

HeadStart Middlesbrough Update

Spring 2019



Giving all Middlesbrough's children and young people the necessary support to build resilience and achieve good emotional health



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So... What is HeadStart Middlesbrough?

In 2015 the Government's *Future in Mind* report was published, providing national recognition of the need to make dramatic improvements in children's mental health services. The report highlighted that although the needs of young people continue to rise investment and services are insufficient in meeting demand. The report set out five key themes that could enhance a systemic changed approach to improve children's emotional wellbeing:

- Promoting resilience, prevention and early intervention
- Improving access to effective support system without tiers
- Care for the most vulnerable
- Accountability and transparency
- Developing the workforce

In response to the report the HeadStart programme was developed to provide a framework to drive forward changed within Middlesbrough. A multi-sector partnership board was established to develop approaches that would -

- Support children and young people to cope in better in difficult circumstances and do well in school, college and in life.
- Build resilience in young people to prevent the onset of common mental health problems.
- Learn from different approaches and contribute to an evidence base for investment in prevention and early intervention.
- Develop an early intervention and prevention model to provide support in school, at home, in the community and virtually.
- Develop a co-production model with children and their families.



HeadStarters training pathway is accessible to all children and young people within Middlesbrough. Topics included in the pathway are friendships, understanding moods, emotional and feelings, stress and how to become more resilient. Work is delivered in a fun, engaging and creative way allowing children and young people to feel safe exploring their thoughts and feelings.

HeadStarters

-There are currently 511 primary and secondary school students engaging with the HeadStarters Youth Engagement Pathway at either a Bronze, Silver or Gold level across 30 schools. The HeadStarters Pathway is an ASDAN accredited education course to enable and empower young people and develop awareness and understanding of emotional health and wellbeing. It is currently the only course of its kind for young people in the country. The pathway is helping to create an army of mental health champions across Middlesbrough to increase awareness and understanding of mental health in emotional wellbeing in young people as well as giving these students the necessary skills to build resilience in themselves and their peers.

-Having achieved the ASDAN accredited HeadStarters Bronze Award, groups from Ayresome Primary School, Green Lane Academy, Linthorpe Community Primary School, St. Clare's Catholic Primary School and The Avenue Primary School have now begun working towards their Silver Award which focuses on upskilling young people to contribute to the emotional wellbeing of the wider community through projects and raising awareness around mental health.

-HeadStarters from Acklam Grange and Trinity Catholic College are now eligible for their Gold Award, having worked on numerous community projects within their schools throughout the academic year. This included both schools groups introducing a "peer support" room within school at lunchtimes for those students who need to speak to a peer about their problems. These HeadStarters will then pass on their learning to students in KS3 to create a sustainable way of working for students.

- Two HeadStarters from Sunnyside Academy, along with head teacher Julie Sutton, presented to the Middlesbrough Council Prevention and Partnerships group on the benefits of the HeadStart Middlesbrough Programme to their school.



Local schoolchildren have become the first in the country to be recognised for **PROMOTING POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH** among their fellow students.

The young people at Sunnyside Academy are now "going for gold" in their ambitions as a Headstart school having recently been accredited with silver standard.

The Coulby Newham-based primary has been a Headstart school since 2017 and has a dedicated pastoral team to support positive mental health and wellbeing and works with therapeutic services such as Mind, Headstart, Link, Footprints and Bungalow.

In recognition of the school's achievement and its commitment to positive wellbeing the school were awarded £8,000 to design a new sensory room in the school that can be used to support vulnerable pupils.

Academic Resilience training

Academic Resilience supports pupils to achieve good educational outcomes despite adversity and enables schools to develop strategies to build resilience in all students.

The Academic Resilience approach (ARA) is based upon the evidence based Resilience Framework developed by Boing Boing and underpins the HeadStart programme.

ARA training is offered to all school based staff in Middlesbrough and includes the following:

- ❖ Understanding Academic Resilience and its benefits for your school
- ❖ Recognising key theories of resilience and the relationship between risk, protective factors and resilience
- ❖ Identifying your own resilience and that of the children, young people and families you work with
- ❖ Understanding workplace resilience
- ❖ Identifying vulnerable children and those at risk
- ❖ Learning how to strategically build systemic resilience into your work

It is well evidenced that by supporting the emotional well-being of children and young people at an early stage significantly improves their outcomes and life chances. Through implementing a resilience approach in school attainment, attendance and behaviour can be improved along with long term physical and mental health.

