

Mental Health in Schools programme funding prospectus

Request for proposals

 unknown

Key information

Publication type: General

Publication date: Monday 23 June 2025

Contents

[Summary](#)

[Definitions](#)

[Background](#)

[Project description](#)

[It will involve, but is not limited to](#)

[The aims of this work are to](#)

[Objectives](#)

[Outcomes](#)

[Target group](#)

[Scope of project](#)

[Who can apply?](#)

[Applicants should](#)

[Equality and diversity](#)

[Project stages](#)

[Location](#)

[Funding and payment](#)

[Duration](#)

[Project management](#)

[Evaluation](#)

[Scoring criteria](#)

[Timetable](#)

[Application form questions](#)

[Request other formats and languages](#)

Summary

As part of the Children and Young Londoners mental health work, the Greater London Authority (GLA) is inviting proposals for £650,000 in grant funding to deliver the Mayor's new Mental Health in Schools project.

This project follows the example of the Mayor's Inclusive and Nurturing Schools work. It aims to support school systems to rollout a whole school approach to wellbeing and mental health. This means creating an environment where young Londoners feel supported, engaged, and thriving in school. The aim is to reduce health inequalities relating to mental health and wellbeing. It does so by giving staff members the knowledge and resources they need to respond effectively and confidently to young people's mental health needs.

The Mental Health in Schools Project should be based on Whole School Approaches and include opportunities to share best practice between schools. Please see chapter two (Project description) for the aims and objectives of the project.

Eligible organisations will be part of the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector with excellent knowledge of the education and mental health sectors.

Delivery is expected to take place over two financial years from July 2025 to March 2027.

The GLA's Children and Young Londoners team is now inviting proposals through a competitive grant process.

If you wish to apply, please provide us with the following documentation:

1. Application form (including delivery plan)
2. Budget (broken down by financial year, April – March)
3. Organisation chart
4. References on request
5. Due diligence documentation

Please submit applications using our e-form below. The closing date for proposals is 12pm on 3 July 2025.

[Start your application now](#)

Definitions

Whole school approach (WSA):

“A whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing is a co-ordinated approach across an educational setting to promote emotional wellbeing, identify emotional and mental health difficulties at an early stage, and provide support to those who need it (either in school or by signposting to external agencies)” Procter et al (2024)

Mental health:

“A state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community.” World Health Organization (2022)

Wellbeing:

Feeling comfortable, fulfilled, and resilient, with good quality of life and positive self-esteem, meaning that the person can relate well to others and function well in their communities and in society.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs):

Negative and/or traumatic experiences while growing up which have a detrimental impact on the person's later life, health, or wellbeing. Examples include physical, verbal, and sexual abuse, poverty, bullying, and bereavement.

1. Background

Fifty per cent of mental health problems develop before the age of 14. As such, schools are ideally placed to identify and minimise the risk factors that might lead to a child or young person developing mental ill health. It is important to support young people with their wellbeing as early as possible to stop low-level problems from developing in complexity later in life.

Certain vulnerabilities significantly increase the risk of developing a mental health condition. For example, an estimated one in three adult mental health disorders are directly linked to ACEs. Additionally, young people in low-income families are four times more likely to experience mental health challenges than those in higher-income households.

There is an increase in mental health needs among children and young people in London which is not matched by the NHS Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) capacity.

- There were 60,000 individuals in contact with children and young people mental health services in London in June 2024. This has been steadily increasing since pre-pandemic. There were 159.9 hospital admissions per 100,000 people for self-harm among 10–24-year-olds in London.
- The proportion of 10-15-year-olds in London with a probable mental disorder has increased from 8 per cent in 2009-2010 to 19 per cent in 2021-2022.
- Most young people referred to mental health care do not receive it. There is a risk of those with low/moderate (early intervention) needs falling through the gap in support. There will also be a hidden population of those who have mental health needs but do not try to access services.

In England, only 32 per cent of children and young people referred to mental health services received support. The remainder were still waiting, or their referral was closed before support could be accessed. Usually this is because they do not meet thresholds for CAMHS.

