School Support - How one school made a difference

(This is partly based on a real example from a school in Cornwall who kindly allowed us to use their fantastic 'signpost poster' created by staff / students together).

'Kernow School'

In 2017 'Kernow School' were very disappointed to see that their results for **School Support** in their WMF were **red** (worse than average) for all students who took part.

The adults in the school felt they had lots of good things in place to support students so asked themselves what might have been happening.

They decided to ask students their thoughts. They asked lots of different students a number of questions e.g.:



"If you were feeling lonely / worried about your school work / upset because a family member was ill / you were being bullied / wanted to harm yourself or concerned about a friend — do you know where / how to get help or who to ask in school"? They also asked students "Do you feel confident to ask for help and if not, why not"?

From the answers it was clear that students:

- thought support was only for some students
- thought they would be seen as weak by asking for help
- didn't think some of the things they were worried about (falling out with a friend; a pet dying)
 were worth asking about
- didn't know who to ask or where to get information
- were confused about the different things going on
- were unsure about asking for help for all sorts of reasons including:
 - * uncertain about what would happen next
 - * if someone would have to tell their parents
 - * they would get into trouble
 - * not being taken seriously

Questions

- Check out the results of this question in your school and for Cornwall as a whole. How does your school compare
- If you asked students in your school these questions do you think you'd get similar answers?
- Are there students in your school who don't know how to find help or who don't feel confident to ask for help?
- What could be done to help those students? How could other students / get involved help?



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The staff were a bit taken aback by what they heard when they spoke to the students.

So they asked students to help them.

A group of students from all year groups including students who were already getting help from support staff got together. They identified all the different people who could help students and all the ways students could ask for help.

They made a poster to use round the school explaining who these people were and how they could help.

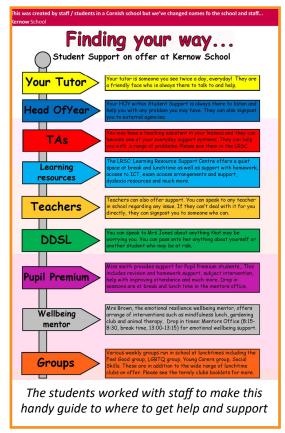
The students worked with the staff to make sure there were wellbeing noticeboards around the school and information on the school computers that all students could access.

Staff went to assemblies and told students about the information / help available and tutors reminded their classes too.

Staff included 'getting help' in PSHE or SMSC lessons. Teachers explained things like confidentiality.

The school also used some of the **Start Now resources** like the

brilliant film made by students at Cape Cornwall School called "It's OK not to be OK" which is all about talking about mental health and asking for help...



Check it out on the Start Now You Tube Channel Start Now Cornwall