To date 76 delegates have been trained including school staff, college staff, school nurses, commissioning services, health improvement workers, emotional wellbeing practitioners, educational psychologists, early help workers and MAP staff. The training supports the sustainable approach of HeadStart through 'training the trainer' to facilitate whole school awareness. ARA complements Restorative Practice by challenging schools to understand the wider circumstances of pupil's lives that impact on behaviour and relationships.

An interactive Resilience Framework for young people can be found here –

<https://youngminds.org.uk/youngminds-professionals/our-projects/academic-resilience/>

YOUNG MINDS

During one of the activity tasks during Academic Resilience Approach Training a group of delegates produced the following poem entitled Ordinary Magic which captures the essence of this approach :



Ordinary Magic

Always running late for school,
Always being made to look a fool.
No-one knew why I was late,
Never knew I wanted to be first through the gate.
Assumed I dawdled, assumed I trudged,
I was the one who was always judged.
Then one morning I hear "How are you?"
"Is there anything we can do?"
"Are you hungry? Are you fed?"
This is when my tears were shed.
Once I'd explained my basic need,
Small changes emerged from the planting of a seed.
I started doing better than expected,
Just one person's interest stopped me feeling neglected.
Slowly staff smiled and used my name,
Now feeling equal, not out of the game.
How did I avoid a tale so tragic?
With a sprinkle then an avalanche of Ordinary Magic

Youth Engagement Events

- Every year, HeadStart Middlesbrough delivers the #FeelGood Festival at MyPlace for our HeadStarters and the MyPlace Mixed Ability Youth Club. The festival sees live music performances from young people involved in the youth club, the Musinc project and local bands, positive activities and building of peer relationships between students from both mainstream and SEND schools. The festival gives young people the opportunity. So far over 300 young people have attended the annual event.

-The second HeadStarters Conference will be held at Teesside University on the 26th of June. Last year's conference was attended by 100 HeadStarters and school staff at THE MyPlace youth facility, however due to the significant increase in the number of schools and young people engaging with the HeadStarters Pathway, the conference has been moved to Teesside University. Having the event at the University will have the added benefit of allowing pupils the ability to take look around the university campus. The HeadStarters Conference brings together HeadStarters for a day of learning, building peer relationships between primary and secondary school students and to celebrate the fantastic work the groups have been doing as part of the pathway and in wider school life as mental health champions.

- The HeadStart team were instrumental in the organisation of the #FeelGoodBoro event at Middlesbrough Town Hall, alongside Voice of the Child practitioner Bethany Bradshaw and Hemlington Linx. #FeelGoodBoro saw 425 families and young people visit the newly refurbished Town Hall for a free community event of educational workshops, live music and positive activities to celebrate all that is positive about Middlesbrough.

NESTA FUNDING

HeadStart were recently successful in a bid to Nesta.

A successful funding application to Nesta for £50,000 will introduce HeadStart into 6th form colleges in Middlesbrough.

This funding will allow delivery of mental health related training to staff, develop curriculum resources and allow the HeadStarters Youth Engagement pathway to be extended to Post 16 education.

HeadStart Programme Officer Andy attended the Nesta education conference in London and feedback from attendees was that our HeadStart bid was exciting, innovative and a really good example of collaboration across services, all with a common goal of improving resilience within young people.

For more information on Nesta, please visit <https://www.nesta.org.uk/>



HEADSTART School Improvement Grants

5 HeadStart School Grants have now been processed and awarded to Ayresome Primary School, Newport Primary School, North Ormesby Primary Academy, Sunnyside Academy and Trinity Catholic College following successful implementation of the HeadStart Quality standard. Ayresome, North Ormesby and Trinity are using their grant to create outdoor nurture spaces within school to give students a safe space to go to. Newport are putting part of their grant towards PAT training for their school support dog Elsie and Sunnyside to create a sensory room to support their visual and hearing impaired and SEND students.

