



**HOUSE OF COMMONS**  
LONDON SW1A 0AA

3<sup>rd</sup> March 2023

*Sean Gribben*

**RE: CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S MENTAL HEALTH**

Thank you for your recent correspondence in respect of your concerns about the mental health of our children and young people. I have read your comments with interest.

Thank you for your invitation to attend the upcoming YoungMinds event in Parliament on the 20<sup>th</sup> March 2023. Unfortunately, I am unable to attend this event owing to prior, long-standing, diary commitments, although I will continue to follow the issues raised closely.

Living through the pandemic has had a significant impact on the mental health of people across our country, particularly children and young people, so I strongly welcome the steps the Government is taking to improve access to mental health support and services.

The 'NHS Long Term Plan' increased investment in mental health services by at least £2.3 billion a year by 2023/24, so that an additional 345,000 children and young people are now able to get the necessary NHS-funded mental health support.

In 2021/22, the Government provided an additional £79 million in response to the pandemic to expand children's mental health services in the 2021/22 financial year. Over 689,000 children and young people under 18 were supported through NHS-funded mental health community services, with at least one contact in the twelve months to July 2022, compared to 615,000 for the same period to July 2021.

Mental health support teams now cover 26 percent of pupils in schools, a year earlier than originally proposed in the 'Transforming Children and Young People's Mental Health Provision Green Paper'. This will increase to 399 teams, covering around 35 percent of pupils by April 2023, with over 500 planned to be up and running by 2024. Rollout of further mental health support teams is being developed and will be confirmed in due course.

On average, each mental health support team will work with around 8,000 children across 10-20 schools and colleges. All schools involved will have a mental health lead. Each mental health support team is made up of education mental health practitioners and senior clinicians or higher-level therapists, as well as a team manager and some admin support. The teams act as a link with local NHS children and young people's mental health services.

In *Our Plan for Patients* published in September last year, the Government committed to expanding mental health support for children at school, given that half of mental health conditions take root by the age of 14. This included a commitment to boost the number of mental health practitioners in primary care and to strengthen mental health support in schools. Furthermore, the Department for Education has committed to offer all state schools and colleges a grant to train a senior mental health lead by 2025, and over 10,000 schools and colleges have taken up the training offer so far.




The Government has also announced its intention to develop and publish a 'Major Conditions Strategy'. Mental ill health is one of the six major conditions included and is at the heart of the strategy. A joined-up 'Major Conditions Strategy', rather than a standalone mental health strategy, will ensure that mental ill health is considered alongside other physical health conditions.

Preventing and providing better support for mental ill health will be part of the strategy, as well as our separate standalone 'Suicide Prevention Strategy'. The Government recognises that the risk factors that contribute to mental ill health are often cross-society in nature, and will therefore be working closely with departments across Government.

I would like to reassure you that all the submissions received as part of the consultation on the 10-year mental health strategy will be considered as part of the 'Major Conditions Strategy'. There were over 5,000 submissions to the mental health and well-being call for evidence, and the Government appreciates the engagement work many stakeholders carried out with children, young people and adults with lived experience, and more broadly, to inform their responses to the call for evidence. The Government has analysed these responses and will consider them as part of the process for developing the 'Major Conditions Strategy'.

Once again, thank you for having taken the time to contact me and if I can ever be of any further assistance to you then please do not hesitate to contact me again.

*With best wishes*  


**TOM PURSGLOVE MP**  
**MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT**  
**CORBY & EAST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**