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Learning Together Mental Health

Information sheet for schools

Overview

Place2Be is delighted to be partnering with the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) and leading researchers at Ipsos, Anna Freud, UCL, and London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine to evaluate the **Learning Together Mental Health** programme.

Learning Together Mental Health (LTMH) is a whole-school, multicomponent intervention that aims to improve academic outcomes, mental health, feelings of school belonging and engagement for pupils, as well as to reduce bullying, and foster a positive school climate.

The programme incorporates school staff training in Restorative and Relational Practice, alongside a student needs assessment and Action Groups, in which staff and students are supported to come together to plan actions to address the needs of the school. LTMH has shown great promise in pilot schools in the south of England. The opportunity to take part in this larger-scale EEF-funded trial is now being extended to secondary schools across England.

Find out what is involved below to see whether you would like your school to benefit from the possibility of being one of our intervention schools.

What does the programme involve?

The LTMH programme has three core components:

1) Needs Assessment Report

Year 7 students in Summer 2025/26 OR Year 8 students in Autumn 2026/27 (the 2025/26 cohort) will complete an online wellbeing and mental health survey at school. For intervention schools, responses will be anonymised and aggregated with responses from other students in their year group to create a school-level Needs Assessment Report, which can be used to inform the Action Group planning (Point 3 below).

2) Restorative and Relational Practice Training

All school staff will attend a 90-minute online training session in Restorative and Relational Practice. This provides staff with an understanding of inclusive and effective strategies for managing conflict, challenging behaviours and building positive relationships at school.

Five members of staff (at least one should be a member of the Senior Leadership Team) will attend a more in-depth Restorative and Relational Practice training (3 days). These members of staff will be the experts that other school staff can call on for more challenging conflict.

All training will be delivered as early as possible in the 2026/27 academic year, by Restorative and Relational Practice experts, [L30 Relational Systems](#).

3) Action Groups

Schools will be supported to set up Action Groups by their Place2Be Facilitator. They will be guided to select a **small group of students and staff** to work together across the year. The students should be diverse, potentially students who don't always feel they have a voice. At least one of the staff members needs to be part of the Senior Leadership Team and have attended the in-depth Restorative Practice training. Action Groups will meet half-termly **to plan activities to address needs identified through the Needs Assessment Report**.

A manual, which includes a menu of optional free or low-cost evidence-based resources, will be provided to guide Action Group discussion and decisions. A Place2Be practitioner will facilitate these sessions in-person in Year 1 (2026/27 academic year) and 2 (2027/28 academic year). In Year 3, Place2Be will provide online support to a member of the Senior Leadership Team to lead the Action Groups going forwards.

How does the trial work?

This is a randomised controlled trial (RCT) which means that half of the schools taking part will be randomly assigned to receive LTMH (**intervention group**) and half of the schools will be randomly assigned to continue with their usual practice (**control group**). Schools in the **control group** will not receive the programme of interventions and will continue with their normal practice. **Schools cannot choose which group they would like to be in and will have an equal chance of being in either group**. This method is necessary to be able to interpret the outcomes with confidence and ensure that the findings are meaningful.

Both groups are extremely important to this evaluation and will receive financial incentives to complete evaluation activity.

What are the benefits of participating?

Your participation (whether as an **intervention** or **control** school) will help us to understand the impact of LTMH on student outcomes, including **academic attainment** and **student mental health and wellbeing**. You will be making an important contribution to the education evidence base that informs efforts to improve outcomes for *all* young people. The evaluation report will be publicly accessible on the EEF website upon project completion.

Intervention schools will receive

- Restorative and Relational Practice training for all school staff
- In-depth Restorative and Relational Practice training for five school staff
- A Needs Assessment Report using baseline surveys completed in 2026
- The LTMH manual, including a menu of optional free or low-cost evidence-based resources
- In-person facilitation of Action Groups from a Place2Be practitioner for two years
- Support with participation in the evaluation activities
- A £500 financial incentive to take part in the evaluation activities

Control schools will receive

- Support with participation in the evaluation activities (see 'What is expected of schools that take part?' section below)
- A £1000 financial incentive to take part in the evaluation activities

Eligibility

To participate, schools must:

- be a state-maintained secondary school in England
- schools with an “inadequate/poor” rating at their most recent school quality rating by Ofsted are ineligible.
- Nominate a key contact to liaise with the delivery and evaluation teams.
- not be taking part in any other EEF research trial in the same period which target the cohort of pupils who will start Year 8 in September 2026, through until the end of their Year 11 in 2030. Schools taking part in EEF trials which target other year groups or populations within the school are still eligible to take part in the LTMH trial.
- not currently be delivering similar interventions that may conflict with the trial: Schools may continue to deliver their usual pastoral, wellbeing, and mental health provisions (e.g., school-based counselling, Mental Health Support Teams, etc.). However, schools will not be eligible if they are currently implementing, or plan to implement during the trial period, a programme that closely resembles the core components of the LTMH intervention (e.g., whole-school structured restorative practice combined with action-group-led needs assessment and system-level change). If you are unsure whether a current/future programme overlaps with the LTMH intervention, please get in touch.

