

**WALTHAM FOREST  
YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
MENTAL HEALTH  
CHARTER  
GUIDANCE**

## Mental Health Charter Guidance

The Mental Health Charter was developed in conjunction with young people, schools, services and organisations across Waltham Forest, through a series of consultation workshops and activities.

The Charter has been designed and worded by young people, so it is accessible and attractive for all ages and abilities.

Below we have provided guidance and further detail on the specific commitments outlined in the Charter, made by the following groups and organisations to support the mental health of young people in the Borough:

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## 1. Young People

**The Youth People of Waltham Forest have pledged to:**

- **Be kind to one another, understanding of those who are struggling and ask for help**
  - Young people in the Borough pledge to demonstrate equal kindness, respect and consideration to all, not to stigmatise those who are suffering with poor mental health and to have the courage to ask for help when struggling.
  - We are challenging all Young People in the Borough to commit to this pledge, not just within their schools or settings, but in their day to day lives. Young people have told us that being treated with kindness and respect makes them feel happy and safe at school and in their communities. For ideas on how you could show kindness, visit: <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/>
  - If you or someone you know is struggling, you can ask a trusted adult like a parent/carer or teacher, for help. The following organisations can also help:
    - ChildLine: <https://www.childline.org.uk/> Tel: 0800 11111
    - Kooth: <https://www.kooth.com/>
    - HOPELINEUK – 0800 068 4141

## 2. Youth Health Champions

- **Youth Health Champions will listen to young people who have problems and give them information about where to go to get help**
  - The Youth Health Champion programme has been running in Waltham Forest for several years.
  - The Youth Health Champion model gives young people the skills, knowledge and confidence to act as peer mentors and educators, increasing awareness of healthy lifestyles and encouraging involvement in activities to promote good health and wellbeing.
  - A team of eight to ten young people aged 14-15 (years 9 and 10) are recruited by the school and trained for the role using the accredited Royal Society for Public Health Level 2 Certificate syllabus for Youth Health Champions.
  - The young people then offer support to their peers by providing confidential signposting to specialist health professionals, by raising awareness of health issues through the delivery of health promotion campaigns and by acting as

healthy role models in their communities.

- As a team, the Youth Health Champions plan and deliver health promotion campaigns to their peers, on topics which include Mental Health.
- School support for the YHC team requires a School coordinator who, after the initial training, is required for approximately 1 hour per week to support the programme internally.
- For more information, please contact:  
[catherine.hutchinson@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:catherine.hutchinson@walthamforest.gov.uk) or visit:  
<https://www.rsph.org.uk/our-work/programmes/young-health-champions.html>

### 3. Young Advisors

**The Young Advisors will:**

- **Encourage young people to speak up if they have problems and to share their ideas**
  - The Young Advisors role in the Borough will be as advocates for young people and will input the voice of young people strategically via the Young Advisors model.
  - Young Advisors can encourage young people to speak up and share their ideas where they do peer engagement, including in workshops, consultations and via the Streetbase project.
  - For more information, please visit: <https://youngadvisors.org.uk/walthamforest>

### 4. Youth Mental Health Ambassadors

**The Youth Mental Health Ambassadors have committed to:**

- **Support and advise services on how best to let young people know about them and how they can help**
  - The YMHA will do this by attending the CAMHS project board, and advising the council, NELFT and CCG in their role, along with ensuring that the young person's voice is included in all service design and strategy development.
  - To read the YMHA's Project Report 2017/18, visit:  
<https://tinyurl.com/y5p7me4o>

## 5. Local Authority Public Health

**As a Local Authority Public Health Team, we will:**

- **Provide training in Youth Mental Health First Aid for all school staff when a school signs up to the charter**
  - The Public Health team at Waltham Forest Council commit to training all school staff in Mental Health First Aid, *if their school signs up to the Charter.*
  - For more information on what the training covers, please visit: <https://mhfaengland.org/individuals/youth/2-day/>
  - **To book training for your school**, or to find out when the next training is, please contact your Healthy Schools Lead.
  
- **Share school's best practice in mental health**
  - The Public Health team have pledged to share the good work that schools are doing in mental health. This will be done through the Health in Schools Steering Group and by showcasing work on the Hub. It is also hoped that a Network will be created for schools to share best practice.

