

# The Link Programme 2021/2022

## What is the programme?

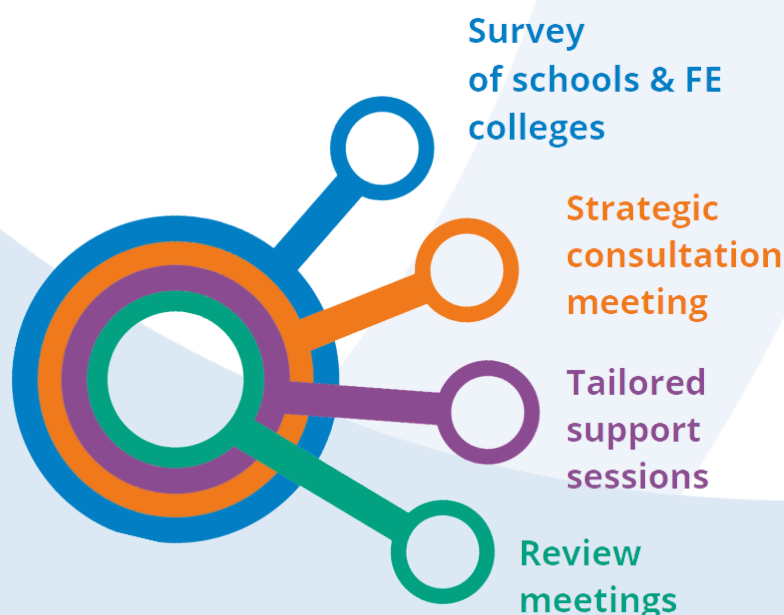
The Link Programme is an established national initiative to support children's mental health, which is now in its sixth year. It is delivered by the Anna Freud Centre, funded by the Department for Education, and supported by NHS England and strategic leaders from local authorities, education departments, and the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector.

The programme gives local authorities and Clinical Commissioning Groups the opportunity to play a lead role in shaping and delivering systemic change in your locality. It complements ongoing initiatives and will feed into your strategic planning.

## How is it structured?

The Link Programme provides you with expert consultation and guidance to help you identify local needs and design a tailored package of support to address them. We will help you set goals and meet with you regularly to review these and offer further advice and support.

The diagram below shows the maximum level of support on offer.



## What are the benefits to my local area?

Sites can pick and choose from the offer to develop a package of support tailored to local needs.

- The chance to survey individual schools and colleges to feed into a needs assessment through a survey designed and analysed by the Anna Freud Centre.
- A strategic consultation meeting of key stakeholders in your area. Anna Freud Centre colleagues will support senior figures in the local authority and CCG, convening local leaders from mental health and education to explore local challenges and define goals.
- Access to a tailored package of support to address local issues. These could be understanding referral pathways, how and when to make an appropriate referral, developing and operationalising a whole-school approach to mental health or measuring and monitoring pupil mental health needs.
- The opportunity to measure your progress through review meetings, convened by the Anna Freud Centre at three and six months. This will bring together the local stakeholders who participated in the strategic consultation meeting to review progress towards goals.

For more information on the programme, visit the [Link Programme pages](#).

If you have any questions, please contact [linkprogramme@annafreud.org](mailto:linkprogramme@annafreud.org).