

**Divisions Affected – N/A**

**OXFORDSHIRE JOINT HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

**23 November 2023**

**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S EMOTIONAL WELLBEING AND  
MENTAL HEALTH – PROGRESS UPDATE**

**Report by Corporate Director of Children's Services, ICB Place  
Director for Oxfordshire and Corporate Director of Public Health &  
Community Safety**

**RECOMMENDATION**

**The Committee is RECOMMENDED** to acknowledge the

1. Progress on the actions within the strategy and to support the continuation of the partnership working across the system.

**Executive Summary**

2. This report summarises the work completed to date on the development and implementation of the emotional mental health and wellbeing strategy and action plan.
3. The emotional mental health and wellbeing strategy has been developed within a preventative framework and identifies four key aims supported by objectives covering:
  - Provide early help and create supportive environments
  - Develop a confident workforce
  - Ensure positive transitions
  - Improve Access
4. The strategy is also embedded within the I-Thrive model of delivery of child and adolescent mental health services developed by Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust and the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families.

5. The emotional mental health and wellbeing action Plan outlines key deliverable areas:
  - Digital offer and directory of services
  - Family Learning and support programmes
  - Whole school wellbeing resilience programme
  - Development of system performance dashboard to track progress of the implementation of the action plan
  - 16-25 transition service
  - Training Programme for the children and young people's workforce
  - Wider determinants of health
6. Key progress so far will include the procurement of a digital app service designed to enable early access to support for children and young people's emotional mental health and wellbeing. Other areas of progress include work to develop an Oxfordshire whole school resilience framework; public health work on addressing the wider determinants of health that cover a diverse range of social, economic and environmental factors which influence people's mental and physical health e.g. school readiness and tackle the economic inequalities.
7. The report further outlines some of the constraints that will impact on delivering the emotional mental health and wellbeing strategy but also some of the opportunities for service transformation.

## Background

8. Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire (BOB) Integrated Care Partnership (ICP) are a group of organisations who plan and provide health and care services for the people who live and work in the local authority areas of Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire's three westerly local authority areas of West Berkshire, Reading and Wokingham (known as 'Berkshire West'). Members include local NHS organisations and GPs, local authorities, public health, Healthwatch, care providers, voluntary and community groups, as well as academic and research partners. The Partnership wants to ensure that children and young people have the best possible start in life and that everyone can live a happy and healthy life for as long as possible.
9. The Strategy<sup>1</sup> for BOB includes an action to 'Improve emotional, mental health and wellbeing for children and young people'. Actions <sup>2</sup> to achieve this include improving timely access and early intervention in universal care and support across our system. As well as developing a population health approach to identify and support CYP most at risk of mental ill health focusing on early intervention, early support and prevention.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.bucksoxonberks.w.nhs.uk/media/2933/integrated-care-strategy.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.bucksoxonberks.w.nhs.uk/media/2915/bob-joint-forward-plan-full-document-june-2023.pdf>

10. Oxfordshire County Council Strategic Plan 2023 - 2025 sets out its vision to lead positive change by working in partnership to make Oxfordshire a greener, fairer and healthier county. A priority within the plan is to 'create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential'. This includes an action to support the emotional mental health and wellbeing of children and young people by increasing the number of interventions in schools and places which young people frequent.
11. Oxfordshire's Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy was presented at Health Overview Scrutiny Committee in June 2022 and with the Health and Wellbeing Board in December 2022. This report will provide an update on progress against the action plan.
12. The action plan<sup>3</sup> and implementation of the strategy is overseen by the Oxfordshire Children and Young People's Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Board which means bi-monthly, alongside other key system partnerships as well as reporting progress to the Joint Commissioning Executive and Health and Wellbeing Board when requested.

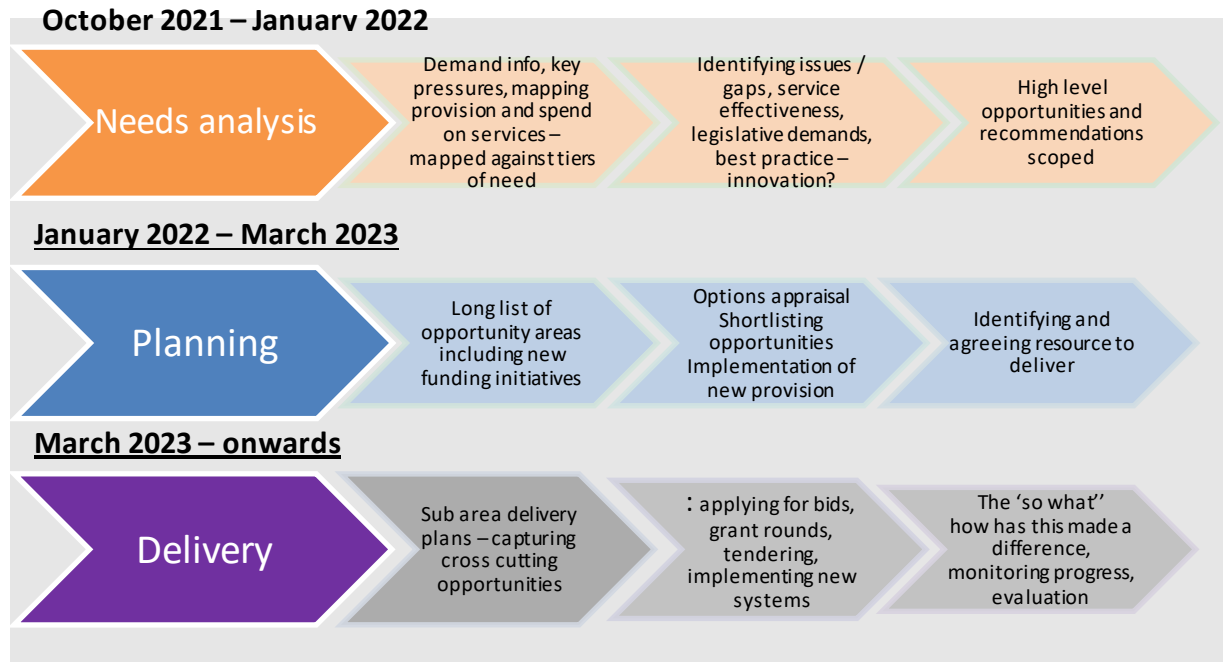
## **Progress Update**

13. At the June 2022 Health Overview Scrutiny Committee meeting, the Lead Commissioner reported that:
  - The planning phase (detailed below) of the development and implementation of the emotional wellbeing and mental health strategy was near completion. This process also included system partners, children and young people and parents and carers making recommendations to short list options to take forward to business case stage to implement the strategy and address the gaps in the system.

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<sup>3</sup><https://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/documents/s63656/CYP%20emotional%20wellbeing%20promotion%20and%20mental%20ill%20health%20prevention%20strategy%20update.pdf>

Fig 1. key milestones chart



14. Engagement through the organisation of five focus groups with children and young people and parents and carers were organised to provide feedback on the options listed below. The focus group meetings took place throughout April and May 2022 with the following groups:

- ✓ 22 April – a focus group with 15 young people from the Sweatbox Youth Group in Wantage at the Buzz Café in Wantage.
- ✓ 5 May – an online focus group with 5 members of the Oxford Young People Advisory Group (YPAG) co-facilitated by the University of Oxford
- ✓ 11 May – two online focus groups with 10 members of the Oxfordshire Parent Carers Forum (OxPCF) co-facilitated by OxPCF
- ✓ 13 May – an in-person focus group with 3 Mental Health Ambassadors, part of the Mental Wealth Academy service, co-facilitated by Oxfordshire Youth
- ✓ Another focus group with has been organised for June 2022 with CYP who identify as LGBTQI+.

Options:

- A digital mental health platform for children and young people
- Enhanced integrated Single Point of Access (SPA)
- Interactive directory of mental health and wellbeing services
- Whole-school wellbeing and resilience programme
- 16-25 transition service(s) to support young people with their mental health who are being discharged from CAMHS and are not eligible for Adult Mental Health Services

- Family learning and support programme(s) to support children with neuro diverse conditions pre and post diagnoses
  - Training programme(s) for children and young people workforce in how to better support children and young people mental health and wellbeing
  - Young person's preventative mental health and wellbeing support – community Youth Offer
15. The Priority opportunities that were shortlisted by children and young people and parents and carers were as follows:
- Teacher training in MH and autism/ADHD training – needs to be mandatory
  - Digital support for CYP mental health
  - 16-25 transitions services
  - Family and Learning Support programmes
  - Single point of access (SPA) for all services
16. The feedback was shared with the system partners in a shortlisting session which took place 19 May 2022 that informed the opportunities that were finally short listed to business case stage which were as follows:
- A digital platform
  - 16-25 transitions service
  - Family learning and support programmes
  - Training programmes for the children and young people's workforce and whole school wellbeing resilience programme

## Progress to date

17. Progress against the key milestones for finalising the strategy and action plan is detailed below.

Activity	Timeline
Finalise the action plan and deliverables for the strategy	November 2022 - complete
Deliver actions in the strategy including starting the activity on the action plan	From January 2023
Implementation and mobilisation of new services	From March 2023
Review impact and progress against priorities	Six monthly and on an annual basis

Progress against key areas of the strategy is detailed below:

### The development of an emotional wellbeing and mental health strategy

18. The strategy focuses on both promoting emotional wellbeing, which can be understood as how people feel and function and deal with the ups and downs of everyday life, and on preventing mental ill health, which is defined clinically

and includes depression and anxiety, for example. It aims to take a public health approach to the emotional wellbeing and mental health of children and young people (aged 0 to 25 years old) which includes considering where people live, work, and play – the wider determinants of health – as well as access to services that provide support when needed.

19. The vision, aims, and objectives have been developed with input from a wide range of stakeholders in Oxfordshire including children, young people, parents/carers, and professionals from across the local public sector partnership including NHS, local authority, and voluntary and community sector colleagues and in response to a local gap and needs analysis.
20. The aims and objectives respond to specific challenges and opportunities in Oxfordshire in the context of increased demand for support for children and young people's wellbeing and mental health over the past five years, which was compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is also mirrored nationally which shows an increase in prevalence over the last three years where one in six children and young people (5 to 16 year olds) have a probable mental disorder in 2020 compared to one in nine in 2017; additionally one in five 17 to 22 year olds have a probable mental disorder in 2020.<sup>1</sup> Applying this to the Oxfordshire population suggests there are 16,159 children aged 5 to 16 years old and 11,069 children and young people aged 17 to 22 years old with a probable mental disorder in the county.
21. Certain groups have been impacted more than others, such as those with a disability, those from less affluent backgrounds, those who identify as LGBTQI+, young carers, those from ethnic minority backgrounds, and young carers, and as an area we will focus resources to these groups to help tackle key local health inequalities.
22. The vision, aims and objectives are summarised below.

## **Vision**

***“All children and young people in Oxfordshire can achieve good mental health and wellbeing with access to the right support at the earliest opportunity when they need it. “***

**Aim 1:** Provide early help and create supportive environments

### **Objectives:**

- Improve the wellbeing and resilience of all children, young people, and families, including focusing on the wider determinants of health
- Targeted support to those with the most need to tackle local health inequalities
- Providing early support to everyone to prevent problems from getting worse

## Aim 2: Develop a confident workforce

### Objectives:

- Building capacity and confidence in the workforce to support children, young people, and families' wellbeing and mental health, and create supportive environments that are positive for wellbeing and mental health.
- Better understanding by the workforce of how and where to apply interventions and strategies to meet children and young people's needs and to ensure the workforce understand who to signpost and refer children and young people too to support their wellbeing and mental health.

## Aim 3: Ensure positive transitions

### Objectives:

- Building emotional wellbeing and resilience of young people aged 16 to 25 years old, including supporting recovery
- Children and young people have and are prepared for positive transitions between children and adult mental health services

## Aim 4: Improve Access

### Objectives:

- Increase the amount of support available across the County to children, young people, and families to promote positive wellbeing and support mental health problems
- Increase the range of options to include a mix of face-to-face, telephone, and digital support
- Support is easy to access via a single integrated pathway
- Children and young people get directed to the right place at the right time

23. The strategy is also embedded within the I-Thrive model of delivery of child and adolescent mental health services developed by Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust and the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families (see figure 2)

Fig 2



- **Thriving:** Around 80% of children at any one time are experiencing the normal ups and downs of life but do not need individualised advice or support around their mental health issues.
- **Getting advice:** This group includes both those with mild or temporary difficulties and those with fluctuating or ongoing severe difficulties, who are managing their own health and not wanting goals-based specialist input.
- **Getting help:** This grouping comprises those children, young people and families who would benefit from focused, evidence-based help and support.  
**Getting more help:** This group is a small number of children who may benefit from extensive intervention.
- **Getting risk support:** This grouping comprises those children, young people and families who will benefit from evidence-based treatment but remain a significant concern and risk.

### **Access to mental health support**

*HOSC question - Whether there is a single point of access that is available for a range of services related to children's emotional wellbeing and mental health.*

24. The CAMHS Single Point of Access (SPA) is open 9-5pm Monday to Friday and accepts self-referrals, family/carer and professional referrals and is open for information, advice about services, where there are concerns about emerging mental health problems. The SPA will also offer consultation to families and other stakeholders. The SPA already signposts a large volume of referrals who are not eligible for support under CAMHS to the Voluntary and Community sectors and this process is working well.
25. The idea of expanding the remit of the CAMHS (SPA) was discounted due to the various ways that the voluntary sector operates and meeting the cost of the potential increased staffing resources required to triage and manage the increased volumes of referrals for all services. However, a directory of services will be included in the new digital peer support app for children and young people of secondary school age.

### **An Emotional wellbeing and mental health action plan**

26. We have taken a partnership approach to the development and implementation of the action plan to deliver on the aims and objectives within the strategy. This is to ensure that we make best use of public resources and working within set budgets across the system.
27. The following workstreams have been established to deliver the strategy aims and objectives and were agreed with children, young people and parents /carers:
- Digital offer and directory of services
  - Family Learning and support programmes
  - Whole school wellbeing resilience programme



- Development of system performance dashboard to track progress of the implementation of the action plan
- 16-25 transition service
- Training Programme for the CYP workforce
- Wider determinants of health

28. Leads have been assigned to each workstream supported by working groups that provide progress reports for the Emotional Mental Health and Wellbeing Board. A progress update is provided below on the implementation of the action plan.

### **Digital offer and directory of services**

29. To deliver a three-year programme of early intervention digital mental health support for children and young people to use anonymously in secondary schools via the procurement of a digital counselling platform. It is recognised that digital solutions to early intervention support for mental health are likely to widen access to support and enhance opportunities for self-care. Early access to support for emotional mental health and wellbeing will have wide long-term benefits, including the potential to reduce long term costs associated with health and social care need.

### **Progress Update**

30. The procurement of a 3-year digital app service commenced in August 2023 because of funding primarily identified by Public Health and the utilisation of a DfE grant awarded to Children's Social Care. The Invitation to Tender closed on 31st October 2023 and the evaluation process has commenced. Providing a successful bidder is identified, the contract is due to commence from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2023 and will include a period for mobilisation so that the new service commences from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024.

### **Family learning and support programme(s)**

31. This involves scoping out existing family learning and support offers and attendance rates across Oxfordshire and identifying gaps and linkages into the Family Hub development. We are also working with Oxford Parent Carer Forum to provide feedback on the quality of courses available and if these courses provide parents and carers with the skills that are required to be able to better care and support a child with mental health concerns.

### **Progress Update**

32. A survey questionnaire has been sent to 64 providers of family and parenting courses. Currently 15 completed questionnaires have been returned. An analysis of the returned questionnaires indicates the following:

- The most popular courses accessed are in relation to family links - supporting parents with children with challenging behaviours and talking teens - managing and supporting teenagers. Attendance at these courses totalled 253.

- Courses focusing on early years to primary school age have been the most popular
- Courses being accessed the most are provided free of charge primarily through a mixture of face 2 face and online.

Once all survey questionnaires have been returned then a more detailed analysis will be undertaken to identify the gaps in service provision.

33. Oxford Health School In-Reach Team<sup>4</sup> is holding several webinars for parents to share how to support children and young people with some of the commonly seen emotional and mental health concerns. The first was on anxiety in October and topics in November and December include supporting young people who self harm, teenage anxiety and talking to distressed young people, low mood.

### **Whole-school wellbeing and resilience programme**

34. Whole-school approaches to wellbeing and supporting children and young people with their mental health to be rolled-out to primary and secondary schools this will be based on the I-Thrive model whereby services will be mapped according to the tiers of need on the I-Thrive model, this has proved to be successful for schools in London and Surrey whereby they were able to clearly list available resources at each tier and make recommendations for improvements to be developed to address and gaps and inequalities. Interventions include focusing on developing social, emotional and mental health literacy skills and instilling good behaviours in children and young people along with having a directory of resources to involve when children's needs escalate.

### **Progress Update**

35. A working group has been established to review frameworks to be used to benchmark schools' ability to support children and young people with their emotional mental health. It has also been agreed that a survey questionnaire to be sent to all Oxfordshire schools in order to understand any frameworks that are being used by schools to build on an Oxfordshire wide school resilience framework and to understand what mental health training schools are accessing and the impact this having on children and young people's mental health.

36. On the 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 an I-Thrive event led by CAMHS colleagues with the Anna Freud Centre completed a system wide I-Thrive benchmarking exercise. This information will be used to build on any chosen framework across the Oxfordshire system.

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<sup>4</sup> [Parent webinars | Oxford Health CAMHS Oxford Health CAMHS](#)

## **Development of system performance dashboard**

37. This involves creating system wide measures to evaluate the effectiveness and the impact of the strategy against achieving its aims and objectives. With the aim of demonstrating how services are working to reduce demand into acute mental health services. Therefore, system wide metrics will be developed based around the I-Thrive model and impact measures will be drawn from:

- The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities' (OHID) [Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing Profiling Tool](#),
- System key performance indicators, that track outcomes, spend, referral pathways, service outputs, and inequalities data.
- asking children and young people, by using qualitative evaluation methods such as storytelling, case studies, and 'mystery shopping'.

## **Progress Update**

38. Initial draft metrics against each pathway of the I Thrive model (Getting Advice, Getting Help, Getting More Help and Getting Risk Support) have been identified covering volume, flow and effectiveness across key service provision areas (CAMHS, OCC, the Provider Collaborative and voluntary sector). The next stage is compiling a dashboard of existing metrics from the current Oxford Health CAMHS performance digest once reporting is resumed following the cyber-attack.

## **16 to 25 year old transition service(s)**

39. The purpose of this area of work is to review the services available for those young people that are not eligible for accessing adult mental health services who were previously accessing CAMHS.

## **Progress Update**

40. As part of the transformation work with Adult Mental Health Services a series of in-person leadership program workshops were conducted across system partners in May-August 2023 which included a series of SPRINT workstreams on specific issues identified in the system. Transitions was a specific SPRINT workstream to support the transformation of both CAMHS and Adult Mental Health Services with a particular focus on three areas covering: the experience of 16+ transition to adulthood, workforce skills and knowledge and models of practice. The outputs from this piece of work will feed into a wider proposal of an all-age mental health services. Oxford Health are leading on the transformation of these services.

*HOSC question - The process and efficacies around transitions.*

*The degree to which transitions from primary to secondary schools are handled sensitively and incrementally.*

41. As children approach 5 years of age, a review of their records is undertaken by the Health Visiting Service, to identify vulnerable children who will need support as they transition over to the School Health Nursing (SHN) Service. All parent/carers of children who enter Reception Class receive a leaflet outlining the SHN service and an offer of a health review. From April 2024, there will be a new 4yr old universal review, before children start school and will highlight any areas of concerns that need to be addressed and give the child and the family more time to prepare for school.
42. Vulnerable children who are approaching transition from primary to secondary school, are known to the primary SHNs and they will link with the appropriate secondary SHN to ensure that these children are supported during the transition. The primary SHNs link with the Mental Health Support Teams around PSHE for transitions. The SHNs and HVs workforce have received trauma informed practice training and receive 6 weekly supervision from CAMHS. The Oliver McGowan Training on Learning Disability and Autism has also been added to the mandatory training of all staff.
43. In relation to transition from CAMHS to Adult Mental Health Services (AMHS), Oxford Health Foundation Trust Adult Mental Health Services have realigned their services, using primary and secondary care criteria. All transitions from CAMHS referrals go to the transitions panel and are discussed with the CAMHS transitions Manager and Adult Mental Health Team (AMHT) managers who can ask for further detail or decline the assessment. They will also support CAMHS in sign posting to other external services for post 18, which in Oxfordshire we call 'bridging the Gap' for young people.
44. There is an ADHD AMHT pathway which does not need to come to transitions panel, instead, the referral goes directly to the GP who will liaise as and when needed with the ADHD AMHT clinic. Kingswood is for post 18 ASD support and is not accessed via the AMHT, but referrals can be made by the patient or family/ carers / Children We Care For teams.
45. Referral to primary care is accessed through the AMHT via the transitions panel and is managed by Keystone Hubs mental health and wellbeing support. Referral to secondary care is for a more complex organic diagnosis.
46. Not all young people who come to the transitions panel will be eligible for the AMHT. Currently, only approximately 10% will not meet the threshold for referral into the AMHT.
47. What is noticeable is that the majority of CAMHS patients are being referred and signposted to the complex needs service which is in the primary care

sector of the AMHT. This is for ongoing work in dysregulation/emotional unstable personality disorder related to complex trauma.

## Wider determinants of health

48. The wider determinants of health are a diverse range of social, economic and environmental factors which influence people's mental and physical health. The quality of the built and natural environment such as air quality, the quality of green spaces and housing quality also affect health. Educational attainment is linked to health behaviours and outcomes throughout a person's life and varies considerably by socioeconomic position.

## Progress Update

49. **School Readiness:** The Early Years dashboard within the 2023 [Oxfordshire JSNA](#) shows that over 87.2% of the 86 middle level super output areas are rated red or amber for the indicator 0-4 years, Speech Language and Communication needs. Early language acquisition impacts on all aspects of young children's development. It contributes to their ability to manage emotions and communicate feelings, to establish and maintain relationships, to think symbolically, and to learn to read and write. Oxfordshire County Council is committed to delivering a joint initiative between Early Years and Public Health to target speech and language communication to children before they go to school. This proposal also includes the development of a graduated response with a particular focus on narrowing the gap for children in areas of disadvantage. This forms part of the work of the Oxfordshire Early Language Pathway Group.

50. **The Oxfordshire Inclusive Economy Partnership (OIEP)** is working together in partnership to tackle the economic inequalities and are working to create opportunities for all people in Oxfordshire, making use of everyone's potential, so that we can all benefit from Oxfordshire's success. The partnership has developed a Charter which is a way for employers to demonstrate support for and commitment to making Oxfordshire a fairer and more inclusive place to live and work. The partnership has 4 working groups focusing on education attainment, place shaping, inclusive employment and social value procurement which contributes to improve the health and wellbeing of children and young people and local communities.

51. There are also other initiatives underway in local communities following the publication of Community Insights Profiles<sup>5</sup>. These include projects such as Oxford Clothes Hub which provides families with second hand clothing to improved self-esteem and wellbeing, providing support to Saturday Club and Wellbeing activities in The Leys. Reading support in primary schools and setting up physical activity sessions in Abingdon. Good Food Oxfordshire are also delivering food poverty training to leaders of frontline organisations from each

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<sup>5</sup> <https://insight.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/community-insight-profiles>

District area. This training will then be cascaded to frontline staff and volunteers who are working with people experiencing food insecurity. There is also a project where air quality is being monitored outside a selection of primary schools across the county and this is being delivered in conjunction with Travel Plans and School Streets Initiative.

### **Training programme(s) for the children and young people's workforce**

52. The aim is to identify resources to ensure frontline staff across all our services (social care, health, education) are trained in the early identification of and can support mental health issues and provide appropriate support and signposting.

### **Progress Update**

53. Public Health have commissioned Oxfordshire MIND to deliver a comprehensive and co-ordinated all-ages Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Training offer in Oxfordshire for professionals and volunteers. The training will be targeted around unmet need and equip people with the knowledge and skills they need to help their families, friends and individuals that they work or volunteer with. A Mental Health Aware Network/Community of Interest will also be established to embed learning and facilitate peer-to-peer support. This was an area of action from the Prevention Concordat for Better Mental Health and Oxfordshire's Suicide Prevention Strategy.
54. **Making Every Contact Count (MECC)** Training has been delivered to primary schools and early years settings. It is an approach that uses evidence-based behaviour change techniques to help everyday conversations with people to improve their health and wellbeing. Key issues being raised in these training sessions by attendees include food banks, housing, cost of living, sleep routines for children.

### **Other training Initiatives**

55. The Department for Education<sup>6</sup> is offering a grant of £1,200 for eligible state-funded schools and colleges in England to train a senior mental health lead to develop and implement a whole school or college approach to mental health and wellbeing. This training is not compulsory, but it is part of the government's commitment to offer this training to all eligible schools and colleges by 2025. The latest figures show take-up across Oxfordshire is 55%, compared to 62% across South-East, and approximately 60% nationally. We are keen to encourage further take up of the grant across the county, as having a trained senior mental health lead in a setting plays an important role in the whole school/college approach and therefore the mental health and wellbeing support available to children and young people. This is a great opportunity for schools and colleges to access funded training which offers full flexibility to meet the

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/senior-mental-health-lead-training>

needs of the individual setting. We will continue to promote this opportunity locally.

56. The Department for Health and Social Care have also produced resources<sup>7</sup> for education settings for staff to teach mental wellbeing topics to both primary and secondary students, with flexible, ready-to-use content co-created with teachers and young people.

57. Mind-Ed<sup>8</sup> is a free, multi-professional online training resource on the mental health of children, young people, adults and older people, developed by Health Education England in partnership with the NHS and professional bodies including Royal College Psychiatry and Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. It includes sessions on a number of topics relevant to early years mental health as well as a specific public mental health training module.

*HOSC question - Details of any extended elements of basic Mental Health First Aid training that could be part of the core curriculum for all school staff, as well as other relevant support services which work within schools or with children.*

58. As stated in the roll out of the training for CYP workforce workstream MIND will be delivering training to staff working with people of all ages to better support them with their mental health. Training recommendations for schools to adopt will also feature in the benchmarking of the I-Thrive model under the Wellbeing and School Resilience workstream. The Anna Freud centre has developed a range of free training<sup>9</sup> for school staff which is actively promoted to schools via Schools News.

### **Identified funding sources to deliver the prioritised opportunities**

*HOSC question - Details on whether it is felt that there is sufficient funding and resource allocated towards Children's emotional wellbeing and mental health*

59. Funding has been made available from Public Health for a range of actions on the action plan as detailed in the progress section. There will be a need to invest in more early intervention and prevention services along with statutory services which is being addressed in the SEND Priority Action Plan (PAP) following the OFSTED inspection in July 2023. This will particularly benefit the school resilience, parenting courses and transitions workstreams which are all a priority on the PAP.

### **Further collaborative work with system partners**

*HOSC question - The level of engagement that has continued with Children and Young People as well as their parents/carers.*

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<sup>7</sup> <https://campaignresources.phe.gov.uk/schools/topics/mental-wellbeing/overview>

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.minded.org.uk/>

<sup>9</sup> [Training in Schools \(annafreud.org\)](https://www.annafreud.org/training-in-schools)

60. Engagement with children and young people, parents and carers continue to be a priority for implementing the aims and objectives of the emotional wellbeing and mental health strategy. Plans are in place to involve children and young people, parents and carers in the “doing and reviewing” stages of the commissioning cycle and this includes working with Oxford parent carer forum to review the outputs of the parenting courses delivered across the County. Whilst it was not possible to involve children and young people and parents and carers in the procurement of the digital app service due to constraints in procurement regulations, they will be involved in all future service reviews and implementation of the action plan.

**HOSC Question** - *The degree to which there has been further/continued collaborative work between Children’s Services and Public Health to improve Children’s emotional wellbeing and mental health.*

61. This needs to be a whole system approach with all organisations working in partnership. A single organisation, initiative or project will not achieve the strategy on its own.

62. A recent report from Royal College of Psychiatrists<sup>10</sup>, ‘Infant and early childhood mental health: the case for action’ October 2023 highlights that the mental health needs of babies and young children under 5 are intimately linked with their general health and wellbeing, and are most effectively met by a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency approach which considers a child’s development in the context of their relationships with primary caregivers and the wider environment. There are a number of interventions already in place in Oxfordshire that will continue to support parents and identifying needs early through the Health Visiting Service and the Specialist Health Visitors in Perinatal and Infant Mental Health, Family Nurse Partnership, Early Help and Family Solutions Plus Model which will promote attachment between parent and baby as attachment difficulties are associated with mental health problems throughout childhood and adolescence.

## **Constraints and Opportunities**

### **Constraints**

63. Data and information presented in the emotional wellbeing and mental health strategy highlighted a local growing trend in increased need and access for mental health support and services. For example, over a four-year period from 2016/17 to 2019/20, the number of referrals of Oxfordshire patients to Oxford Health for mental health services increased by 38% overall and by:

- +83% for people aged 0 to 9 years

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<sup>10</sup> [https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/docs/default-source/improving-care/better-mh-policy/college-reports/college-report-cr238--infant-and-early-childhood-mental-health.pdf?sfvrsn=1d8d5efd\\_12&utm\\_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=NEWSL\\_HMP\\_Lib](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/docs/default-source/improving-care/better-mh-policy/college-reports/college-report-cr238--infant-and-early-childhood-mental-health.pdf?sfvrsn=1d8d5efd_12&utm_source=The%20King%27s%20Fund%20newsletters%20%28main%20account%29&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=NEWSL_HMP_Lib)



- +58% for people aged 10 to 19 years
- +36% for people aged 20 to 24 years
- +22% for people aged 25 years and over.

64. In 2020/21 there was an increase in both demand and acuity – meaning an increase in the severity of the presenting illness. In 2021, Oxfordshire had a higher proportion of all school age pupils with social emotional and mental health needs (3.25%) compared to the England average (2.79).

65. This pattern of increased need and demand continues to be identified in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) 2023 for Starting Well:

- Oxfordshire continues to have a higher than average proportion of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) support, although the gap with England has narrowed
- The number of mental health referrals for young people has increased significantly
- Similar to the national trend (4.2% for boys), Oxfordshire has an increasing percentage of children with social, emotional, and mental health needs, with a higher prevalence in boys (4.8%).
- Between 2020-21 and 2022-23, the number of referrals of Oxfordshire patients to Oxford Health for mental health services increased by 23% for people aged 0-4
- The proportion of pupils with autism was above the England average in Oxfordshire's state-funded secondary schools (2.7% compared with 1.8%), however, the total prevalence (all schools) is similar.
- The number of Children Looked After (CLA) in key stage 2 with SEN support and with Autistic Spectrum Disorder was 9 percentage points above the percentage for England (16% in Oxfordshire vs England 7.3%).

#### OxWell Survey<sup>11</sup>

66. In the 2023, 7,206 students in years 5 to 13 took part from 13 primary schools, 15 secondary schools and 3 Further Education colleges. Separate reports have been generated for each of the primary schools, secondary schools (years 7 to 11) and sixth forms/colleges who participated. The overall OxWell Student Survey collected data from February - March 2023; 43,734 students took part in the survey from 105 primary schools, 70 secondary schools and 10 Further Education colleges across six different regions in England – Berkshire East, West Berkshire, Liverpool, Milton Keynes, Sandwell and Oxfordshire.

67. Early results

- 1 in 4 regularly skip meals because of weight concerns
- 1 in 3 have a problem with sleepiness
- 18% often feel lonely
- 1 in 4 often feel sad or empty
- 1 in 5 asked for support from a parent/carer and most found it helpful
- Most of those who turned to a friend (in person) found it helpful

<sup>11</sup> <https://oxwell.org/2023-results/>

- 1 in 10 asked a school counsellor/nurse for help and over help found it helpful

## Workforce challenges

68. There continues to be recruitment challenges for the local community CAMHS which is not dissimilar to the other CAMH services across the BOB ICS footprint. At the start of 2022, BOB concluded a detailed review of workforce challenges which showed recruitment to getting more help services, crisis and T4 inpatient services to be of particular concern. A key BOB project is to develop a CAMHS Academy to expand workforce and assessment capacity for the CAMHS and neurodevelopmental pathways.

## Financial Challenges

69. It is noted that both the ICB and Oxfordshire County Council Children services have significant financial challenges and any new investments into service provision will require the reallocation of funding from within the system.

## Opportunities

70. **The Healthy Child and Young Person Public Health Service will provide** an integrated 0-19 years public health service across Oxfordshire will include the mandated developmental reviews for 0-5 years and nationally recommended contacts for 0-19 years, a Family Nurse Partnership (FNP) programme, Vision Screening for 4–5-year-olds, the National Child Measurement Programme (NCMP), and a Personal Safety/Protective Behaviours programme. This new service will become operational from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024, it will be needs led with a 'Think Family Approach' and will feature service improvements that include an additional universal school readiness review at age 4 years, a targeted focus on transitions, bringing Home Start into the service delivery offer to provide targeted support, and having a single point of access for families and young people.