## 6. Waltham Forest Council Sports And Leisure Services

**As a Local Authority Sports and Leisure Team, we will:**

- **Provide mental health training to all sports clubs**
  - The Sport and Leisure team will be offering bespoke training for any organisation delivering sport and physical activity in the Borough to provide them with the knowledge, skills and confidence to better understand and support young people living with mental health problems; creating positive environments that ensure all residents can enjoy the benefits of being active.

## 7. Waltham Forest Council Life Chances Programme

**As a Local Authority Life Chances Team, we will:**

- **Provide parents with information to help them better understand and support their children**
  - The Life Chances Programme is developing an offer to parents of children and young people over the age of 5 years, to help them feel supported in

raising their children. Currently, there is a newsletter sent to all parents and parent networks in the Borough, with relevant information, opportunities and resources for parents. To find out more, contact Cat Crowther (Life Chances Project Manager): [lifechances@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:lifechances@walthamforest.gov.uk)

- **Improve young people’s chance of having a good life by working with all services and ensuring that young people’s ideas are heard**
  - In 2017 the Life Chances Commission was established to gather evidence about how the life chances of our young residents could be improved. The Commission heard from young people, residents, local businesses and educational institutions, and considered evidence from across London and beyond.
  - The Commission set out 30 recommendations for the council to improve the life chances of young people in the borough in their [Enabling Young People to Thrive](#) publication. Based on these initial findings, a [plan for improving life chances for young people](#) has been created, focusing on four priority areas for action: ensuring every child gets the best start in life; providing a good quality education for every child; supporting young people to be resilient, confident and healthy; and giving young people the opportunities to flourish.
  - To find out more, contact Cat Crowther (Life Chances Project Manager): [lifechances@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:lifechances@walthamforest.gov.uk)

## 8. Schools<sup>1</sup>

**Schools that sign-up to the charter, commit to providing the following:**

- **Safe spaces in our school for our pupils**
  - By ‘safe’ space, we mean a space that a young person feels comfortable going to, in a time of need, or just to unwind, where they feel they can be open, or feel accepted, and can gain the information they need. Good safe spaces include the following:
    - A classroom/room with access to a member of staff, and if available, peer mentors/youth health champions/buddies.
    - Information of support services (e.g. leaflets, posters, displays etc).
    - A Worry Box/Tell Us Box.

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<sup>1</sup> With support from Public Health Healthy Schools Team

- **A peer listening or buddying scheme**

- Peer mentoring is traditionally a one-to-one non-judgemental relationship in which an individual (mentor) voluntarily gives time to support and encourage another (mentee). Peer mentors provide advice and guidance whilst acting as a positive role model for younger people require their support.
- Peer mentoring programmes in schools can improve self-esteem, confidence, communication skills, and problem-solving skills. This approach can improve a student's sense of belonging in school and improve pupil attendance in school. It can also reduce behaviour incidents and improve academic achievement.
- Participating in peer mentor training and being a mentor enables a young person to gain valuable skills in communication, empathy and can give them valuable experience for the future. Peer mentoring programmes can take place in primary and secondary schools.
- To set up a scheme, see toolkit:  
[https://www.kelsi.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0007/67147/peer-mentoring-toolkit.pdf](https://www.kelsi.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/67147/peer-mentoring-toolkit.pdf)

- **Lessons, assemblies and activities on mental health throughout the year**

- There are a wealth of resources to support young people, and help teachers with delivering education and raising awareness around mental health. Please see here a list of resources: <https://tinurl.com/y2awlrjm>
- Other helpful resources include:
  - Mentally Healthy Schools (Free): <https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/>
  - London Schools Mental Health Toolkit (free): <https://www.healthy london.org/resource/schools-mental-health-toolkit/>
  - The PSHE Association (members only) <https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/curriculum-and-resources/resources/mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing-lesson-plans>

- **Engage with mental health professionals**

- Each school should have a mental health lead who liaises with CAMHS as part of the CAMHS School Link Initiative. This Lead is often the SENCO or a

member of the Pastoral team. The Lead needs to have significant influence within the school and training and support from the system. An effective model is one where a senior leader is paired up with an operational lead. For more information on the Link Programme, please visit:

<https://www.annafreud.org/what-we-do/schools-in-mind/our-work-with-schools/the-link-programme/schools-and-colleges/>

- Schools also have access to a school nurse. They are qualified to speak to young people about mental health and services, and are a real support in your school. Schools should ensure that all pupils know who their school nurse is and the services that they offer.
- Other organisations in the Borough/London, that schools could work with include Kooth, TimeToChange, Samaritans, Flourish, ThriveLondon and GoodThinking.

