How can schools and CAMHS work best together?

Preliminary results from the national school survey

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28th July 2015
Schools and CAMHS: the challenge

- Rising need (Fink et al., 2015)
- Ongoing reduction in services (YoungMinds, 2014)
- Teachers most commonly contacted as point of advice for mental health issues (Ford et al., 2007)
- Long term challenges in relationship between schools and CAMHS (Fazel et al., 2014, Pettit, 2003)
- Increased diversity in educational sector
Schools and CAMHS: the opportunity

- Future in Mind (2015) stresses need for greater links between schools and CAMHS
- DfE funding projects to support this
- Recent survey of head teachers suggests mental health is a top priority for heads (The Key, 2015)
- Increasing range of initiatives to support mental health and wellbeing in schools, many being showcased today at this event.
We wanted to know:

1. What specialist support is available for young people with mental health difficulties in schools?

2. Who provides this specialist support?

3. Where do school staff refer/signpost young people with mental health difficulties for help?

4. What are the key barriers to schools accessing support for young people with mental health problems?

5. What are schools’ lived experiences of supporting the mental health of students and pupils?
The survey in action
With thanks to all those involved, including:

Abbotskerswell Primary School
Acland Burghley School
Alderwood Farm Primary School
Ark Little Ridge Primary Academy
Barnston Village Primary School
Batchwood School
Bethlem and Maudsley Hospital School
Bridlewood Primary School
Bromet Primary School
Bunwell Primary School
Canons High School
Central Bedfordshire UTC
Cherry Willingham Community School
Chesterton Community College
Chilton County Primary School
Church End Lower School
Church of England Voluntary Controlled Upper School
Condover CofE Primary School
Cotwall End Primary School
Countess Wear Community School
Cuddington and Dinton CofE School
Devon Hospitals’ Short Stay School
Dr Radcliffe’s Church of England School
Eardisley CofE Primary School
Eastfield Primary School
Emscote Infant School
Exeter Mathematics School
Farndon St Peter's CofE Primary School
Field End Infant School
FIndern Primary School
Five Acre Wood School
Fountain Primary School
Gnosall St Lawrence Coe Primary Academy
Goodleigh Church of England Primary School
Grafton Primary School
Grampian Primary Academy
Green Oaks Primary School
Hamilton College
Hampstead School
Hawkswood Primary PRU
Heathcoat Primary School
Hellesdon High School
Henry Cavendish Primary School
Henry Tyndale School
Highgate Wood Secondary School
Hollingworth Primary School
Holy Cross Church of England Primary School
Holy Trinity CofE Primary School, NW3
Hull Trinity House Academy
Ifield School
Ilkley Grammar School
Inthorpe Infant School and Nursery
Jack Hunt School
Katherine Semar Junior School
Keresforth Primary School
Kings Weston School
Larches House School
Leatherhead Trinity School and Children’s Centre
Lexden Springs School
Light Oaks Junior School
Loddington CofE (VA) Primary School
Manadon Vale Primary School
Marshlands School
Mayfield Primary School
Meadow View Farm School
Meadow View Primary School
New End Primary School
Newfield School
Newton-le-Willows Primary School
Oak Lodge School
Oliver House School
Our Lady and St John Catholic College
Park View School
Passmores Academy
Pennington Infant School
Pimlico Academy
Priory Infant School
Purley CofE Primary School
Ralph Allen School
Rotherham Aspire
Samuel Rhodes MLD School
Seal Primary Academy
Skipton Girls’ High School
South Dartmoor Community College
South Wilts Grammar School for Girls
St Catherines’s School
St Cedd’s Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School, Bradwell
St Crispin’s Community Primary Infant School
St David’s Church of England Primary School
St John’s CofE (A) Primary School
St Margaret’s CofE Junior School
St Neot Community Primary School
St Nicholas CofE VA Primary School
St Philip Howard Catholic School
St Thomas’ Catholic Primary School, Canterbury
The Ashley School
The Castle School
The Holt School
The John Henry Newman Catholic School
The Primary School of St Mary and St Martin
The Ridgeway School & Sixth Form College
The Shrubberies School
The St Christopher School
The St Marylebone CofE School
The Weston Road Academy
The Willows CofE Primary School
Thornhill Primary School
Tormead School
Trinity High School and Sixth Form Centre
Warren Wood - A Specialist Academy
West Hill School
Westonbirt School
Whitgreave Infant School
Willesborough Junior School
William Macgregor Primary School
Windmill Primary School
Wisbech St Mary CofE Aided Primary School
Woodbridge Junior School
Wootton Upper School
... AND MANY MORE!
Schools represented in the survey

