

Mental health - a priority for schools

A plan to be unveiled will ensure that all new teachers in England will be trained to spot early warning signs of mental illness

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A plan to be unveiled will ensure that all new teachers in England will be trained to spot early warning signs of mental illness. Mrs May having stepped away from party leadership has called for this change to tackle an ever increasing problem in schools. No one will deny this is much needed support to offer students to identify and address issues before they become critical. It is likely that the training will be backed up with statutory guidance which will make it clear what schools' responsibilities in this area really are and how they should be protecting the mental wellbeing of their pupils.

It will however add another responsibility to teachers workloads on the mental health front and will require some careful training and designation to ensure the right interventions are made at the right time by the right people. It is likely the changes will form part of a package of materials and training for schools in this area.

How the teachers will be able to be this frontline service remains to be seen. Will it be through lesson planning and identification or through curriculum and teaching. In higher education funding is being provided to look at innovative ways to tackle mental health, will the same be seen in schools and colleges? It can only be a positive step that these issues are finally coming to the forefront but will the financial backing be as forthcoming to ensure those who will be on the frontline will be able to deliver the quality of service they need to offer.

Contact



Laura Murphy

Associate

Laura.murphy@brownejacobson.com

+44 (0)115 908 4886

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