NHS Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) provide targeted support in schools to pupils with mental health needs and backs the whole school approach. However, they are not present in every school. The Mayor supports several projects that run in educational settings. These include Inclusive and Nurturing Schools (to reduce exclusions and improve peer and student-staff relationships) and Healthy Schools London (an award project to encourage schools to holistically support children's health and wellbeing). While these initiatives are valuable, there is an opportunity to strengthen our focus on mental health and wellbeing.

A [review of MHSTs' use of WSAs](#) found potential of the teams in improving school culture and community towards mental health. It found that senior leadership in schools was committed to using a WSA. They found the support of MHSTs to be especially valuable for young people with low to moderate mental health needs.

NICE guidance recommends adopting a WSA: the committee "regarded the whole-school approach as a framework that other interventions can slot into. They noted that interventions such as targeted support have a better chance of success if schools actively engage with local agencies. They also agreed that, to be effective, a

whole-school approach needed monitoring and evaluating to make sure the approach was working."

A WSA is also recommended by Public Health England alongside the [Department for Education](#). They outline eight principles of a whole school approach:

- Leadership and management that support and champions efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing.
- Curriculum teaching and learning to promote resilience and support social and emotional learning.
- Enabling student voice to influence decisions.
- Staff development to support their own wellbeing and that of students.
- Identifying need and monitoring impact of interventions.
- Working with parents and carers.
- Targeted support and appropriate referral.
- An ethos and environment that promotes respect and values diversity.

This project builds on the practice and impact of the Mayor's Violence Reduction Unit's Inclusive and Nurturing Schools programme. City Hall is adopting a whole school approach that both supports young people's wellbeing and promotes the values of London's Inclusion Charter.

2. Project description

The GLA will award funding to develop and deliver bespoke projects for schools. The projects will support students, staff, and parents to become more understanding and supportive of young people's mental health and wellbeing needs and better able to respond to them.

This work will require close collaboration with boroughs and strong trust-based relationships with schools. This will ensure effective local delivery, engage young people, and embed the project successfully.

It will involve, but is not limited to

It will involve, but is not limited to:

- Completing individualised assessments for participating schools to understand the baseline of the school's culture, ethos, practices, and policies towards mental health and wellbeing.
- Using the assessment results to develop a bespoke whole school approach plan to build on and improve the expertise and capabilities of schools and local authorities to identify and meet pupils' needs.
- This plan might include the following components.
- Leadership and management that support and champions efforts to promote emotional health and wellbeing.
- Curriculum teaching and learning to promote resilience and support social and emotional learning.
- Enabling student voice to influence decisions.
- Staff training to support their own wellbeing and that of students.
- Identifying need and monitoring impact of interventions.

- Working with parents and carers.
- Targeted support, such as peer networks, and appropriate referral.
- An ethos and environment that promotes respect and values diversity.
- Supporting staff wellbeing.
- Supporting schools, including special schools, to move forward in implementing their delivery plan over the course of the project.
- Engaging the whole school community, including carers, staff, students, parents, and local community organisations.
- Actively supporting partnership working with local authorities and local MHSTs, including producing learning outputs, a Community of Practice and engaging with dissemination across the project.
- The GLA will convene an Implementation Group. This will be comprised of borough representatives, the NHS, London Councils, the evaluator, and grantee. We expect the grantee to participate, bring issues, and use the Implementation Group for a steer when needed.
- Working with the independent evaluator to ensure the project's impact can be effectively assessed.

2.1 The aims of this work are to

The aims of this work are to:

- Enable transformative systems change across regional partners and London schools.
- Reduce health inequalities relating to mental health and wellbeing.
- Improve schools' capacity to support students' mental health and wellbeing.
- Increase awareness and understanding of mental health issues among students, staff, and parents.
- Equip students with the skills and knowledge to manage their own mental health and support their peers.

2.2 Objectives

Objectives:

- Build sustainable partnership with London boroughs, schools and wider regional partners to co-produce and deliver the programme.
- Equip school staff with the skills and knowledge on mental health awareness, early intervention techniques and how to support students with mental health issues.
- Provide stronger support networks for young people with clear access routes for help with their mental health and wellbeing.
- Engage parents and carers to ensure there is an understanding of the changes being made at school and how mental health and wellbeing support can translate into the home.
- Encourage students to become involved in decision-making processes related to new mental health initiatives.
- Build a community of practice: support participating schools to work together on their whole school approaches, share best practice and support staff wellbeing.
- Ensure the legacy of the project by embedding sustainable practices within school systems and sharing learning across the education sector.