587 school staff in England
  60% school SLT / pastoral leads / inclusion managers
  40% other school staff

From 351 schools in 112 LAs
  • Mean = 1.6 respondents per school (range 1 – 21)
  • Mean = 5.1 respondents per LA (range 1 – 36)
Schools were primary & secondary, mostly mainstream, urban, non-fee paying, with a range of deprivation levels.
We under-represent primary, rural and fee-paying schools, and over-represent special schools.
Categorising schools by their relative size

- **Primary**: 133 (Small), 453 (Medium), 1352 (Large)
- **Secondary**: 253 (Small), 513 (Medium), 902 (Large)
- **All through/other**: 30 (Small), 68 (Medium), 496 (Large), 892 (Large)
- **Special**: 183 (Large)
1. RESULTS

AVAILABILITY OF SPECIALIST SUPPORT
Do you have specialist support for students with mental health problems within your school?

Yes: 72%
No: 28%

556 respondents
No differences in the reported level of specialist support between:

- Fee paying vs. non-fee paying schools
- Urban vs. rural schools
- Special vs. mainstream schools
- Schools with different levels of deprivation
Those in secondary schools report more specialist support than those in primary schools.

- **Primary:**
  - Yes: 57%
  - No: 43%

- **Secondary:**
  - Yes: 82%
  - No: 18%
Those in relatively larger schools report more specialist support than those in relatively smaller schools.

- **Small**
  - Yes: 65%
  - No: 35%

- **Medium**
  - Yes: 70%
  - No: 30%

- **Large**
  - Yes: 79%
  - No: 21%
How common are whole school approaches, curriculum time and staff training?

- Whole school approaches: 60% respondents
- Curriculum time: 50% respondents
- Staff training: 70% respondents
What specific interventions are used in schools?

- Therapy: 50%
- Nurture groups: 50%
- Family work: 40%
- Anger management: 30%
- Peer Support: 25%
- Mindfulness: 25%
- Themed support groups: 10%

333 respondents
Whole school approaches are more common in schools with higher levels of deprivation.
Peer support and anger management are more common in secondary schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Peer support</td>
<td>Yes 15%</td>
<td>Yes 37%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>No 85%</td>
<td>No 63%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anger management</td>
<td>Yes 33%</td>
<td>Yes 54%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No 67%</td>
<td>No 46%</td>
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Family work is more common in urban schools

Urban

- Yes: 57%
- No: 43%

Rural

- Yes: 32%
- No: 68%
Mindfulness is more common in special schools

Mainstream
- Yes: 22%
- No: 78%

Special
- Yes: 42%
- No: 58%
2: RESULTS

WHO PROVIDES THIS MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT?
Specialists providing support in school

- Counsellor
- Clinical psychologist
- Educational psychologist
- External agency (e.g. drugs)

% reporting each specialist: 333 respondents
Counsellors are more common in secondary schools

- **Primary**: Yes 49%, No 51%
- **Secondary**: Yes 81%, No 19%
Clinical psychologists are more common in special schools and in larger schools.

- **Mainstream**: Yes 17%, No 83%
- **Special**: Yes 36%, No 64%
- **Small**: Yes 6%, No 94%
- **Medium**: Yes 28%, No 72%
- **Large**: Yes 21%, No 79%
Use of external agencies is more common in secondary schools and in schools with higher levels of deprivation.

