



Barnardo's **Let's Connect Service**

Supporting the mental health and wellbeing of whole school communities.

 Barnardo's
**LET'S
CONNECT**



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We're thrilled to share with you the full range of Let's Connect services which we can tailor to meet the needs of you and your school. Through our extensive experience working in schools, we understand how difficult it is to support pupils and staff who are struggling with their wellbeing and mental health.

Wherever your school is on their journey to supporting pupil and staff wellbeing, we're confident that our support offer can make a positive impact. Our practice is committed to ensuring pupil and staff interests are at the centre of everything we do. We recognise that pupils and staff have strength and resilience which can be developed through connection with our support offer.

www.barnardosletsconnect.org.uk



Mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff

The prevalence of mental health challenges within children and young people is increasing and unaddressed challenges impact pupil learning and academic outcomes.

There is increasing expectation on school staff to provide wellbeing support to growing numbers of pupils.

Over 80 per cent of teachers report experiencing stress, anxiety, and depression at work, and over 50 per cent report feeling 'severely' stressed. (Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families, Mentally Healthy Schools).

Recognising that a pupil or colleague may be struggling can be difficult and supporting the wellbeing of others if you're struggling with your own wellness can be even more difficult. It is now understood that teachers' own emotional wellbeing affects classroom management and pupil outcomes (Braun, et al., 2018).

Whole school approach

In response to this, evidence-based models provide a framework to promote social and emotional wellbeing in schools for the benefit of the individual, the whole school, and the wider community. This requires engagement from all community members with a focus on early identification and intervention alongside a focus on staff wellness too.

We know this can be a challenge because, whilst mental health and wellbeing affects us all, not everyone has knowledge of mental health terminology or access to the services.

Staff recruitment and retention

Many sectors report challenges with staff recruitment and the education sector faces similar pressures. Mentoring and supervision have been valued by health professionals as a strategy for maintaining their wellness within work for many years (Greene, et al., 2002), and the role of mentoring as a wellness tool is recognised within whole school approach models.

Ofsted

Ofsted's current strategy prioritises children's health with a strong focus on guidance and support of healthy relationships and the mental health and wellbeing of children and young people.

The Ofsted framework requires schools to routinely assess, monitor and address pupils' mental health and wellbeing under the key judgement area of personal development. This includes resilience, confidence, independence and an understanding of how to keep mentally healthy.

Barnardo's Let's Connect Service provides the foundation for schools to work with the Ofsted framework and develop positive evidence across the aspects of mental health and wellbeing for pupils, for school staff and for the wider school community.

The different types of support we offer can provide an early response to potential school exclusions; improve individual self-esteem, wellbeing and confidence; support positive mental health; address specific concerns such as exam worries and managing transitions and enable schools to build a nurturing, effective and positive whole school culture.

Trauma informed practice

Many Integrated Care Boards promote the benefits of developing environments which are supportive of the difficulties we all face and the impact of these, particularly for pupils. Schools are being encouraged to adapt their working practices to become trauma informed.

Trauma relates to many events such as sexual, physical, and emotional abuse, as well as neglect, disasters, accidents, and medical injury. Events or experiences such as bullying, school transition and exam pressure, where the individual's support mechanisms fail to provide essential protection, can also result in a trauma response. Similarly, living with high levels of anxiety can impact how thoughts and feelings are processed and can result in trauma reactions to situations that people ordinarily would not find challenging. Given the prevalence of difficulties that pupils and staff are likely to experience that may evoke trauma responses, it is important for schools to adapt policies, processes, and protocols to be trauma informed.

Barnardo's support offer can help you do this and can help you understand what trauma informed practice is and what it looks like in your school. We can provide training to staff as well as guidance and strategies for staff supporting pupils who are experiencing difficulties, due to the effects of trauma.

Why choose Barnardo's?

Barnardo's Let's Connect team has experience of working across a range of educational settings, delivering evidence-based interventions for children, young people and adults.

We are passionate about supporting schools to achieve an inclusive culture and build school communities which promote good mental health, where everyone feels safe and has the opportunity to thrive.

We can provide evidenced based workforce development to equip staff with the skills, knowledge and confidence to support and develop.

We have a wealth of experience in supporting the development of a trauma-informed approach.

Barnardo's is a recognised national leader in the voice and influence of children and young people.

Our aim is simple; to provide the best outcomes for every child, no matter who they are or what they have been through.



Our mission is SET:

Support

pupils and staff to have a better understanding of themselves, so they feel confident to manage their own wellness.