Mental Health News

Game of Thrones star Sophie Turner speaks out about her struggles with anxiety and depression from growing up in the public eye

<https://www.independent.co.uk/life-style/health-and-families/sophie-turner-depression-anxiety-game-of-thrones-season-8-mental-health-a8841401.html>

Education Secretary Damian Hinds announces new taskforce to support university student's mental health

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-creates-new-student-mental-health-taskforce>

More than one in ten primary schools boys are being labelled as suffering with a mental health disorder

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2019/03/26/one-ten-primary-school-boys-labelled-mental-disorder/>

The family of late musician Avicii have launched a suicide prevention foundation in his memory

<https://faroutmagazine.co.uk/aviciis-family-launch-mental-health-and-suicide-prevention-foundation/>

All children in England will be taught how to look after their mental wellbeing and recognise when classmates may be struggling, as the Government unveils new guidance for the introduction of compulsory health education

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/all-pupils-will-be-taught-about-mental-and-physical-wellbeing>

“Alarming high” levels of anxiety and stress amongst university students

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/mar/05/levels-of-distress-and-illness-among-students-in-uk-alarmingly-high>

New measures to tackle a reported rise in mental health problems among young girls linked to social media use have been announced

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-scotland-47981269>

Public health challenge in grassroots sports

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/sport/47925229>

On the 25th of February, Education Secretary Damian Hinds confirmed that, from September 2020, pupils of all ages will be taught to look after their mental wellbeing and recognise when classmates may be struggling as part of compulsory health education. The HeadStart Middlesbrough Programme is already enabling school's to offer this type of education to some students as part of the HeadStarters Pathway and giving school's the support to prepare for the beginning of compulsory health education in 2020 by developing sustainable resources and lesson plans that have already been trialled and tested.

New independent research commissioned by youth charity Eikon shows that school based programmes such as Smart Moves can **significantly improve the resilience of young people**. This is exciting news for schools keen to positively impact young people's resilience, behaviour and progress. The research conducted by Dr Watling and her team at Royal Holloway University of London asked more than 900 young people about their resilience and wellbeing as an independent assessment of the Smart Moves programme.

The research included an assessment of children's resiliency, wellbeing and behaviour before and after engaging with Smart Moves. Findings demonstrated that pupils who had low to average resiliency pre-Smart Moves, had **significant improvements in resilience on completion** and in a group who were visited three months later, their resiliency level did not drop to previous levels.

To read the report - <https://eikon.org.uk/files/2019/01/Smart-Moves-Assessment-Report.pdf>



HeadStart in Action.....

Development & impact of HeadStart?

Julie Sutton – Chair Headstart school task group & Headteacher Sunnyside Academy.

Overview:

As previous Headteacher of Newport Primary School and current Headteacher of Sunnyside Academy, I have been very actively involved in the development, implementation and evaluation of Headstart over the last four years. I have been an active board member at governance level and

chair the school task group that consists of representatives from education, public health, voluntary services and local authority.

I became involved in the development of Headstart because I understand the increasing challenges and difficulties that our communities face and recognized the importance of promoting positive emotional health and wellbeing across schools and settings and the community that we serve. Headstart is not a program or a project but a strategic and active framework in which to identify, intervene and support early intervention, ultimately equipping young people with resilience to prevent mental health problems occurring in the first place, and to build the evidence base for prevention, early intervention and service redesign.

The targeted funding from Public Health and CCG has helped to provide excellent training for staff, access to pupil and family support and valuable guidance, advice and support.

Sunnyside Academy has been a Headstart school since 2017 and now has a dedicated pastoral team to support positive mental health and well being, working with a range therapeutic services and multi agencies. The school has achieved the Silver Standard and will be going for Gold standard this year which means that we will share best practice. This has been as a direct result of the headstart approach. Our pupils have completed an accredited course in supporting wellbeing with their peers and it is the first of it's kind nationally. In recognition of this, the chief Executive Tony Parkinson visited the school and recognised the important work that the school were doing in promoting positive emotional health.

In recognition of the school's achievement and it's commitment to positive wellbeing the school was awarded £8000 from Headstart funding to design and install a new sensory room in the school that can be used to support vulnerable pupils.

The school is very committed to improving outcomes for children and their families are keen to support other schools in developing their approaches to supporting positive mental health and wellbeing. Headstart provides a robust and consistent approach to this invaluable work.



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