school developed in order to support pupils' wellbeing.

Pencoed Primary School

Pencoed Primary School is mindful in an ever changing world that they are facing challenging times. Wellbeing/mental health problems affecting children and young people are on the increase, typically with one in ten pupils exhibiting symptoms of depression, anxiety, behaviour/anger, loss and bereavement, lack of friendship/social skills, low self-esteem, eating disorders, self-harm and suicidal thoughts.

The emotional wellbeing/mental health of children are just as important as their physical health. They strive to ensure their pupils are loved, trusted, understood, valued and safe, accepting who they are and what they are good at. The aim is for them to have a sense of belonging to the school, their family and the community with the opportunities for them to succeed, taking an active interest in life itself being optimistic and hopeful for their future. The school want them to have the tools they'll require with the ability to solve problems and the resilience to cope and manage whatever life throws at them.

They have a passionate and dedicated family involvement officer, together with a wellbeing officer who regularly liaises with the staff, multi-disciplinary teams and each other to provide the best provision they can with the resources they have to ensure pupils have the necessary support they require.

They currently provide a number of specialist interventions to support pupils who require it. These include:

- NBAR Data (National Behaviour and Attendance Review) All key Stage 2 pupils are screened using NBAR and any pupil requiring support is identified from this and along with discussion from the class teacher.
- ELSA (Emotional Literacy Support Assistance) – this is one to one support that involves a range of activities to develop self-esteem and overcome anxiety
- Thrive (identification of emotional development) – this is a detailed specialist programme offered which enables the school to work in a targeted way with children who have struggled with difficult life events to help them re-engage with life and learning.
- Worry Warriors – these are pupils who are identified to others in the yard who provide support and comfort to others.
- The Place (peer support group) – this is a group intervention where pupils support each other by working through planned activities to develop self-awareness, co-operation and communication.
- MISP (Massage In Schools Programme) – this is a weekly programme where targeted children are involved in massage sessions.
- Lego Therapy (expressing through construction) – this can be one to one or group based where pupils are encouraged to use lego and model making to express their feelings and thoughts and to express themselves.
- Transition (helping hands programme) - in conjunction with the Comprehensive School provide additional support to those who need it.

Cynffig Comprehensive School

The school run a mindfulness 10-week programme, aimed to give students mindfulness as a life skill. Mindfulness is taught with striking visuals, film clips and activities.

Students used it for the following reasons:

- to feel happier, calmer and more fulfilled;
- to get on better with others;
- to help them concentrate and learn better;
- to help cope more with stress and anxiety; and
- to perform better in their exams, music and sport.

Impact Wellbeing uses a range of simple, adaptable and effective relaxation techniques to improve mental, emotional and physical wellbeing. The six-week programme's chosen techniques are promoted by health services and use a mindfulness based approach.

- IMPACT Wellbeing programme relaxation techniques include:
- breathing and stretching exercises
- relaxation and guided visualisation
- self-massage for head and hands
- a mindfulness-based approach
- Individuals also gain an understanding of the causes and effects of stress.

Building confidence through learning is a 6 week programme aimed to engage and build pupils self-esteem and self-confidence through learning. The programme provides weekly sessions of innovative tasks to help them discover who they are. The sessions include all about me, how do I like to learn, my amazing brain, we all have a strength, team roles and self- reflection.

The key outcomes for the project were:

- identifying feelings and emotions;
- sketching and informal description of themselves;
- identifying dominant body parts;
- Identifying their brain function and brain profile;
- discovering their natural abilities and intelligences;
- identifying their team roles and strengths;
- Identifying personal qualities;
- action for children workshop.

The key outcomes for the three-week programme were:

- anxiety and stress management;
- building confidence and self- esteem;
- building and raising self-esteem/friendships;

The school also had additional PSE shut down days covering topics on healthy eating, physical activities, mental health and LGBT awareness.