

POINTS TO CONSIDER WHEN BUYING TRAINING OR HEALTH SERVICES: A brief checklist for schools

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We always recommend using Local Authority or CCG commissioned services and resources where possible, however we know this isn't always the case. If you do choose to buy-in external support, we don't want you to sign a contract and be disappointed!

We can't recommend an approach or specific provider, however using the below considerations can help you make the right choices when looking to buy-in providers of training and health services. We have also included some links to national resource should you want further information on commissioning services and knowing the evidence base.

1.0 Why?

Has an assessment of need been carried out?
What are you wanting to achieve from this purchase?
Has the capacity to deliver the purchase (where appropriate) been considered? Who will deliver the service?
Has the need been evidenced? <i>i.e. Health related behaviour survey results</i>
Are there more effective/efficient ways to achieve your outcomes?
How do you plan to monitor whether you have been successful in meeting your outcomes through this purchase?

2.0 What else is out there?

Has a thorough search been conducted on providers of similar services?
Environmental footprint – could local providers be used?
Remember it isn't just about cost – quality is equally important!
If there is lots of choice, does a particular provider/supplier have added value for money or a unique selling point?
Request sample learning materials

3.0 Quality Assurance:

Do they have any service standards – what can you expect from the provider?
If it is a health service, what clinical standards are in place – are these in line with national legislation and guidance?
Are they affiliated with a regulatory body (if applicable)?
Can reasonable equality/accessibility requirements be adjusted to when appropriate?
Has the provider got transparent and accessible feedback/complaint processes?
Are there any accessible testimonials/reviews/customer feedback to indicate reliability of provider?
When was the product/service last updated or validated?

4.0 Purchasing training for staff/pupils:

What is the expertise/competencies of the trainer – are they up to date/relevant?
Content: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has it been reviewed by a subject expert? • When was it last updated? • Is it suited to the audience you are after?
Is it clear what will happen once the service has been delivered? <i>i.e. are members of staff free to use the materials as they see fit? Is further support / supervision available or necessary?</i>

5.0 Purchasing services for pupils:

What is the provider's experience of working with a) primary school aged children b) secondary school aged children?
What is the Provider's experience of working with students demonstrating the area of need that is causing concern? <i>i.e. subject matter/working in specialist settings etc.</i>
Can the provider demonstrate that they are able to implement the intervention or approach with fidelity <i>i.e. it is going to be implemented in a way that is consistent with how the original approach was used when the evidence-base was established?</i>
Are they sufficiently clinically qualified/suitably trained (if applicable)?
Assurance that provider workforce has applicable checks e.g. DBS?
Have they got appropriate safeguarding/information governance policies in place that are in line with national guidance/protocols?
What is the evidence base of the service/intervention – it is known to work?
What measures do they use to assess need and evaluate impact?

Unsure?

- Contact the [Healthy Schools service](#) who can support you in the decision making process!

USEFUL FURTHER READING – COMMISSIONING/PURCHASING SERVICES:

<https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/whole-school-approach/school-and-local-commissioning/about-school-and-local-commissioning/>

<https://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Commissioning-Futures-full-report-final.pdf?>

<https://aquietplace.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/p35-Guidance-on-commissioning-targeted-mental-health-and-emotional-wellbeing-services-in-schools1.pdf>

USEFUL FURTHER READING – UNDERSTANDING THE EVIDENCE BASE:

<https://www.eif.org.uk/resource/the-eif-guidebook-a-vital-step-towards-delivering-evidence-based-early-intervention>

<https://www.eif.org.uk/resource/improving-social-and-emotional-learning-in-primary-schools-guidance-report>

<https://www.pshe-association.org.uk/what-we-do/evidence-and-research>