2.3 Outcomes

Outcomes:

Table 2.1 - Expected outcomes of the Mental Health in Schools programme

	Outcomes
Pupils in participating schools/colleges	Improved mental wellbeing
	Improved feeling of support by, and belonging in, the school environment
	Improved ability to respond to stress or trauma
	Improved understanding of mental health and wellbeing and how they can support themselves and peers
	Increased engagement in decision-making
Education settings and staff	Improved knowledge and understanding of pupils' needs
	Improved staff attitudes towards, and consistency in applying a supportive environment towards mental health
	Increased collaboration with young people in shaping the school environment
	Increased confidence in responding to the social and emotional needs of all children and young people
	Improved understanding, confidence, and transparency in school about the impacts of adverse childhood events, mental ill-health and mental distress, and support needs related to these
	Improved understanding and confidence in supporting young people around periods of stress for young people (transitions, exams)

	Outcomes
Improved understanding of the internal and external support available to young people with mental health needs/illness and how to refer	
A more inclusive approach to behavioural difficulties with reduced emphasis on punitive measures and exclusion, which take account underlying mental health needs	
Longer term: Reduction in emotionally based school avoidance	
Longer term: Improved measures of wellbeing	
Local Authority	Increased access and use of community resources and support
	Improved collaboration and knowledge-sharing with other local authorities and the NHS on mental health and wellbeing amongst children and young people.
	Longer term: Reduction in emotionally based school avoidance

3. Target group

Secondary school students

- Please get in touch with MHinSchools@london.gov.uk for a list of Boroughs this project is likely to be working in.
- Boroughs have been selected by the GLA based on a set of social, health, and educational criteria including CAMHS waiting lists, child poverty rates, index of multiple deprivation, school absence rates,

and young people from ethnic minority backgrounds.

- The grantee will deliver the project in a minimum of sixteen schools, equally divided across the eight boroughs, over the course of the project.
- One or more of these schools may be special schools for young Londoners with SEND.

3.1 Scope of project

We expect proposed models to meet the following requirements:

- Consider best practice approaches and the resources below in the design and/or delivery of the project:
 - [Promoting children and young people's mental health and wellbeing \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
 - [Recommendations | Social, emotional and mental wellbeing in primary and secondary education | Guidance | NICE](#)
 - [Best practice review of whole school approach \(WSA\) in the South-East of England. NIHR applied research collaboration Kent, Surrey and Sussex \(figshare.com\)](https://figshare.com)
- Design a plan to assess the needs of chosen schools, design tailored support for each school to rollout a WSA and how this support can then be delivered.
- These whole school approaches must follow the eight principles as set out by the Department for Education and Public Health England.
- Understand how best to adapt the wider project plan to suit special schools to support young Londoners with SEND.
- Work closely with local authorities to ensure that project delivery is aligned with local mental health strategies, and to engage with selected schools at the outset.
- Work closely with the selected independent evaluator to develop their evaluation framework and assist in gathering relevant quantitative and qualitative school-level data over the course of the project, as required.
- Engage and ensure buy-in from senior leaders, teachers, and parents/carers, non-teaching staff and governors.
- Deliver the project depending on the needs and capacity of the individual setting based on a baseline assessment.
- The proposals should build on existing strengths of schools and local authorities. These will have different starting points when it comes to their needs and provision for WSAs. The composition of each borough's two target schools will be different, depending on local need and strategy.
- Work with the school to provide training and resources in support of this plan from September 2025 to March 2027, including support and supervision until the end of the project. Some settings are likely to need more support than others. The grantee must work to provide this support flexibly, with a view to ensuring sustainability once the funding period is over.
- Share learning, challenges, and best practice both within and across schools, boroughs, and London-wide. The grantee will:
 - work with the local authority coordinators to organise a regular, shared community of practice for school staff from the participating schools
 - prepare a toolkit with learnings and resources developed over the course of the project to support other London schools looking to rollout a WSA beyond the funding term.
- Ensure work with schools, boroughs, students, and parents embeds a place-based anti-racism approach to systemic discrimination and power imbalances and how they affect young people's mental health and wellbeing.
- Work to embed links with other GLA Family programmes where possible.

