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Promoting Positive Adolescent Mental Health (PPAMH!) for school climate: a whole school approach to improving the school environment to support student wellbeing.

Submission date
17/07/2024

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
24/09/2024

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
29/10/2026

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[ ] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[ ] Statistical analysis plan
[ ] Results
[ ] Individual participant data
[X] Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol
Background and study aims
Promoting Positive Adolescent Mental Health (PPAMH!) for School Climate aims to promote a positive environment to support student wellbeing. A 'well-being mentor' will work in each school for half of the week. They will do whole-school activities such as assemblies, peer group activities such as workshops, and one-to-one activities with pupils. The PPAMH! for School Climate Intervention focuses on empowering pupils to have their say on school policies and curriculum by creating a participative school environment. Interventions using similar principles have been done in India (called 'SEHER' Strengthening Evidence base on scHool-based intErventions for pRomoting adolescents health program) and Australia. PPAMH! for School Climate could improve student attendance. The research trial in India found that it reduced bullying and feelings of depression. The intervention will be adapted to be suitable for schools in Bradford through a series of workshops with students and staff.

Who can participate?
This initial pilot trial will involve the staff and pupils of six secondary schools in Bradford

What does the study involve?
Schools will be randomly assigned to be either a control school (three schools) or to receive the intervention (three schools). The main outcome of this feasibility trial is the successful implementation of the intervention in the secondary schools, for example, looking at how many activities were completed and by how many students. The effect of the intervention on school absences or other aspects of well-being will not be studied in this trial. During the feasibility trial, there will be interviews held with school staff members who are involved in running the intervention in the schools and the well-being mentors. This will highlight barriers to implementation and how these could be overcome and track how schools adjust the intervention. The plan is to do a full trial if the feasibility trial shows that the PPAMH! intervention can be successfully set up in schools. The study will also highlight how easily the data planned to be used in the full trial can be accessed, which include school absences (from

routine educational data) and mental health outcomes such as depression and anxiety symptoms (reported by students in surveys).

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
Participants will benefit from having access to the intervention resources created, which are hoped to be beneficial to them.

School staff are not expected to be at increased risk from the implementation interviews which might cover sensitive or distressing topics. However, the interview will be paused or stopped if a participant becomes distressed. There is a possibility that school staff could be identifiable, so the study team will be careful with the level of specific details provided in any written reports.

Where is the study run from?
Mental Health and Addiction Research Group, University of York (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
April 2023 to December 2025

Who is funding the study?
National Institute for Health and Care Research (NIHR) (UK)

Who is the main contact?
Dr Ruth Wadman, ruth.wadman@york.ac.uk

Contact information

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Principal investigator

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Additional identifiers

Study information

Scientific Title
Promoting Positive Adolescent Mental Health (PPAMH!) for school climate: protocol for a feasibility randomised control trial in secondary schools

Acronym

PPAMH! for School Climate

Study objectives
As this is a feasibility study no formal hypothesis testing will be undertaken. This study will provide information about the acceptability and feasibility of delivering the school climate intervention in secondary schools.

The study aims to carry out a feasibility and external pilot trial to determine if it is possible to implement a cluster-randomised trial of a multi-component whole-school intervention aiming to improve the school climate. The feasibility trial will not aim to estimate the effect of the intervention, but to learn whether the intervention and research are feasible. A full trial is planned if the intervention is feasible, and the resources are identified.

Ethics approval required
Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)
Approved 15/03/2024, Health Sciences' Research Governance Committee (University of York, York, YO10 5DD, United Kingdom; +44 (0)1904 321344; stephen.holland@york.ac.uk), ref: HSRGC /2024/616/F

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Feasibility cluster randomized trial

Study type(s)
Prevention

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Prevention of early mental health symptoms in adolescents

Interventions
The design is a feasibility cluster-randomised trial of an intervention that aims to create a more positive school environment. The feasibility trial will involve randomisation of six schools with a primary outcome of the successful delivery of the intervention in schools determined by 1. Qualitative interview data from staff involved in implementing the intervention and 2. Quantitative data on intervention delivery via an activity log including the number of sessions and attendees. Schools will be randomised to either being a control school (three schools) or receiving the intervention (three schools). Schools randomised to the control arm of the pilot trial will not be required to do anything additional. The control condition is 'usual care'. Schools will be randomised using minimisation. Minimisation will be undertaken in minimPy (or equivalent package in R) using naïve minimisation. Minimisation factors will include 1) baseline absence rate, 2) percentage of pupils from non-White ethnic groups and 3) percentage of female pupils.

