

PRESS RELEASE

Two-thirds of schools do not have a policy for meeting the mental health needs of their pupils

Embargoed until 26th April 2019

Starts

The team responsible for delivering a national programme for headteachers on leading mental health and wellbeing in schools have released details from their upcoming report '*Mental Health and Wellbeing in UK Schools Survey 2019*' released on 26th April.

This release relates to schools readiness for meeting the mental health needs of staff and pupils.

Only 56.9% of schools responding to the survey have a designated mental health lead. Almost a fifth of these designated leads are the heads themselves, whilst another 18% are the Special Educational Needs Coordinator. This means that about 43% of schools do not have a designated Mental Health Lead.

The role being fulfilled by the strategic lead of the school (Head or similar) varied from 14.1% in England, to 25% in Northern Ireland, 31.8% in Scotland and 15.8% in Wales.

As one Head said "No, but it's probably me!"

Furthermore, only 32.5% of schools have a Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy to manage the mental health provision for staff and pupils. Surprisingly, only 26.8% have completed an action plan relating to this area.

When asked about areas of concern in implementing mental health provision in their school, 70% of school leaders reported concerns about both financial and time constraints. 4 in 10 reported staffing issues affect their ability, whilst a third identified their staff needed additional training to meet these needs. Over 10% of school leaders identified that their own need for training was holding their school back.

Author, Richard Curtis from the National Leaders in Social, Emotional and Mental Health Programme, says "The ever-increasing demands on school leaders put a strain on them. Without support on leading mental health and wellbeing, or the budget to get this support, many leaders will feel like they are failing and having to make it up as they go along. It's vital that schools are supported in developing these responsibilities, not just left to fend for themselves."

Ends

Note to editors

The Root Of It carried out an anonymous survey of school leaders across the UK and captured responses from approximately 1% of primary and secondary schools. 75.2% of the respondents were Headteachers, Principals, CEO and Deputies; 21.1% were middle leaders, such as PSHE Leads or SENDCOs. The acceptable confidence level has been set at 80% throughout this survey.

The team run the National Leaders in Social, Emotional and Mental Health Programme for headteachers, local authorities and senior education leaders.

The full report will be available on 26th April at <https://www.rootofit.com/semhw-survey>

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