Who is running the project?

Recruitment and Delivery

Place2Be is a children’s mental health charity with over 30 years’ experience working with pupils, families and staff in schools across the UK. We offer a range of services to support the mental health of children and young people using tried and tested methods backed by research. We will be overseeing the delivery of the LTMH programme, which includes recruiting schools and in-person facilitation of Action Groups. Place2Be will also coordinate the Restorative and Relational Practice training for staff via our external providers, [L30 Relational Systems](#).

Evaluation

There will be two evaluations carried out on the same data set.

- The education evaluation will be carried out by a team of researchers from Anna Freud (a children’s mental health charity) and Ipsos (a leading market research company). They will be evaluating the impact of LTMH, with a primary focus on academic attainment and related outcomes. They will be using data from the school surveys (staff and students), National Pupil Database information for attainment, and school records for their evaluation. They will also look at the way in which the programme can be successfully implemented in the school setting.
- Researchers at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM), who developed this programme, will be carrying out a health evaluation using the same data, with a focus on student mental health outcomes.

What evaluation activity is expected of schools that take part?

Evaluation activities for all schools include:

- Distributing parent/carers and student information sheets and withdrawal forms to facilitate the online student survey in 2026 and 2029

- Entering into a data sharing agreement with the research team at Anna Freud
- Securely sharing student lists (including student name, date of birth, ethnicity, Free School Meal eligibility and Special Educational Needs Status) with the research team at Anna Freud
- Facilitating survey sessions in school in 2026 and 2029, including booking a computer room or IT equipment at school (note that the research team will provide support and guidance for this).
- Agreeing to a target 80% completion rate of the pupil survey, in both 2026 and 2029 (after accounting for opt-outs and withdrawals)

Additional evaluation activities for schools allocated to receive LTMH (**intervention group**):

- Completing monitoring forms and / or capturing themes and actions in session logs from Action Groups to support the evaluation
- Completing an annual online survey to provide information about experiences of implementing LTMH
- Six intervention schools will be invited to participate in yearly case study visits. Case study schools will be required to cooperate with school visits (one per year) which will include staff interviews/focus groups, action group observations and focus groups, and pupil interviews.
- An additional four schools will also be invited to take part as case studies in the health evaluation of LTMH, led by researchers at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine (LSHTM). These schools will also receive a separate financial incentive as a thank you for their time.

Additional evaluation activities for schools allocated to continue usual practice (**control group**):

- Completing an annual 'usual practice' online survey to provide information on whole-school approaches or programmes/policies that are being implemented to support pupil mental health and wellbeing
- A representative from some schools may be invited to take part in a short telephone interview each year to further explore usual practice in control schools

All schools will also need to

- Sign a Memorandum of Understanding and a data sharing agreement
- Provide contact details for your Designated Safeguarding Lead
- Communicate with the delivery team (Place2Be) and the evaluators (Ipsos, Anna Freud, and LSHTM) throughout the multi-year trial.
- participate in the evaluation activities (throughout the 4-year trial)

Intervention schools will also need to

- Ensure staff attend the appropriate Restorative and Relational Practice training
- setup and engage participating students and staff in Action Groups twice termly
- support school actions or activities chosen by the Action Group

Are there any costs involved?

Schools randomly allocated into the **intervention group** (receiving all the interventions within LTMH) will be required to make a contribution of £1,200 towards the total cost of delivery (equivalent to £12,000 worth of support).

Schools will be asked to make full payment prior to the start of the interventions.

Financial Incentives

All schools receive a financial incentive as a thank you for taking part in the evaluation.

- Schools in the **intervention group** that fulfil all evaluation requirements, in the specified time periods, will receive £500 in recognition of administrative commitments.
- Schools in the **control group** (no interventions) that fulfil all evaluation requirements within the specified time periods will receive £1000 in recognition of the administrative commitment, without the benefit of the intervention.
- Schools will receive 50% of their incentive after successful completion of baseline student surveys (at least 80% completion rate) in 2026. The second 50% installment will be paid after successful completion of the follow-up student survey in 2029 when students are in year 10.

