

# The One Gloucestershire Way



## Priority Summary:

### Children and Young People's Mental Health

#### Our ambition

Early access to services is essential for children and young people who are experiencing mental health problems, and improving support is one of our top priorities.

With the mental health trailblazer programme, we want to establish more Mental Health Support Teams (MHSTs) within schools to provide care to children and young people who may be experiencing mild to moderate or early symptoms of mental health problems.

We also want to work with clinicians, young people and their families to improve access to specialist mental health services where required.

# What are we doing?

- We have invested in mental health workers to provide support and training in schools, supporting early intervention and signposting to appropriate services. In late 2018, Gloucestershire was one of only a handful of areas in the country to successfully bid for NHS England Mental Health Trailblazer funding (£5m), allowing us to build on the work we have been doing with schools and establish four new Mental Health Support Teams.
- Where children need more support, working with charity TIC+, an online counselling platform has been developed, in addition to face-to-face sessions. Since 2017, more than 1,700 children and young people have benefited.

## Case Study

Feedback from the work we have been doing with schools has been very positive. Staff told us that they felt like they had permission to ensure that mental health was high on their agenda, and that they felt better able to recognise when one of their students may be showing signs of mental health problems. Teachers have also reported a reduction in the stigma associated with mental health, with children developing the confidence and tools to talk about how they are feeling.

### One student, Keira, told us:

*"There used to be such a big thing about not speaking about mental health and just keeping it to yourself whereas now it's just normal to be open about how you're feeling."*



## What next?

- We want to continue our work with schools through the Trailblazer programme, focusing on improving the resilience of students and providing early support to prevent issues from escalating.
- We also want to improve access to specialist mental health services for those children and young people who need extra support.
- We will be trialling social prescribing for children and young people in the Forest of Dean, supporting them to make community connections they may not be able to make themselves. This could include activities such as sports, arts, or social groups.