Enable

early access to wellbeing and mental health support to prevent difficulties escalating and help pupils reach their potential in school.



Train

staff and pupils to deliver evidenced based and sustainable models of wellbeing support so they can help others in their school community year on year.



About us

Barnardo's Let's Connect Service supports the emotional wellbeing and mental health of whole school communities. We know that mental health and wellbeing affects us all. We believe that, for those experiencing difficulties, gaining help from people who understand within an environment committed to maintaining everybody's wellness is vital and helps schools to be an educating, encouraging, and enabling place to be.

How we can help

- We support schools to develop a whole school approach in delivering effective mental health and wellbeing support for pupils, staff, and the wider school community.
- We offer a menu of support options which align with latest guidance from NICE, the DfE, Ofsted, the Children's Commissioner, and the latest published research.
- We understand the essence of trauma informed practice and can support your school's understanding of this and what trauma informed practice looks like in a school setting. We can provide training to staff as well as guidance and strategies for staff supporting pupils who are experiencing difficulties, due to the effects of trauma.
- We support schools to 'grow their own' resources by training members of the school community to facilitate evidenced based support programmes. This enables schools to provide sustainable support early and to be more self-reliant and reduce the need to fund external providers.
- Our support is evidence based and, using our experience and expertise, we can tailor each offer to meet the needs of individual schools and settings.

Mental Health and Wellbeing – A Whole School Approach

Barnardo's can support your school to implement an effective whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing.

Irrespective of what stage your school is at in developing a whole school approach, we'd love to be part of your journey. For those new to the process, we can support your understanding of what a whole school approach is and share with you an audit tool we have created to help you evidence what you already have in place and any gaps that need supporting. For those with a further developed whole school approach plan, our support offer can enhance existing provision or support identified areas of development.

Schools who don't yet have plans to adopt a whole school approach can still access and benefit from our varied support offer to help create an emotionally healthy and supportive school environment. Our support can provide pupils and staff with understanding and tools to maintain their own wellness; improve pupil engagement in learning; enhance communication and relationships; support understanding and implementation of trauma informed approaches and enhance staff CPD.



Barnardo's support offer can help schools achieve a sustainable whole school approach to wellness and mental health and embed nurturing, inclusive and trauma informed environments.

Leadership & Management	Ethos & Environment	Curriculum Teaching & Learning	Targeted Support	Staff Development, Health & Wellbeing	Identifying Need & Monitoring Impact	Enabling Student Voice to Influence Decisions	Working with Parents, Families & Carers
<p>Understanding & Implementing</p> <p>Whole School Approach audit tool to identify existing strengths and areas and actions to develop.</p> <p>Support school leaders to understand and demonstrate a commitment to a whole school approach to championing mental health and well-being.</p>	<p>Shared language, understanding & approach</p> <p>Support to understand the process of embedding a trauma informed approach.</p> <p>Trauma informed practice training.</p> <p>Information and therapeutic workshops.</p> <p>Policy and practice updates.</p> <p>Mentoring and consultancy.</p>	<p>Preventative Support</p> <p>Themed whole class wellness workshops on resilience and wellbeing topics.</p> <p>LGBTQ guidance and support programmes.</p> <p>Real Love Rocks: healthy relationships programme.</p> <p>PATHS® Curriculum.</p> <p>Exam support programme.</p> <p>School transition programme.</p>	<p>Early Help & Intervention</p> <p>Evidenced based interventions.</p> <p>Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) group work.</p> <p>WRAP Train the Trainer programmes to support sustainability.</p> <p>Individual counselling for pupils.</p> <p>Trauma informed guidance and strategies for staff supporting pupils who are experiencing difficulties due to the effects of trauma.</p>	<p>Developing, Supporting & Maintaining Wellness</p> <p>Staff CPD to help them maintain their own health and well-being.</p> <p>WRAP and wellness workshops for staff.</p> <p>WRAP train the trainer programmes.</p> <p>Supervision & consultation sessions for staff working with pupils whose environments create on-going challenges.</p>	<p>Identify appropriate interventions</p> <p>Staff training on understanding & responding to trauma.</p> <p>Guidance on creating easy to access support within the school.</p> <p>Needs & support review with pupils & parent /carer.</p> <p>Help to generate staff/pupil feedback.</p> <p>Small group & whole class support within PSHE.</p> <p>Wellbeing sessions to address individual need.</p>	<p>Enabling & Developing</p> <p>Support development of a Voice & Influence Policy and group.</p> <p>Involve pupils in decisions about how services are delivered and promoted to other pupils.</p> <p>Support pupils to develop peer to peer support networks.</p> <p>Help to generate pupil feedback.</p>	<p>Advice, Guidance & Support</p> <p>Information and events for parents/ carers to assist their understanding of targeted interventions and how to access these.</p> <p>Parent/carer open access sessions for guidance on supportive responses to their c/yp.</p> <p>WRAP groups and wellness workshops for parents.</p>