How will data be used?

Please see the privacy notice for schools for full details on what data are being collected, what it will be used for and who it will be shared with.

Anna Freud are responsible for the collection and handling of the student data (from student surveys, school records and national pupil database). They will share pseudonymised data with the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine for analysis and creation of the Needs Assessment Report which Place2Be will collate and share with intervention schools.

Ipsos are responsible for the collection and handling of data from staff surveys, focus groups, interviews, and observations.

London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine will collect data from focus groups and interviews held in a small number of case study schools to inform their health evaluation of the programme.

Place2Be will support schools to use the data recorded in the Action Group Logs to inform their actions. Themes will be shared with the evaluators.

The evaluators will use the data to

- help schools understand the kinds of difficulties their students are experiencing (Needs Assessment Report) and help schools decide what actions to take (Action Groups)
- find out whether this approach has an impact on students' mental health
- find out whether this approach helps students have better school outcomes (e.g. attainment and attendance)
- explore how this programme can be best implemented in schools across the country

All project partners will treat data securely, confidentially and in accordance with data protection law. Personal data will be collected and used to conduct the evaluation, with pseudonymised data being shared for archiving and further research at the end of the project.

Your school, staff, and students will not be identified in any report arising from the research. website. For further information about data handling, you can contact the Principal Investigators for the evaluation:

Ipsos Evaluation Team Contact

- Name: Dr Jessica Ozan
- Organisation: Ipsos
- Email: LTMH@ipsosresearch.com

Anna Freud Evaluation Team Contact

- Name: Prof Jessica Deighton
- Organisation: Anna Freud
- Email: LTMH@annafreud.or

What is the timeline for this project?

Wave membership is defined simply by when baseline pupil surveys are completed, and therefore when schools are randomized.

Activities	Wave 1	Wave 2
School recruitment; and MoU and Data Sharing Agreement signed	Jan-May 2026	June-September 2026
Baseline surveys with students (all schools)	May-Jul 2026	September-October 2026
Randomisation of schools to intervention or control groups	Jul 2026	September-November 2026
Programme delivery begins (intervention group)	Sept 2026	September-January 2026
Place2Be facilitate programme delivery (intervention group)	Sept 2026-Jul 2028	Sept 2026-Jul 2028
Place2Be support schools to deliver programme independently (intervention group)	Sept 2028-Jul 2029	Sept 2028-Jul 2029
Schools deliver programme independently (intervention group)	Sept 2029-Jun 2030	Sept 2029-Jun 2030
Follow-up surveys with Y10 students (all schools)	May-Jul 2029	May-Jul 2029
Annual provision surveys (all schools)	Sept 2026-Jul 2029	Sept 2026-Jul 2029
Case study fieldwork (six case study schools)	Sept 2026-Jul 2029	Sept 2026-Jul 2029
Summary reports shared with participating schools	Sept 2031	Sept 2031
Final report published on EEF website	Dec 2031	Dec 2031

Some questions answered

What happens after a school expresses interest?	Place2Be will contact you with more information about the trial, check eligibility, and give you an opportunity to ask questions.
When will schools hear whether they have been allocated to the intervention or control group?	Between July-December 2026. Schools who sign-up and complete baseline evaluation activities earlier, will be informed of their allocation earlier.
When will the interventions be delivered?	LTMH is a 4-year programme which begins in the 2026/27 academic year.
When will pre- and end-testing be carried out?	Pre- (baseline) testing will take place, online in 2026. This will be 2025/26 Year 7 cohort, although depending on when schools sign up to take part baseline testing may take place when this cohort is in Year 8 (Autumn 2026). The same Year group will complete the survey towards the end of Year 10 (May-July 2029)
When will control group schools receive incentive payments?	Incentive payments will be made at the start of the trial (2026/27) and on completion of all evaluation activities at the end of the trial (2029/30).
When will the evaluation results be published?	The evaluators will publish the results on the EEF website in 2031. The gap between the end-testing in 2029 and the results being published in 2031 is to allow for students in this year group to sit their GCSEs in Summer 2030 and for that data to become available for the impact evaluation in early 2031 through the NPD.

Interested in participating?

More Information

www.place2be.org.uk/ltmh

Ask a question

ltmh@place2be.org.uk

Register your interest

www.place2be.org.uk/ltmh#sign-up