



# Mental health and schools

Supporting pupils, parents and teachers

# Mental health and schools

Pupils cannot thrive at school if emotional issues distract them in class. Teachers cannot teach effectively if pupils cannot concentrate.

That is why promoting good mental health is everyone's business – from headteachers and school leaders, to teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors.



**3 children in every classroom**

have a diagnosable mental health problem.  
NHS Digital, 2018

**Half of all mental health problems**

are established by the age of 14.  
Kessler R and Wang P, 2007

**83% of school staff**

said they have seen an increase in the number of pupils with mental health problems over the past two years.

National Education Union survey, 2019

# Who we are

Place2Be is a children's mental health charity. We provide in-school support and expert training across England, Scotland and Wales to improve the emotional wellbeing of pupils, families, teachers and staff.

Founded in 1994, Place2Be has grown from supporting a handful of schools, to working with over 700 schools each year to help them become more 'mentally healthy'.

## Our mission

To improve the mental wellbeing and prospects of children, their families and school communities across the UK.

## Our vision

Children should not have to face mental health problems alone. Place2Be's vision is for all children to have the vital support they need to help them build lifelong coping skills and thrive.

# How we help

## Working in close partnership with school leaders, we offer:

- In-school mental health support for pupils, families and school staff
- Face-to-face and online training for teachers, school leaders and school staff
- Reflective supervision and supportive forums for teachers, school leaders and school staff
- Accredited qualifications up to Postgraduate Diploma and Masters level for individuals looking to become child counsellors, to ensure schools have access to qualified, experienced professionals.

**“As a school we have worked with Place2Be for nine years and I now can't imagine the school functioning as effectively without them.”**

Angela Anterkyi, Headteacher,  
Gladstone Park Primary



# In-school support

Place2Be takes a whole-school approach to improve the emotional wellbeing of pupils, families and staff.

We provide mental health services in primary and secondary schools, offering vital therapeutic support around big changes and challenges in life. Our mental health support helps children to become more settled, more able to manage their behaviour and to engage in learning.

With Place2Be working in partnership with a school, teachers are able to focus on teaching and parents feel more confident and able to support their children.

Our mental health professional is also on hand to respond swiftly to critical incidents, engage with external agencies, support staff initiatives and assist on all issues relating to children's mental wellbeing.

**“Place2Be is unique – it’s valued by students, by staff, by parents. It’s the wraparound nature of it that is so important – the fact that it’s for everybody. The impact of it is that young people are happier and able to get on with their lives and access their education – and that’s what it’s all about”**

Hazel Kinnear, Headteacher,  
Tynecastle High School



Find out more at  
[place2be.org.uk/schools](https://place2be.org.uk/schools)



# Our whole-school approach includes:

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## Quality assurance

Care pathways with CAMHS and specialist agencies

Evaluating impact and reporting

Clinical supervision for all counsellors.



## Supporting children and young people

One-to-one counselling

Group work

Whole-class work

Self-referral sessions during lunchtime or breaktime.



## Supporting parents and carers

Support for parents

Parent counselling

Signposting.



## Supporting school staff

Consultation for teachers and staff

Training and CPD.



## Additional expertise

Specialist teams on safeguarding and SEND/ASN.



# Impacts and outcomes

Many of the children and families we work with lead difficult and complex lives. By providing support at an early stage, we help children learn coping strategies that support them in the long term.

## In the 2018/19 school year\*:

**5.3k**  
children

accessed weekly one-to-one counselling sessions.

**38k**  
children

booked a self-referral session during lunchtime or breaktime.

## Of the children who have taken part in counselling with Place2Be:

**68%**

cause fewer problems for their teacher or class.

**62%**

of children's difficulties had less impact on their learning.

**75%**

find it easier to have & keep friends.

**81%**

of those with severe difficulties show an improvement in wellbeing.

# Mental Health Champions – Foundation programme

Our online Mental Health Champions – Foundation programme will provide you with a deeper understanding of mental health and wellbeing.

