

PaJeS

wellbeing

Offering Jewish schools a whole school approach to positive mental health & wellbeing

IMPACT REPORT

Introduction

This report is an overview of The PaJeS Wellbeing journey that started in 2018, when it became evident there was a different approach needed to mental health and wellbeing in schools.

The report includes the key areas that we have worked on and continue to develop. On page [14](#) you will find links to a library of reports, videos and resources that we have referred to throughout and have been delivered to school leaders, staff, parents and the students.

If you have any questions or require any further information, please feel free to contact us at wellbeing@pajes.org.uk



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PaJeS Wellbeing Manager



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PaJeS Wellbeing Manager

About

PaJeS Wellbeing offers Jewish schools a whole school approach to positive mental health and wellbeing. The framework provides support and guidance for school leaders to embed a positive culture for staff and students, with opportunities for parents to be educated and engaged in wellbeing initiatives to further support their children.

“*It has made things easy, helped to reinforce wellbeing and make it a priority rather than something always on the long list of TO DOs*”

Wellbeing Lead

Research & Evaluation

PaJeS Wellbeing was first launched as a JLC pilot programme in 2018

Since then there have been three independent reports

2019 Middx and Bucks University ¹

2022 The Anna Freud Centre ²

2024 Indigo Research ³

Timeline

“Wellbeing wasn't really a thing in the past, now it is firmly on the map”

Designated Safeguarding Lead
Secondary School

- 2018** JLC launched The Community Wellbeing project to scope and develop **a pilot programme of positive and proactive mental health and wellbeing**
- 2019** **Wellbeing Practitioners were employed** to deliver this programme in 5 pilot schools, with The Anna Freud Centre monitoring and evaluating the programme
- 2020** In March 2020, **schools were closed** due to the pandemic and the Wellbeing Practitioners took their work online
- 2021** Schools reopened and **the impact of the pandemic** on young people's mental health became very apparent
- 2022** **The Anna Freud Centre presented their findings** of the three-year pilot. It was agreed that The Schools Wellbeing Project be held and further developed by PaJeS
- 2023** The programme becomes integral to PaJeS, supporting schools with their mental health and Wellbeing offer. **The PaJeS Wellbeing award⁴ is launched**, recognising the implementation of the recognised criteria for a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing
- 2024** The team work **with 23 schools who have received the PaJeS Wellbeing award**, a whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing. The programme also offers regular parent/carer online educational sessions, plus a network of staff who meet termly and are engaged in further training

The Framework

PaJeS Wellbeing Managers, Julia Alberga and Jessica Overlander-Kaye, have developed a broad, **evidence based, framework** to provide support, guidance and curriculum for school leaders to **embed a holistic, positive culture for school leadership, staff and students**. It provides additional opportunities for parents to be educated and engaged in, to further support their children.

“

Excellent follow up after the meetings. They do what they say they will do so you have high levels of trust. The team has been totally consistent and reliable

”

Wellbeing Lead – Primary

The Award

‘attaining & maintaining’



“ *It has filled in the gaps we needed, whether it was policies, resources, information, established practice, the mindset of other staff, it gave us what we needed* ”

Head Teacher – Primary

Evidence from the pilot years has resulted in the formation of The PaJeS Wellbeing Award which recognises the good practice of school leadership and staff, in implementing the framework that will embed ongoing, positive wellbeing in the culture of the school.

To date 23 schools have received the award. Each school allocates a designated Wellbeing Lead as a primary contact. The PaJeS Wellbeing team work alongside schools to offer support and guidance on this journey throughout an academic year.

The team continue to visit the schools and maintain the relationship with the Wellbeing Lead, after the award has been achieved.

Addressing Challenges

PaJeS Wellbeing is fast becoming viewed as a **'centre of excellence'** in nationally related mental health and wellbeing issues within schools.

The team listen to school leaders and wellbeing staff to address challenges that all schools are facing. Audiences are diverse, extensive and far reaching. This is done through **engaging with thought leaders** to present up to date, evidenced based knowledge, **targeted to the audience**, whether they are school leaders, staff or parents and carers.

Key topics highlighted

1. Addressing trauma post 7th October

2. Managing young people with ADHD

3. Smartphones and young people

4. Understanding EBSA (emotionally based school avoidance)

“*They did a session on a smartphone free childhood and then we organised a meeting with parents, and they helped us make something out of it*”

Head of Year – Secondary School

“

Thank you for recently putting me in touch with Gemma Handelsman, educational psychologist, who provided me with some positive strategies and suggestions to support our Israeli pupil in Year 3.

Class Teacher – Primary School

”

Addressing Trauma Post 7th October 2023

Following the tragic events of **October 7th 2023**, PaJeS Wellbeing pivoted in order to respond to the urgent needs required by schools. With rising antisemitism, **British parents became anxious** and schools immediately welcomed over 100 Israeli children into classes.

Together with CST, PaJeS wellbeing offered an **online session for parents** to support children with their emotional wellbeing and physical safety. Over 1000 parents and carers attended the event.⁵

Schools asked for guidance in absorbing Israeli children into schools. PaJeS Wellbeing responded by commissioning Educational Psychologist, Dr Gemma Handelsman, to write an evidence based report, together with a support plan delivered to schools who require further, targeted support.⁶

Further Trauma Informed training and resources were given to all DSLs and Wellbeing Leads and together with Jami a Critical Incident Psychological Safety Plan was developed and sent to all schools.⁷

PaJeS Wellbeing continue to support Jewish schools through this challenging time.

Managing Young People with ADHD

Soli Lazarus, a former teacher and a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO), offered, expert guidance on understanding and supporting children with ADHD.