## 9. School and EOTAS Nursing

### As a School Nursing Team, we will

- **Make sure that everyone knows us and how we can help**
  - Each school has a named nurse who is trained in mental health and can provide help and advice, and signposting to services. There are also nurses for those young people who are not attending a school, known as Education Other Than School (EOTAS) Nurses.
  - For more information, visit: <https://www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-waltham-forest-universal-intervention/>

## 10. Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and Public Health

### In partnership, the CCG and Public Health commit to:

- **Fund online mental health services**
  - The CCG and LBWF Public Health pledge to provide online services for young people to get help for their mental wellbeing.
  - In 2018 the first online counselling service, Kooth, was commissioned as part of the Life Chances commitments.



- Kooth is a free online counselling service for young people aged 11-18 years living in Waltham Forest. Young people can register anonymously with the site, giving them timely access to Kooth whenever they need it. Professional counsellors are available for one-to-one chat sessions from 6pm until 10pm on weekdays, and from 12noon until 10pm on weekends. Kooth, accredited by the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP), also offers peer-to-peer support, live moderated forums, self-help materials, goal setting and messaging 365 days a year. For more information, visit: <https://www.kooth.com/>

## 11. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS)

**The CAMHS Team have pledged to:**

- **Deliver specialist mental health care by professionals who can put themselves in young people's shoes, understand how they feel and what they need.**
- The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service has pledged to work closely with young people and their families, to understand the difficulties they face, and to work in partnership to make access easier, ensuring that problems are resolved as early as possible.
- For more information, visit: <https://www.nelft.nhs.uk/waltham-forest-camhs>

## 12. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG)

**The CAMHS Team and CCG have committed to working in partnership to:**

- **Reduce mental health service waiting times**
- The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) have pledged to work together to reduce the waiting times for young people trying to access the service. There was additional investment in the CAMHS service in 2018/19, and resulted in a reduction in waiting times. However, it has been established that further resource is still required to reduce the current waiting times for CAMHS referrals. In light of this, the partnership will be recruiting additional workforce into CAMHS.

- **Work with everyone to give the right support, in the right place, at the right time**

— The aim of this pledge is to build on the current provision to ensure Children and Young People receive timely treatment. The service provision will be developed to include the delivery of targeted intervention in other areas such as schools, GP practices, and more collaborative working with partner agencies.

— For future developments, visit:

<https://www.walthamforestccg.nhs.uk/ourwork/mental-health.htm>

### 13. Time To Change

**Time to Change have pledged to:**

- **Support young people to not feel ashamed**

They will do this by:

— Improving public attitudes and behaviour towards people with mental health problems.

— Reducing the amount of discrimination that people with mental health problems report in their personal relationships, their social lives and at work.

— Making sure even more people with mental health problems can act to challenge stigma and discrimination in their communities, in workplaces, in schools and online.

— Creating a sustainable campaign that will continue long into the future.

— For more information contact: [Naomi.Russell@rethink.org](mailto:Naomi.Russell@rethink.org)

### 14. WE London

**The WE London School Team have pledged to:**

- **Help young people to bring positive change in mental health in their school & community**

— The WE Schools programme provides teachers and students with curriculum-matched lesson plans, educational resources and a full calendar

of action campaign ideas. Through WE Schools, students gain an understanding of the root causes of pressing issues like mental health and poverty and explore what they can do to help. They also plan at least one local and one global action to improve their community and the world.

— To find out more, visit: <https://gb.we.org/gb/we-at-school/we-schools/> or contact [eleanor.davies-lawley@we.org](mailto:eleanor.davies-lawley@we.org)