The funding scope for the project includes the following components:

- project design, delivery, and management
- staffing
- resources (digital and physical)
- data collection
- monitoring and reporting.

The successful applicant would also be expected to work with the GLA communications teams on all external branding for the project.

4. Who can apply?

We welcome applications from voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations. You should have excellent knowledge of the education and mental health sectors and understand the current issues affecting young Londoners and the education workforce.

We encourage applications from smaller and grassroots organisations, and those majority led by equalities groups (at least 50 per cent management and staff). This includes Black, Asian and minority ethnic Londoners, Deaf and disabled Londoners, LGBTQ+ Londoners, women, or people from a lower social economic background.

[Start your application now](#)

Applicants should

- have the capability to design and deliver a project which both builds and supports a WSA to mental health and wellbeing in 16 London secondary schools
- have extensive experience of delivering interventions for children and young people in schools, including those around mental health and wellbeing as well as for young people with SEND
- have demonstrable expertise in the field of children and young people's mental health and a strong understanding of school systems
- have demonstrable expertise and understanding of mental health policy and issues related to young people's mental health, particularly related to London and including young people with SEND
- understand the importance of equality, diversity, and cultural competency in the delivery of the project given the variety of schools and students the grantee will be expected to work with
- have experience of working in partnership with schools including special schools, and local authorities, preferably in London
- be able to provide evidence of strong safeguarding policies and safer recruitment principles.

To be eligible to receive this funding, the funding proposal must:

- be a registered charity, charitable incorporated organisation, or a social enterprise – this includes companies limited by guarantee and community interest companies
- have demonstrable capacity, experience, and expertise to lead and deliver a project that will incorporate a range of stakeholders and partners at strategic and operational levels

- be in sound financial health with a positive end-of-year position in the previous financial year
- have robust experience of project management including gathering and analysing data, measuring, and communicating impact, and reporting
- be based in London and/or working with Londoners.

Due Diligence documentation

- copy of the most recent audited accounts
- evidence of public and employer's liability insurance
- copy of the organisation's financial regulations/procedures
- statement of the organisation's cash flow forecast for the current year
- the organisation's budget for the current year
- budgeted allocation of funding within the project
- name and contact details of bank
- details of previous GLA contracts/grants and values over the last 12 months
- grant amount
- project title
- company or charity registration number.

Equality and diversity

The funding proposal must:

- ensure that all staff, particularly those interacting directly with pupils and school staff, are appropriately trained, including in:
 - interacting with members of protected groups to ensure that they do not discriminate by commission or omission in delivery of the contract on behalf of the GLA
 - ensuring that their approaches and processes are underpinned by equality and diversity policies which also consider intersectionality and encompass cultural humility
 - evidence that reasonable and proportionate adjustments have been made where appropriate to their delivery of the services and management of the project. These include, but are not limited to, communications (telephone, face to face, web-based, print etc) and alternative means of access to the material for those who are neurodiverse or disabled
 - support the participation, as appropriate, in the project of those protected groups who may otherwise be excluded through project design and management.

5. Project stages

The GLA considers that to successfully deliver the required outcomes, the project should incorporate various stages. Applicants should set out how they will deliver the following:

Table 5.1 - Project stages and related activities

Stage	Activity
Engage stakeholders	Engage with local authorities and their selected schools ahead of the academic year 2025-26.
Develop and finalise the project	Prepare and plan for project delivery alongside local authorities and the GLA.
Recruit staff (if needed)	Recruitment and application process for project staff if needed.
Delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Running baseline assessments with students and staff • Collaborating on building a delivery plan • Providing relevant training and support
Wider knowledge dissemination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building a Community of Practice for participating schools • Creating a toolkit on WSAs with experience from the project
Evaluation	Gathering relevant data as part of the evaluation process and working with an external evaluator (throughout)

6. Location

Please get in touch with MHinSchools@london.gov.uk for a list of Boroughs this project is likely to be working in.

