

Dear Andrew Connell

Thank you for your letter received 29 September about the mental health and wellbeing of teachers. I write on behalf of the Secretary of State for Education and would like to apologise for the extreme delay in doing so, which is due to exceptionally high volumes of correspondence received by the department over a prolonged period.

In March 2019, we set up an expert advisory group (EAG) to advise on the wellbeing of staff in schools and colleges. The expert advisory group's [recommendations](#) were accepted by ministers and published in June 2020. They include a commitment to develop a wellbeing charter for the teaching sector.

The wellbeing charter will help create an open culture around wellbeing and mental health, breaking down stigma, and will include commitments from the government to regularly measure staff wellbeing, and to embed this into training, guidance and policy making. These commitments are the beginning of a long-term collaborative process of learning, evaluating, and adapting. This also means taking an empirical approach, with a commitment to developing our evidence base over time.

We have taken decisive action to respond to the mental health needs of school leaders managing the pressures caused by COVID-19 by announcing a new £95,000 pilot led by the Education Support Partnership to provide online peer-support and telephone supervision from experts to around 250 school leaders. This service will run from mid-June to March 2021. The outcome of the pilot will inform future wellbeing and mental health interventions.

Alongside this, the £8 million 'Wellbeing for education return' training programme is supporting staff in schools and colleges to respond to the additional pressures some children and young people may be feeling as a direct result of the pandemic, as well as to any emotional response they or their teachers may be experiencing.

The department will be convening a Mental Health Action Group to look at the effects on children, young people and staff in the education system and we will confirm the next steps as soon as possible.

Furthermore, the department is committed to taking a whole-school approach to mental health and wellbeing, and to ensuring that staff wellbeing policy is integrated within schools' culture. This is reflected in the announcement made last year about combined action on pupil and staff wellbeing. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/extra-mental-health-support-for-pupils-and-teachers>

Thank you for writing on this important issue and I hope that this information addresses your concerns.

Your correspondence has been allocated reference number 2020-0054929. If you need to respond to us, please visit <https://www.education.gov.uk/contactus> and quote your reference number.

As part of our commitment to improving the service we provide to our customers, we are interested in hearing your views and would welcome your comments via our website at: <https://form.education.gov.uk/service/TOCMTfeedback> .

Yours sincerely

Amanda Christian

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