

## THE ACSEED INITIATIVE

The AcSEED Initiative was founded by young people with direct personal experience of mental illness at a young age, and is entirely dedicated to supporting the emotional wellbeing and mental health of young people in schools. AcSEED provides a forum for sharing personal experiences, and an accreditation scheme for schools adopting best practices.

The AcSEED website hosts personal stories and video blogs that describe real experiences of coping with wellbeing challenges in schools. Contributions from staff, teachers, and parents can offer helpful feedback on the approaches they have taken to support children. Stories from young people provide a valuable insight into their emotional journeys, and can be of great re-assurance to other children that they are not suffering alone.

The AcSEED Award is a quality assurance mark presented to schools that have made a substantial effort to support the mental health of their students. It encourages a whole school approach to emotional wellbeing and rewards high quality provision. The scheme defines best practices that schools are expected to meet in order to receive accreditation, whilst simultaneously allowing flexibility for schools to tailor their support appropriately. The guidance on best practices was developed in collaboration with teachers, students, charities and Education Authorities. The best practice and the AcSEED assessment criteria cover many of the 10 key elements of a whole school approach. All UK primary and secondary schools may apply for The AcSEED award which requires an initial self-assessment and subsequent review and ratification by The AcSEED Initiative.

The motivation for AcSEED came from a recognition that the emotional support services offered by schools varied enormously. The AcSEED Initiative encourages all UK schools to achieve and maintain an acceptable threshold of support, and to align on best practices that provide a common language and understanding between schools, parents, young people, and associated organisations and charities.

A guiding principle of The AcSEED Initiative is to encourage schools to nurture both the academic and personal development of their students, emphasising the correlation between emotional wellbeing and attendance, behaviour and academic achievement.

Feedback on AcSEED from selected pilot schools has highlighted the value of resources provided on the AcSEED website, and indicated strong agreement that schools should be aiming to provide the level and quality of support recommended by the AcSEED best practices.

The AcSEED website contains a wide range of personal experiences and practical suggestions, news and blogs on topics relevant to wellbeing in schools, an overview of the AcSEED best practices, and details on how to apply for The AcSEED Award.

For more information visit [www.acseed.org](http://www.acseed.org)