7. Funding and payment

We will be funding one grant of £650,000.

Payments will be based on achievement of key milestones as set out in the applicant's delivery plan / work plan or agreed by the GLA.

8. Duration

The funding will cover activity from July 2025 to March 2027.

9. Project management

The successful grantee must provide a work plan / delivery plan with key milestones and submit quarterly claims to the GLA. They should also provide the GLA project manager with regular monthly progress reports linked to these milestones.

The successful applicant will also be expected to make themselves available for an inception meeting and may be asked to contribute to future good practice activities being undertaken by the GLA as part of wider policy activity.

A designated GLA officer will be responsible for grant agreement monitoring the grantee to ensure effective delivery and value for money. The GLA officer will also conduct regular meetings with the local authorities to ensure the project is managed to expectations.

The grantee will be responsible for monitoring the project to ensure effective delivery and value for money.

The grantee will be expected to report to the Children and Young Londoners team as and when requested. They will also be subject to standard GLA project monitoring approaches, which includes providing quarterly data and progress reports in standard GLA formats. The grantee will also submit an end-of-project report with details of the impact of the project, as well as school- and borough-level case studies.

10. Evaluation

The GLA will commission an external evaluation partner to work with the partnership throughout the project.

The GLA expects that the grantee works closely with the evaluator from the start. This will include ensuring appropriate monitoring and data collection processes are implemented to meet the needs of all parties.

11. Scoring criteria

All applications received will be scored based on the criteria below.

We reserve the right to ask for clarification on proposals through an interview process.

The GLA may request presentations from prospective grantees. Funding will be dependent on passing due diligence checks:

Table 11.1 - Scoring criteria

<p>Strength of Rationale and Evidence for Proposal (35 per cent)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear understanding of the project scope, objectives and desired outcome. • Evidence of how the proposed project is informed by the needs of the prospective participants, including evidence of co-design. • Clear evaluation plan.
<p>Clear delivery and impact (30 per cent)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear outline of the proposed structure and content of the project. • This should include a timeline of all key activities. • Clearly structured delivery plan with reference to the outlined project stages. • Commitment to provide bespoke support to each school - applicants are encouraged to design their projects in a way that will allow a flexible approach to suit individual school's needs. • Strong project management skills, including an awareness of risks associated with the project. • Use of qualitative and quantitative data to track progress.
<p>Previous Expertise and Experience (20 per cent)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relevant previous experience. • A proven track record of collaborating with the education and mental health sectors. • Experience of building and managing partnerships with local authorities and educational settings. • Evidence of supporting schools with implementing mental health support for students and staff. • Qualification and expertise of staff delivering the project. • Experience of safeguarding children and youth engagement.
<p>Value for Money (15 per cent)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear outline of the cost of running the project. • Evidence of sustainability plans and consideration of how the project might be embedded beyond the funding period.

Each of the above areas will be assessed in accordance with the following criteria:

0 – No response

1 - Unsatisfactory No real evidence

2 - Poor Criteria not met and unacceptable

3 - Satisfactory Not met exactly but acceptably

4 - Good Most aspects of criteria are met

5 - Excellent Meets criteria exactly

12. Timetable

The anticipated timetable for the project is outlined in the table below.

Table 12.1 - Timetable for the project

Milestone	Deadline (W/C – Provisional)
Request for proposals published	5 June 2025
Closing date for tender responses	3 July 2025
GLA shortlisting	4 – 11 July 2025
Interviews if needed	11 – 18 July 2025
Due diligence and appointment	18 – 23 July 2025
Initiation Meeting	week commencing 28 July 2025
Signing of grant agreements	week commencing 28 July 2025
GLA funding starts	July 2025
GLA funding ends	March 2027
Quarterly updates on progress	On a termly basis from September 2025

Please apply using this application form and send any questions to MHinSchools@london.gov.uk

13. Application form questions

Please submit your application using the [online application form](#).

The questions are listed below for ease:

1. Main contact person name, position, email address and phone number
2. Describe your organisation's status. Select one:
 - Company limited by guarantee
 - Company limited by shares
 - Community Interest Company (CIC)
 - Partnership
 - Trust or foundation
 - Unincorporated group
 - Other (Please give details in no more than 10 words)
3. Are you a registered charity?
4. What is the full name of your organisation, its full registered address, full trading/operational address (if different from the registered address) and registration number.
5. Please upload the following documents:
 - Copy of the most recent audited accounts or copy of the most recent accounts signed by an independent and qualified accountant
 - Copy of the organisation's Financial Regulations
 - Statement of the organisation's cash flow forecast for the current year
 - The organisation's budget for the current year
6. If relevant, please provide the documents listed below:
 - Written Parent Company Guarantee (to be submitted by Parent Companies only)
 - Consolidated Financial Accounts for the consortium (to be submitted by the Lead Partner from Consortium's only)
 - Details of previous GLA contracts/grants and values over the last 12 months
 - Where applicable, details of your organisation and or any of your directors, partners, proprietors' bankruptcy, insolvency, compulsory winding up, receivership, composition with creditors, or subject to relevant proceedings
 - Where applicable, details of any pending or actual investigation by a consultative committee of accounting bodies in relation to accountancy standards or professional conduct for which your organisation and or any of its director(s), partners or proprietor(s) is or has been subject to, including actions taken to put things right.
7. How did you hear about the availability of grant funding?
8. If you have discussed your activity with any of our GLA staff, please tell us their name(s) and team(s), if known.
9. Are you related to, or do you have contact with any of our staff? If so, describe your relationship and their name(s)/team(s).
10. Please inform us of any current or former funding from any organisation in the GLA family.
11. Please outline the process you took in designing your programme. Include current mental health issues, school roles, and responsiveness to needs.
12. Provide a clear outline of your proposed programme and its content. Include how your proposed delivery model will provide bespoke support to schools and address any additional training needs.
13. Describe how your programme meets the objectives and outcomes of the Mental Health in Schools programme.
14. How will your programme be managed? Include roles, experience, and risk management.
15. Attach an organisation chart
16. Provide details of your safeguarding policies and procedures. Upload your safer recruitment policy.
17. Please identify three key risks that you anticipate your programme may face, the likelihood and impact (high, medium or low) of that risk and the action you plan to take to mitigate it.
18. Please explain your previous experience of delivering this type of programme and working with strategic partners. Please set out clearly:

- Your experience of engaging and supporting schools and staff
- Your experience of working with local authorities
- Your experience of working with schools on supporting students' mental health and wellbeing using a Whole School Approach (WSA).

19. Delivery activities should consider planned evaluation points and demonstrate that the programme can start in schools in September 2025. You can upload a document of your delivery plan. Please copy the below format and input your proposed delivery activity in chronological order.

Start Date	End Date	Activity or Milestone	Target Outcomes / Outputs
month and year	month and year	first engagement with schools	increased staff confidence

20. Provide two organisational references:

- Describe the project, problem addressed, and impact
- Referee Name
- Organisation
- Email Address

21. How will the requested funding be used to deliver the programme and demonstrate value for money?
Optional: upload supporting document.

22. Monitoring information

- How many employees are there in your organisation?
- We define an organisation as being 'Black and minority ethnic led' if at least 51 per cent of the senior managers, management committee, board, governing body or council define themselves as Black or minority ethnic. Provide numbers of senior managers/board members by ethnic group.
- We define an organisation as being 'disabled led' if at least 51 per cent of the senior managers, management committee, board, governing body or council consider themselves to be disabled. Provide numbers of senior managers/board members who consider themselves disabled or non-disabled.
- Provide numbers of board/management who identify by sexuality.
- Provide number of board/management by gender.

23. List any information you believe should be exempt from FOI or GDPR disclosure.

Request other formats and languages

Contact us for a large print, Braille, disc, sign language video or audio-tape version of this document:

- **Address:** Greater London Authority, City Hall, Kamal Chunchie Way, London, E16 1ZE
- **Telephone:** 020 7983 4000
- **Email:** Submit a request using our [contact us form](#)

You will need to give your name, postal address and state the format and title of the publication you require.

For a document summary in your language, call or contact us at the address above.

[Back to table of contents](#)