

HALCYON PODCAST SEASON 1 E11

Mental Health Leads in School - Exploring the Role

This document is intended to act as a guide to schools and is based on current DFE guidelines. Should you wish to have a more detailed discussion about the role of the Mental Health Lead, whether you are recruiting for the position, or planning mental health initiatives in your school, feel free to call for a no obligation chat. We'd be happy to advise and help you implement new strategies.

Guide to the role of the Mental Health Lead

Context

The Department for Education has issued guidance on the role of the mental health lead to help schools recruit for and define the position. Whilst there is no statutory need for this role at present, this guide is offered to help schools in the interim until further information is available.

The role title, 'Designated Senior Lead' (DSL) for Mental Health (MH) was purposely chosen to mirror the statutory role of the Designated Senior Lead for Safeguarding, with the intention that it will have the same senior leadership role and strategic whole school approach.

Potential Roles of the Designated Senior Lead for Mental Health

- Overseeing the whole school approach to mental health and well-being.
- This includes how it is reflected in the design of behaviour policies, curriculum and pastoral support, how staff are supported with their own mental well-being and how students and parents are engaged.
- Supporting the identification of at-risk children and children exhibiting signs of mental ill health
- Knowledge of local mental health services and working with clear links into CAHMS to refer students

- Co-ordinating the mental health needs of students within school and overseeing the delivery of interventions where these are being delivered in the educational setting
- Supporting staff to raise awareness, and give all staff the confidence to work with students and look after their own mental well-being
- Overseeing the outcomes of interventions on student's well-being and education

Potential Tasks

- To deliver a well-being strategy
- To report on the outcomes of interventions
- To implement positive mental health as part of the curriculum and other whole school activities
- To delegate and empower others to deliver

Potential Attributes

- Good mental health awareness, subject knowledge and a passion for the subject
- Management and Leadership capabilities
- Good time management and the ability to assimilate information quickly

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Links mentioned in the podcast

Anna Freud

<https://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/>

Birmingham Education Partnership Newstart Scheme

<https://bep.education/mental-health-and-newstart/>

Tootoot - Giving a voice to young people

<https://tootoot.co.uk/>