

HeadStart Newham - Training Offer

[HeadStart Newham](#) provides a detailed school-based training offer designed to improve children and young people's [academic resilience](#). Using Lisa Williams' and Professor Angie Hart's [Academic Resilience Approach](#), HeadStart, CAMHS, the Local Authority and local community-based organisations collaborate to design and deliver training. The offer aims to promote academic resilience to achieve good educational outcomes in pupils despite adversity, as well as supporting pupils to improve behaviour and get the most out of their school lives – both academically and socially. HeadStart Newham's [vision](#) is for young people to becoming champions of their own wellbeing. Supporting pupils to become academically resilient supports this vision and involves working with schools to develop [Whole School Approaches](#) that support children's mental health and wellbeing, recognising the context surrounding the child and how it contributes towards his or her levels of resilience.

Implementing the Academic Resilience Approach involves:

- Meeting with senior leadership teams to consider school priorities
- Staff training and workshop delivery on the [Resilience Framework](#)
- Auditing of the whole school community against an evidence-based framework
- Development of a whole school action plan
- Implementation of action plans and reviewing through further training and consultancy.

HeadStart Newham have provided school-based training grounded in Academic Resilience principles since the programme began in 2016. In 2020-2021, 274 school staff members were trained by HeadStart Newham across 14 secondary and 35 primary schools. A pre and post outcomes score analysis of one group found a 125% increase in knowledge and understanding, and an 80% increase in confidence, in how to best support others with a mental health issue.

'The mental health workshop was particularly useful. Normally a topic like this can be overwhelming, but it has been presented well and it gave lots of suggestions of how to recognise, avoid and deal with a mental health crisis' – school staff member

'I feel confident to have positive conversations regarding mental health. Excellent delivery, very informative. Definitely recommend' – school staff member

Training has been designed, evaluated and developed in line with the 2017 Green Paper [Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision](#), and other services and agencies have been invited to collaborate and co-deliver on elements of the training, such as mindfulness training with CAMHS and parents and carers mental health training sessions with Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs). The Green Paper outlined increasing expectations on schools for the mental health of their pupils, including the introduction of MHSTs, and pledged Designated Senior Leads training. In response to the priorities laid out in the paper, HeadStart Newham collaborated with CAMHS clinicians, link workers and Local Authority practitioners to deliver a fully rounded, collaborative local training offer that equipped schools with the clinical and policy knowledge surrounding children and young people's mental health. For example, HeadStart Newham and CAMHS deliver primary school training on self-harm awareness, with HeadStart providing expertise on policy developments and CAMHS on clinical presentation of self-harm. HeadStart Newham's work in schools led to improved communication between provisions, through a schools' forum, providing a way to share best practice and updates as well as concerns and issues coming up within schools. Since MHSTs have been rolled out in Newham, HeadStart have provided training in preparing teams around working with schools and across the system.

Sustainability is a central aim of the Academic Resilience Approach and of the development of a Whole School Approach. HeadStart Newham have reflected on the facilitating and challenging factors of implementing both an Academic Resilience and Whole School Approach to mental health and wellbeing. Facilitating factors include:

- Taking a strengths-based approach with schools, acknowledging wider factors affecting the school context
- Taking the time to understand the unique communities of schools' and staff members' training needs
- Where wellbeing was a priority in school ethos and was prioritised in the school culture

- Where senior leadership teams were invested in the training and were able to share resources throughout staff teams and provide time for the training to take place

Challenging factors include:

- Supporting schools to provide mental wellbeing provision for year 11s, where exam time was protected and prioritised
- Staff turnover, in both schools and HeadStart teams
- Reduced HeadStart capacity to deliver the desired quantity of training
- Changes to school leadership priorities, such as attainment and preparing for Ofsted inspection

'It's all about the headteacher being engaged really. If you're in a school where it's one person who's passionate about it and wants it to happen, but the rest of SLT or the headteacher aren't fully behind it, then it's a real struggle. I would say that is typical of all the schools where we haven't had as much impact' – HeadStart

Resilience Training Lead

HeadStart Newham have also delivered training on:

Wellbeing for education return

Delivering the [Wellbeing for Education Return](#) sessions, written by the Department for Education and the Department for Health, which were designed to support school staff to respond to additional mental health difficulties that pupils may have been feeling as a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic.

Youth mental health first aid

HeadStart Newham staff received training in [youth mental health first aid](#) and subsequently delivered the training to school staff across Newham. Once delivered, they provided additional training to support schools to embed the learning as part of their Whole School Approach, to maximise impact and ensure high quality support for all pupils.

Governor training

Training on national and local changes to mental health in education policy was delivered to governors and trustees informing them of how they can support young people's resilience in their strategic, senior leadership roles. Sessions aimed to enhance governors' knowledge of mental health, resilience and wellbeing and develop knowledge of how to embed a whole school approach.

Positive Behaviour Support Awareness

Sessions aimed to develop a shared understanding of positive behaviour support in schools, exploring how the [Positive Behavioural Support Competence Framework](#) is applied across settings and sharing ideas for implementation and development.

Bounce Back online

An online tool containing 15 [Bounce Back](#) session plans, a wellbeing check-in resource and case studies, designed for schools, parents and carers to help them support pupils or children to get the most out of the Bounce Back programme. Intended outcomes of the Bounce Back programme are for children and young people to build resilience, and learn tools and tricks to look after their health, body and mind, and the session plans support school staff, parents and carers to help young people achieve these aims.

In addition, the following series of training were aimed at school staff supporting pupils affected by parental mental illness:

Whole School Awareness Raising, which aimed to raise school staff members' awareness of parental mental illness, spotting the signs of parental mental illness in pupils and how best to offer support.

Complementary to the Whole School awareness raising were sessions designed to Support staff to work together to develop ways to support their pupils affected by parental mental illness through supporting conversations and developing deeper understanding of the impact on pupils' mental health and wellbeing.



'The strategic oversight of school development has incorporated a focus on wellbeing since those early meetings. For me, I think that that's when I saw a shift in terms of the impact. Because although HeadStart weren't physically doing all of those things, the conversation was started. Using the academic resilience framework, to interrogate our systems really helped' – secondary school staff member