



HALTON LODGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

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NEWSLETTER 16

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Introducing Halton's MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT TEAM

Over the next few weeks, we are looking forward to welcoming the newly formed Mental Health Support Team (MHST) for Runcorn to their new offices – which will be located in our school building.

Halton is fortunate to be part of the third wave of MHSTs being rolled out in this area – following the two teams that have been created in Warrington, the team in St Helens and a team in Knowlsey.

There will be TWO teams in Halton – one based in Widnes and the team that will be based at our school, for the whole of Runcorn – who all started their training back in September.

The team are now ready to start working with primary schools, high schools and colleges to identify children with mental health concerns who they will be able to support.

The support will come in two forms:

- **Child-Led Interventions** (where the NHS clinical staff members will work directly with the child over a series of sessions);
- **Parent-Led Interventions** (where the NHS clinical staff members will work directly with the parents of the child, to help them understand their child's needs in greater detail and help them to recognise how they can support their child to manage their mental health better).

We will be looking to make the first of our referrals into the MHST next week. Therefore, if we do not contact you to request your consent to discuss your child with the Education Mental Health Practitioner (EMHP) who has been allocated to our school - Kristen Vogt-Johnston – then please speak with your child's class team, or email the school, with the reason why you feel that your child would benefit from an assessment and some additional support.

If there is anything positive that has come out of the pandemic in recent years, it is perhaps the increased awareness of the impact of mental health and well-being on the lives of all people (including children). Therefore, if we can get the right support for the children who attend our school, they may be able to manage their mental health much better as they get older.

The key intervention and support that will be offered from the start will be helping those children who suffer from any form of **anxiety**, those who often display **low mood** and children who often **feel depressed**. They will also be offering support to families whose child exhibits **challenging behaviours** or who has a **phobia** that they are wishing to overcome.



My name is Kristen and I am a Trainee Education Mental Health Practitioner within the Halton Mental Health Support Team; and I have been allocated to work with Halton Lodge Primary School.

My role is to support children and young people with mild-moderate mental health needs such as anxiety, low mood, worry and phobias. As a team, we provide one to one interventions to give children and young people the tools they need to manage their mental health needs.

We also work closely with other agencies such as child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and we can refer onto them directly if this is required.

Another part of my role is to work closely with the school to both support and develop the work they are already doing to support children's mental health and providing training, education and advice to school staff; to help them better support the pupils with their mental and emotional wellbeing.

Referrals to our service are made through the school, so if you have any concerns about your child's mental health then please discuss this with the staff at Halton Lodge.

For more information on the service, please access our website: <https://www.merseycare.nhs.uk/mhst-halton>

If you still require more information, please speak to the staff at the school who will be able to contact me and discuss your enquiry.

If your child needs urgent or emergency mental health support at any time, you can contact Warrington's 24/7 all-age mental health crisis line on 0800 051 1508 (Freephone).

I am really looking forward to working with the staff, children and parents of Halton Lodge Primary School to begin to develop and foster a mentally healthy school.



Community and Mental Health Services