Further details on some elements of our support offer

Trauma Informed Practice:

Trauma informed practice is more than just an offer of training. For a school to be trauma informed, the environment, the language, and the ethos needs to embrace and understand the principles. Let's Connect can help by:

- providing consultancy regarding the use of language used within all literature the school produces from art displays and newsletters to school policies
- providing information and awareness-raising workshops focused on developmental trauma and trauma responses
- consultancy sessions for staff when working with individual children with extra needs
- supervision for staff members requiring a reflective space to discuss the challenges they are experiencing
- advice and guidance from the art therapists and play therapists in the team for when working with children and young people in the classroom.

Support can be specific to individual need and can be either single-session or long term. Let's Connect can assist you to support the children as well as each other.

Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP®):

An evidenced based group model with proven effectiveness in increasing resilience, emotional wellbeing and mental health. It's a simple, structured wellness process which can be used by *anyone* – children, young people and adults – who want to change how they feel and how they react to life's challenges. WRAP® enables you to:

- better understand what impacts your wellness and mental health
- plan, in advance, what you can do to keep yourself emotionally on track
- work out what your resources are and focus on things you do well
- increase coping strategies and so prevent/decrease troubling feelings/behaviours
- focus on understanding key supporters who can help when needed
- increase your confidence and the 'how to' bounce back from setbacks.

WRAP® groups are not issue specific but allow people to focus on and action plan individual challenges such as: anxiety, low mood, relationships, stress, anger, work/school pressure, isolation, self-harm, grief, panic, low confidence, pain management, addiction. WRAP® has dual benefits as a preventative model and in supporting existing wellbeing and mental health challenges.

PATHS Curriculum:

Is designed for use with primary school children from reception to year 6. An evidenced based programme proven to improve self-esteem, emotional intelligence, self-control, classroom behaviour and academic engagement. Proven to reduce aggressive responses and emotional distress.

PSHE Whole Class Wellbeing Support:

Informed by WRAP and CBT approaches. Programmes are delivered over 10 sessions and support pupils to: improve wellbeing and mental health; build resilience and confidence; develop evidenced based coping strategies; improve understanding of what impacts individual wellbeing; strengthen peer networks; prevent/decrease troubling feelings/behaviours; plan, in advance, what pupils can do to keep emotionally 'on track'.

Transition Support Groups:

We provide whole class transition support programmes to help pupils manage and prepare for key transitions; explore thoughts and feelings about moving school; feel more confident; prepare for next steps; understand what they can do to support themselves and identify who and how others can support them.

We have created specific resources to support pupils transition including our 'Stepping into Secondary' guide which helps pupils be 'mind-set ready' and think positively about starting secondary school.

Exam Support Groups:

We provide exam support programmes to help pupils explore what impacts their wellbeing as they prepare for exams; build resilience and confidence; develop evidenced based coping skills and promote self-care. We support pupils to develop ways to manage worries, prevent challenges escalating and to find balance between revision, rest and recreation.

Real Love Rocks:

An evidenced based, trauma informed education programme created by Barnardo's and recently reviewed with the new statutory relationships and sex education guidance in mind. It provides age-appropriate support on healthy relationships, social media, exploitation and being safe. Themes covered include children's rights; consent, power and control; feelings and emotional regulation; mental health and wellbeing; grooming; bullying and cyberbullying; appropriate and inappropriate content online; challenging victim blaming; laws around keeping people safe.

There are three versions: one for primary schools, one for secondary schools and one for children and young people with special education needs.

Wellness Workshops:

We deliver workshops for pupils, staff and parents on wellness topics such as sleep, healthy lifestyles, anxiety, challenging negative thoughts, friendships/peer support, managing challenges, relaxation and stress reduction.

LGBTQ guidance and support:

We work with Barnardo's colleagues in our Positive Identities Service to develop bespoke support for school communities addressing LGBTQ topics.



To arrange a conversation or visit:

Email: letsconnect@barnardos.org.uk

Telephone: Paula Dawson on **07803 441344**

www.barnardosletsconnect.org.uk

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