- **Primary**: 74% No, 26% Yes
- **Secondary**: 74% Yes, 26% No

Bar chart showing the percentage of schools with Free School Meals (FSM) as a predictor of higher usage of external agencies: 0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90%. The x-axis represents the percentage of FSM in schools, and the y-axis represents the percentage of schools using external agencies.
Who provides this support in schools?

- NHS: 60% respondents
- Voluntary sector: 30% respondents
- Private services: 20% respondents
- LA: 10% respondents
- Don’t know: 0% respondents

316 respondents
Secondary schools report more support provided by NHS CAMHS and voluntary sector than primary schools.
3. RESULTS

REFERRING STUDENTS FOR SUPPORT
School staff are most likely to direct students with mental health problems to NHS CAMHS.
Compared with other difficulties, self harm is more likely to be referred to specialist help within school.
Those in schools with greater levels of deprivation are more likely to refer students to services within school.
Special schools are more likely to refer students to services within school
Specialist services in school are viewed as being particularly helpful.

- **Specialist help in school**: helped (70%), neutral (20%), made worse (10%)
- **NHS CAMHS**: helped (60%), neutral (30%), made worse (10%)
- **Vol/Ind CAMHS**: helped (50%), neutral (40%), made worse (10%)

275 – 315 respondents
Specialist services in schools are viewed as providing particularly good feedback.
4. RESULTS

BARRIERS TO SUPPORT
Capacity of provision is viewed as the greatest barrier to supporting mental health in students.
5. RESULTS

SCHOOLS’ LIVED EXPERIENCES
1. Recognition of the difficulties all services are facing due to funding shortages

“Anyone at CAMHS who is working under the conditions they are working under and dealing with their impossible tasks on a day to day basis deserves our complete admiration and respect. CAMHS is doing the best that they can with the very limited resources that they have - we now don't even bother referring to CAMHS unless we can justifiably say there is clear and present risk of significant harm to either themselves or others around them. The chronic funding shortage is just storing up problems for the future. It is the untold scandal in education of our generation.”
2. Perceived increasing reliance on schools due to funding shortages

“Over the years the burden on schools to deal with mental health issues has increased dramatically but there has been very little investment in this year. Schools are having to 'pick up the pieces' that social services, the NHS and other organisations should be dealing with and schools lack the time, money and training to deal with the wide range of issues.”
3. Wish for increased skills and knowledge in schools

“Experiencing the frustration of trying to help and support students and their families during school time but having only limited knowledge about what resources are available, waiting lists etc. and who best to signpost them to for more help.”

“Feel completely overwhelmed. I feel I have no specialist skills in the area and am struggling to support the number of students that present. Also lack of time means I feel we are not picking up the students early so that issues do not escalate.”
4. Wish for emotional support for school staff

“It is often very distressing to see a student in that state and we as teachers hold onto that load for many of our students.”

“There should be counselling available for teachers (or publicity about it)”
5. Concern about academic pressures as key risk factor

“Schools need to rethink the pressure of academic achievement and constant targets and equally value each child's happiness and well being. So many students crack under the pressure and are not totally supported when they do. The pressure from the government is really felt by teachers and this filters down to the students. Change needs to come from the top!”

“I think the pressure that the current education puts on young people to enormous and can trigger or exacerbate mental health difficulties for students.”
6. Concern about lack of application of evidence based practice

“Many mental health issues are well understood in terms of cause and treatment. However, as a society we are not applying this knowledge when young people display clear symptoms nor, indeed preventatively with regard to parenting. This is analogous to living in a feudal agricultural society whilst having our current advanced scientific and technological expertise.”
SUMMING UP
In summary

- Schools are expressing the burden of trying to support young people in distress.
- Schools recognise the challenges both they and CAMHS face, and often feel frustrated by this.
- Attitudes/stigma around mental health are not perceived to be the main barrier, but rather lack of capacity for provision of specialist help.
- On the whole there were few differences between schools, but relatively larger schools and secondary schools tended to report greater provision.
The problem does not appear to be attitudes or stigma.

The problem appears to be capacity.

How do we jointly address this?