



Mental Health Bulletin October 2023



CAMHS (childhood and adolescent mental health service)



Hampshire Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service

CAMHS are a specialist NHS mental health service for children and young people. They offer assessment, diagnosis, treatment and support for young people who are experiencing problems with their emotions, behaviour or mental health.

Children can be referred to CAMHS with a whole range of emotional, behavioural and mental health difficulties that are affecting their own wellbeing, family life, school or the wider world.

These include:

- Violence and aggression*
- Depression*
- Eating difficulties and disorders*
- Anxiety and phobias*
- Self-esteem problems*
- Difficulties arising from trauma*
- Obsessions and compulsions*
- Relationship problems*
- Sleep problems*
- Self-harm*
- Suicidal thinking*

In some areas, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) also fall within the remit of CAMHS, but in others, children will be seen by a paediatrician.

The most common way to seek a referral to CAMHS is via your GP (school can fill in a referral also).

This is some of the information that would be useful for you to share with your GP to inform the referral

- Your child's symptoms and behaviour*

-Timeframes: when they first started, and if/when they escalated

-Any triggers that you have identified

-The impact the difficulties are having on your child, the rest of the family, their school life, etc

- Any discussions that you have had with school and what they have already put in place to support your child.

-Any parenting courses you have attended to support your child at home.

-The outcome you are hoping for

It's important to remember that CAMHS is an under-resourced and very busy service and there isn't a universal set of criteria or a single threshold for referral. In some areas, children may be referred with fairly recent or relatively minor problems; in others areas the service is so stretched that only children who are self-harming or showing serious signs of suicidal thinking are referred. Waiting lists will also vary, and it's not a matter of first come, first served: the young people who are deemed to be most at risk will top the list.

Don't worry, there are many things that you can put in place to support your child whilst you are waiting for CAMHS involvement.

Please access the CAMHS website for ideas or strategies that can be used to support a variety of mental health difficulties.

<https://hampshirecamhs.nhs.uk/>

If you are worried about your child's mental health then please come into school and speak to Miss Newman (Federation SENDCO) or Mrs Allen (Mental Health lead) who can signpost you to the most appropriate support.