This five-week programme is designed to be an introductory or refresher course for professionals who work with children and young people in schools and community settings.

Thanks to our supporters, we are pleased to be able to offer the programme for free to qualified teachers and school-based staff in the UK.

## What does it cover?

- **Understanding mental health and wellbeing** We discuss factors that contribute to positive mental health and wellbeing.
- **Nature and nurture** We explore how early experiences shape the way we perceive ourselves and relate to others, and how those experiences create the pathways in the brain that support our development.
- **How you can help** We consider what a child's behaviour might be communicating about their underlying needs.
- **Mental health: everybody's business** We reflect on the importance of positive mental health for everyone, with a focus on the adults around a child.

“What I really liked about the training was that it didn't just give you the theory, it also provided lots of ways to put it into practice. I also found the discussion element – where other teachers gave their feedback – really helpful.”

Teacher on Mental Health Champions – Foundation programme

## Course details:

- Five-week programme (1-1.5 hours per week)
- Different course versions for teachers, student teachers and youth workers
- A dedicated Place2Be professional facilitating discussions
- Regular course dates to choose from throughout the year
- You can access the programme on any digital device
- Study at a time that suits you.



## Find out more

To find out more about the course and to register your interest, visit [place2be.org.uk/foundation](https://place2be.org.uk/foundation)

# Reflective supervision — Place2Think

A supportive forum for school staff to reflect on their work.

Facilitated by Place2Be clinicians, our Place2Think service provides a safe and supportive space for education professionals working with children and families to explore any issues or concerns, and gain a broader understanding of children's mental health needs.



**“Being able to reflect on your practice with someone in a neutral, compassionate and non-judgemental way, who is able to offer guidance and advice, is essential.”**

Place2Think participant

## Who is it for?

Education professionals who work with children and young people, including:

- Headteachers and school leadership teams
- Designated safeguarding leads
- Inclusion leads and pastoral support staff
- Class teachers and newly or recently qualified teachers
- Support staff, including teaching assistants and midday supervisors.

Individuals can sign-up to join a group of their peers, or schools and organisations can commission this service for a group of staff.

## What does it cover?

Place2Think sessions focus on how to:

- Understand and manage challenging behaviour
- Resolve issues in the playground or classroom
- Build resilient relationships with children and young people with mental health needs
- Reflect on our emotional responses to children and young people
- Promote self-care and manage stress.



Find out more at  
[place2be.org.uk/supervision](https://place2be.org.uk/supervision)



# Continuing professional development

Place2Be offers full and half-day workshops, as well as a series of webinars, to develop professionals' understanding of children and young people's emotional wellbeing and how it affects behaviour.

## Workshops

Our workshops help to build confidence and expertise, while also providing participants with practical tools to improve their work with children and families. These workshops can be tailored to suit your school's needs.

### Popular sessions include:

- Resilience – wellbeing without words
- Understanding attachment
- Self-belief – helping children thrive
- Peer mentoring skills for students.

## Webinars

We offer a series of webinars for school staff on a range of topics. Our webinars run for up to an hour and are delivered by Educational Psychologists and clinical training experts.

### Topics include:

- Recovery and self care
- Understanding and managing anxiety
- Holding supportive conversations
- Understanding loss and bereavement
- Teachers in transition: testing times.



**“As a teacher it was great to get new ideas for opening up communication with children and between them. An excellent mix of theory and practice.”**

Teacher



Find out more at:  
[place2be.org.uk/CPD](https://place2be.org.uk/CPD)



**“Place2Be is part of our school family. It is more than an office, more than a therapy room, and more than a collection of counsellors. Its work permeates through every aspect of our school and its community. It is trusted by parents and carers, valued by the staff, and vociferously supported by the children.”**

Glyn Ellis, Headteacher, Haslingden Primary School

## **Get in touch**

If you are interested in finding out more about how Place2Be can work with your school, please get in touch:

**0207 923 5500**  
**[schools@place2be.org.uk](mailto:schools@place2be.org.uk)**  
**[place2be.org.uk](http://place2be.org.uk)**

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