The quantitative data accessed in this study is either routine data from the education record or data already being collected as part of the Age of Wonder cohort study. The Age of Wonder study has HRA ethical approval (IRAS number 295413; REC reference number 21/YH/0261) and this approval includes plans for supporting interventions that will use Age of Wonder outcome

data. The Age of Wonder study information and informed consent process included information about the use of participant data to evaluate interventions, to ensure that cohort participants are fully informed.

The PPAMH! for School Climate intervention is a multi-level whole-school intervention. The intervention's conceptual framework emphasises the importance of a positive school climate.

A positive school climate can be described as one that features a sense of belonging, a participative school environment, student commitment to academic values, and supportive relationships among school students, teachers, parents, and leadership. Improvements to the school climate are targeted using a multi-level school-based intervention, organised at the whole school, peer group and individual.

PPAMH! includes four priority areas: promoting social skills; engaging the school community (i.e., pupils, teachers, and parents) in school decision-making processes; improving understanding of health and risk behaviours; and enhancing problem-solving skills.

The PPAMH! intervention itself will be delivered by two non-clinical community workers ('well-being mentors'), most likely employed by the local NHS Trust.

A well-being mentor will be in intervention schools for 50% of the school week to facilitate whole school activities. They will also run peer group sessions and 1-1 activities with year 9 pupils. Example activities are awareness generation, policy review, workshops and skills training. Each month will have a different topic of focus, which will have been selected by the students and school staff. Example topics may include mental health and well-being, study skills, and rights and responsibilities.

The control condition is usual care.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
1. Successful delivery of the intervention in schools measured using descriptive quantitative data on intervention delivery via an activity log of the number of sessions, frequency, number of attendees and evidence of training to support delivery throughout the study - implementation data collection (via intervention activity log) – January 2025 to July 2025
2. Assessment of qualitative data regarding and measured using data collected on implementation via interviews with relevant school staff (and the wellbeing mentors) involved in implementing the intervention throughout the study - implementation data collection (via interviews) – January 2025 to July 2025

Key secondary outcome(s)
1. Successful collection of school absences data, as a proxy measure of the school environment. This was selected as the planned primary outcome for the full trial by young people and stakeholders. It will be available for all pupils and measured using the educational record (routine data)
2. Access to mental health and well-being data of year 9 students, collected in the Age of Wonder study, including mental health problems such as depression and anxiety (measured using the RCADS-25), mental well-being (measured using the SWEMWBS) and bullying

Baseline data collection (via routine and survey data records) September 2024 to January 2025
Outcome data collection (via routine and survey data records) June/July 2025

Completion date
30/12/2025

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
Bradford secondary schools who are taking part in the Born in Bradford Age of Wonder Cohort Study. Staff and pupils.

Participant type(s)
Employee, Learner/student

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Mixed

Lower age limit
11 Years

Upper age limit
90 Years

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
0

Key exclusion criteria
Schools who are not taking part in the Born in Bradford Age of Wonder Cohort Study

Date of first enrolment
01/12/2023

Date of final enrolment
30/09/2024

Locations

Countries of recruitment
United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre
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Sponsor information

Organisation
University of York

Funder(s)

Funder type
Government

Funder Name
National Institute for Health and Care Research

Alternative Name(s)
National Institute for Health Research, NIHR Research, NIHRresearch, NIHR - National Institute for Health Research, NIHR (The National Institute for Health and Care Research), NIHR

Funding Body Type
Government organisation

Funding Body Subtype
National government

Location
United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be available upon request from Dr Ruth Wadman, ruth.wadman@york.ac.uk

IPD sharing plan summary
Available on request

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Protocol article		23/07/2026	29/10/2026	Yes	No
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes