

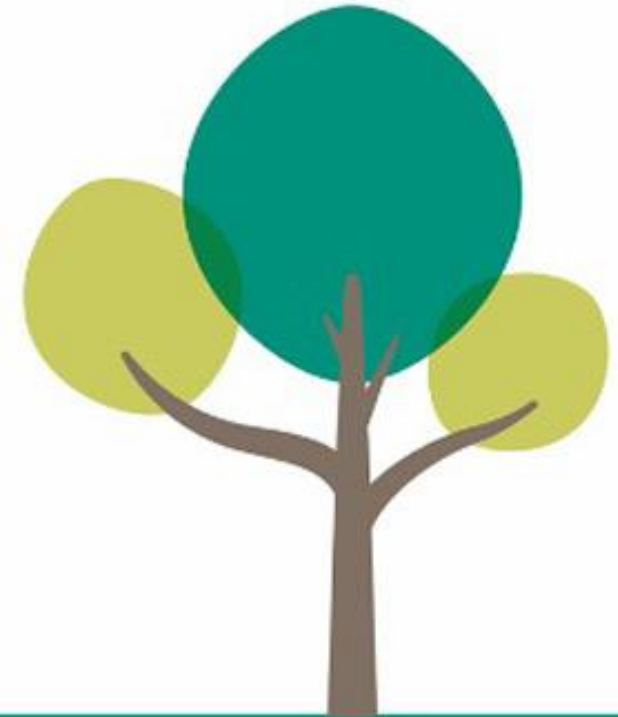


COVID FUNDING UPDATE

Children's Services and Education Scrutiny Board
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Context

- Children and Education has received Covid Emergency Funding for a range of initiatives to deal with increased demand or promote recovery from the pandemic. Details are set out at Appendix 1.
- A significant amount has been allocated to improving children and young people's emotional wellbeing.
- There has been a significant impact on children and young people's education, mental health and emotional wellbeing due to the pandemic.
- One in six children aged five to 16 were identified as having a probable mental health problem in July 2021, a huge increase from one in nine in 2017. That's five children in every classroom ***Young Minds (January 2021)***



The voice of Sandwell's children and young people

Consultation and engagement with our young people has told us how the pandemic has impacted on them:

- ✓ They have missed out on their education – worried about exams and their work
- ✓ They felt their mental health dipped
- ✓ They felt more anxious – in social settings and returning to school
- ✓ They are worried about their physical appearance due to increased use of social media
- ✓ They missed socialising and interacting with friends
- ✓ They felt isolated
- ✓ They were worried about being bullied



Strategic approach

- In 2021, SMBC identified £1.1m Covid Emergency Funding to increase capacity within the voluntary sector to meet the emotional wellbeing needs of children and young
- To achieve a rapid increase in capacity, the money was grant aided to SCVO and first round rolled out at speed last summer, followed by two more rounds in September 21 and January 22
- A multi–agency panel with representatives from CAMHS, SMBC, Public Health, Sandwell Children’s Trust, Education Psychology and the Charter Mark team provide expertise, make funding decisions and oversee the grants being awarded.



Overview of EWB Programme

- The purpose of the funding:
 - ❖ *To make support available to school aged children to enable them to address their challenges.*
 - ❖ *To target those who are identified as requiring additional support or access to specialist service which are not provided.*
 - ❖ *Provide support for children and young people identified as being impacted by domestic abuse, including family support where possible.*
- Target group - Children and young people aged 5-18





Activity and Impact

- Progress to date:
 - ✓ 13 providers received grant funding to delivery a range of activities
 - ✓ Activities taking place in all 6 towns
 - ✓ Over 2000 individuals have accessed support sessions
 - ✓ Largest cohort receiving support - 9-13 years old
 - ✓ Improved cross provider engagement and support
- Feedback from children and young people:
 - “This is the best because it helps me control my feelings.”
 - “I love doing this because it helps with stress and anger.”
- Feedback from teachers:
 - “They are asking to talk to trusted adults in school if they need to.”
 - “We’ve now implement self-care jars/positivity jars in classrooms as a result.”





Next Steps

- ✓ £550k approved at June 2022 Cabinet for Phase 2 in 22/23; review the need thereafter
- ✓ Partners working together to identify how to target this funding
- ✓ Mapping has been carried out by Children and Education and Public Health – there is clearer understanding emerging of schools who have not received as much support
- ✓ Public Health have also undertaken a needs assessment to support commissioning
- ✓ An external evaluation partner has been appointed to work alongside SCVO, providers and the Steering Group. The final evaluation will assess the impact of the programme, including the legacy of provider relationships and networks
- ✓ Feedback from young people's engagement on mental health and wellbeing sessions (SHAPE report), delivery and key partners such as education and NHS about what is needed for the future.
- ✓ Broader governance of emotional wellbeing and mental health established through the Thrive Board/Partnership