71. **Emotionally School Based Avoidance Project** Oxfordshire MIND are working alongside Primary Care Networks to support children and young people supported aged 7-17 yr olds who fall into the category of 'Emotionally Based School Avoidance (EBSA).' Emotionally-based school avoidance is a term referring to reduced or nonattendance at school by a child or young person and rather than the term 'school refusal', the term EBSA recognises that this avoidance has its root in emotional, mental health or wellbeing issues<sup>12</sup>. The project involves an initial assessment and then 5 short sessions with a trained

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<sup>12</sup> <https://www.annafreud.org/resources/schools-and-colleges/addressing-emotionally-based-school-avoidance/#:~:text=Emotionally-based%20school%20avoidance%20is%20a%20term%20referring%20to,2022%20Attendance%20Audit%20from%20the%20Children%E2%80%99s%20Commissioner%20>

CYP Wellbeing Worker to hear what support a child or young person needs and develop a wellbeing toolkit with them. Supported Self-Help has been developed with young people and their trusted adults and can be delivered in a GP Surgery or community setting. In Oxfordshire it is currently being delivered from 5 Primary Care Networks, (Bicester, Banbury Alliance, Didcot, Kidlington, Islip, Woodstock, Yarnton and Wantage), working with 7-17 year olds and their trusted adults.

72. **Oxford Health CAMHS Service** hosted a whole system engagement event on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023 facilitated by the National **I-THRIVE Programme** and completed a self-evaluation for system change, identifying good practice already happening locally as well as looking at opportunities to work more effectively across all sectors going forward. The National I-THRIVE Programme<sup>13</sup> is working with over 70 areas in England to improve services for children and young people's mental health. It is an integrated, person centred and needs led approach to delivering mental health services for children, young people and their families that was developed by a collaboration of authors from the Anna Freud National Centre for Children and Families and the Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust.

## Service Transformation

73. It is acknowledged that with new financial resources being extremely limited across the local system opportunities to improve services will have to be because of service transformation and increased partnership/multi-agency working. This will involve e.g. learning from system wide service partnerships such as the Thames Valley Link Project that is providing multi-agency support for the most vulnerable children and young people with complex needs across multiple domains between the ages of 0-18 across the Thames Valley region. The aim being to work with professionals across all settings to provide care that is integrated, trauma-informed and systemic.

74. The Oxfordshire based team went live on 12<sup>th</sup> December 2022 and have worked with 170 cases up to October 2023, and are offering advice, consultation, assessment and direct interventions. Berkshire team are due to go live January 2024 and Buckinghamshire are due to go live November 2023.

75. Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND) also provides further opportunities for service transformation and early intervention to improve outcomes for children and young people. Stakeholder views in relation to mental health in The Oxfordshire Education Commission 2023 report highlighted that there was a "lack of early diagnosis of needs as well as long waiting lists and high thresholds to access specialist support, including CAMHS". The report also highlighted the need to take a more "preventative, early intervention approach" to achieve better outcomes and the lack of understanding and training around the impact that trauma can have on young people's development and lives."

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<sup>13</sup> <http://implementingthrive.org/>

## **SEND Priority Action Plan**

76. In July 2023, during the Local Area inspection, OFSTED and CQC identified five priority actions and four areas for improvement which are required to be addressed in the Priority Action Plan (PAP). Oxfordshire is awaiting approval from the DfE to begin implementing the system wide task and finish groups which will address the actions in PAP.

## **Corporate Policies and Priorities**

77. The work described in the paper aims to support key corporate priorities, including:

### **Inequalities**

- Tackle inequalities in Oxfordshire.

### **Health and Wellbeing**

- Prioritise the health and wellbeing of residents.

### **Social Care**

- Support carers and the social care system.

### **Children and Young People**

- Create opportunities for children and young people to reach their full potential.

## **Financial Implications**

78. There are no financial implications to content of the report at this stage. Detailed financial implications will be identified as part of the finalisation of business cases when required for specific workstreams in the action plan.

## **Legal Implications**

79. There are no legal implications to the content of the report at this stage. Legal colleagues have been engaged to ensure compliance with the Contract Procurement Regulations in respect of the commissioning of the mental health digital app.

## **Staff Implications**

80. There are no new or additional staff implications to the content of the report.

## **Equality & Inclusion Implications**

81. One of the primary aims of the emotional wellbeing and mental health strategy is to reduce health inequalities in a range of priority groups. The views and input from the main beneficiaries of the content of the report – children, young people and families continue to be sought as the development of the work.

## **Sustainability Implications**

82. There are no sustainability implications to the content of the report.

## **Risk Management**

83. There is a risk that gaps will not be met causing further detriment to children and young people, however this is being addressed through the Emotional Mental Health and Wellbeing Board and SEND PAP following the OFSTED inspection.

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Annex:

Background papers: Emotional Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022



CYP WBandMH  
strategy Oxfordshire