PaJeS Wellbeing delivered informative sessions to:

- Parent and carers
- DSLs & wellbeing leads

Read Soli's Op-Ed on ADHD published in the Jewish Chronicle [8](#)

760

Registered for the Parent & Carers Session [9](#)

37

DSL's and Wellbeing Leads attended an in person training session following the success of the online parents and carer's session [10](#)

5

Schools invited Soli to give a whole school inset training for staff – following the DSL training

“*It was very helpful on a topic that many schools are finding challenging. It was helpful to hear practical guidance and advice to use and adapt to our school environment*”

Secondary School SENCO

Smartphones & Young People

505

registered for the event ¹¹

400+ Downloads

PaJeS Wellbeing went on to commission Dr Gemma to write an evidence based guidance report on Smartphones, for all Jewish schools ¹²

16,000 Copies

Dr Handelsman published an Op-Ed on the subject in the Jewish Chronicle ¹³

PaJeS Wellbeing commissioned experts, Beth Kerr, consultant for wellbeing, learning and digital habits, together with educational psychologist, Dr Gemma Handelsman to share their understanding of the current research and guidance on Smartphones and how to navigate and manage the complexities of parenting and teaching this generation.

“ Thank you! I’ve taken away a huge amount and learnt masses just in that short session. What brilliant, composed, calm, authoritative and dedicated speakers. I feel grateful to have received such excellent advice, some of which I’ve already implemented this morning and will make sure to keep in mind ”

Parent

Understanding EBSA

(emotionally based school avoidance)

Working with Cathy Haysom, executive headteacher of Heartwood House, and educator on EBSA, PaJeS Wellbeing shared knowledge on spotting the early signs of school avoidance and how to best support a child who is unable to access mainstream school.

PaJeS Wellbeing hosted an evidence based, informative online parent and carer session delivered by Cathy Haysom

208

people registered to understand how to support their children who struggle to regularly attend school.¹⁴

“ It was reassuring to know we are not alone ”
Parent

Following the parents evening, PaJeS Wellbeing hosted an in person workshop on EBSA for DSLs and Wellbeing Leads. An opportunity for staff to learn and share challenging situations in a safe space.

41

DSLs and Wellbeing Leads attended

“ It was really supportive in an area of work in schools which is hugely challenging and can leave professionals feeling powerless and deskilled ”
Head of Year
Secondary School

National Campaigns

In advance of national mental health campaign days and events, the team develop and update relevant educational resources for Primary and Secondary schools. These are produced in partnership with specialist organisations.

Childrens' mental health week - *Place2Be*

Anti-bullying week¹⁵ - *The Anti-bullying Alliance*

Healthy Eating - *The British Nutrition Foundation*

Time to talk Day - *Mind*

“

Thank you for this useful resource! The bingo card on self-care is fabulous and I thought it helpful for our pupils as it links into work we were wanting to develop with our students. I plan to use it for all our different year groups. Many thanks for all you are doing to promote mental health and wellbeing

Head of Wellbeing – Secondary School

”

Student Curriculum

As part of recommended guidance and being accredited as a PaJeS Wellbeing award school, the PaJeS Wellbeing team **recommend and create curriculum for schools**, that include:

Heads Up Kids (HUK)

HUK is a social and emotional wellbeing curriculum, promoting positive mental health for Reception years through to Year 7. Programmes are delivered in the classroom by the class teacher.

Nearly **5000** children in Jewish primary schools have been educated on HUK

67 teachers have been trained to deliver the programme

Torah, Wellbeing & Me ¹⁶

A Parashah and wellbeing curriculum, used weekly by the class teacher or JS teacher, teaching positive values and life skills, in keeping with the culture and ethos of the school.

35 Jewish studies teachers have been trained on the delivery of this interactive programme.

It is now used **extensively** in Jewish Primary Schools around the UK



Torah Wellbeing and Me has become an integral part of our school's PSHE offer. We value a cross curricular approach and this programme is exactly that. Using it contributed to our Outstanding Pikuach rating last year. It is a wonderful resource

Headteacher – Primary School



With Thanks

With thanks to the following trusts and foundations who have supported PaJeS Wellbeing

**The Wohl Foundation
The B and M Shemtob charitable trust
The Rayne Trust
The Wolfson Charitable Fund
The Wolfson Family Charitable Trust
Pears foundation
Anglo Jewish Association**

And to the professional bodies who have monitored and evaluated PaJeS Wellbeing

**Margaret Greenfields and Eleonore Kofman at Buckinghamshire and Middx Universities
Nick Tait at The Anna Freud Centre
Alison Benson at Indigo Research**

**And all the speakers, school leaders, staff, families and students
who have engaged with this programme**

Links to reports, videos & resources mentioned throughout this Impact Report

1. [Middx and Bucks University](#)
2. [The Anna Freud Centre](#)
3. [Indigo research](#)
4. [The PaJeS Wellbeing Award](#)
5. [Response to October 7th CST and Wellbeing session for parents](#)
6. [Guidance for schools on in absorbing Israeli children into schools](#)
7. [Critical Incident psychological safety plan for schools](#)
8. [ADHD Op-Ed in Jewish Chronicle](#)
9. [ADHD online Parent Sesion](#)
10. [ADHD training for DSLs and Wellbeing Leads](#)
11. [Smartphone online parent event](#)
12. [Smartphones evidence based guidance for schools](#)
13. [Smartphones Op-Ed in the Jewish Chronicle](#)
14. [Understanding EBSA parent session](#)
15. [Antibullying week resources](#)
16. [Torah Wellbeing & Me](#)



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