

Comments from individuals, partners and staff who have explored the app:

Children's Commissioner:

'I downloaded the app a little while ago and had a play around. I love the concept – so much is written about how the digital world negatively impacts upon young people's wellbeing, but from our point of view there's so much that can be gained for young people if they are given the right apps and tools, so it's great to see this being developed.

I really liked how it almost gamifies mental wellbeing – I definitely wanted to click through the various activities. It's also very good that it has the signposting section so that young people can get help offline if they need it.'

Gary Perkins, Assistant Director for Education at Peterborough City Council said:

"When YMCA came and presented the app to our commissioning board, we were extremely impressed and could instantly see its potential to support school staff and students to address their mental health needs. Not only is it a cost effective support tool, but it is available 24/7 and can provide really helpful data about the well-being needs of users. That means that we can work towards creating an evidence-based programme of support to improve outcomes for young people across Peterborough and reduce the burden on schools in having to cope with demand themselves. We are very keen to explore ways of making this accessible to all of our schools and urge all schools to consider how it could benefit them."

Joanne Howling, Health Schools Co-ordinator, Everyone Health:

"In today's fast moving digital world, the concept of logging onto an App to take your mind off life's pressures is so relevant; Thrive provides instant access to a range of tools and strategies that provide support 24/7 for everyone to help manage their anxieties – students and staff alike.

This is particularly vital as the App fills the gap between home and school and most importantly can be used privately when students may need it most. Consequently, more students can receive timely support which has the benefit of reducing the need for counselling, and the strain on a currently oversubscribed service. This App, if used widely, may be able to turn the tide of an ever-growing population of people requiring crisis intervention.

At the heart of the Healthy Schools Service is the priority to: facilitate schools and their communities to develop an environment that will support young people to build the resilience to avoid risk taking behaviours, choose healthy lifestyles and so improve their long-term health outcomes"

With mental health and wellbeing being identified by many schools as a priority, The Thrive App is an appropriate response; it has kudos with the students whilst performing the vital task of helping to nurture the skills of resilience through a variety of activities and strategies to enable young people to cope with stress, adversity and life's challenges.

With roll out of Thrive, more students will have the opportunity to receive the support they require when they need it, so they are better equipped to face difficulties and achieve positive outcomes."

Paul Swift, Assistant Principal at the Ken Stimpson Community School:

"As teachers we are not qualified in mental health so we rely on external services for a lot of that support for students, so an app gives them something tangible that's there to use 24/7. Staff well-being is as important as student well-being, if you haven't got healthy well-being for staff that's going to impact our students ultimately".

"It impacts on all elements of school life, it's an absolutely worthwhile investment. At the moment mental health is an area in schools that is growing significantly so we need to be focusing our budgets and efforts towards that".

Sophie Ellwood-Jeal, Assistant Principal at the City of Peterborough Academy:

"We're delighted to be one of the first to use The Thrive App and we can't wait to see the benefits it will bring to our students and teachers. The social media world we now live in means that they are under more pressure than ever, but the app is all about building young people's resilience to enable them to live happier, stress free lives – our aim is always to help our students and teachers to do that."

Phil Smith, Student Service Manager at New College Stamford:

"I really want it to work as Thrive is a perfect companion for people that want to manage their mental health, but don't want to stick their head up and seek support in person".

Richard Corner, Senior Assistant Head teacher at The Deepings School:

"It's a huge benefit to the school because we can roll it out quickly to every student which will prevent them requiring further counselling".

Caroline Russon, Head of college at The Deepings School:

"There are more stresses on students nowadays both inside and outside of schools but what can we offer them to get instant access particularly at home, we're only here from 9am to 3pm with the students, it's nice to know they've got something when they leave us".

"It has enabled us to give more students support, its allowed the counselling service waiting list to reduce and is giving that instant access and support".

Lorraine Gregg, Progression Mentor at Ken Stimpson Community School:

"The Thrive app isn't just for individuals, we could use it as part of the school curriculum, encouraging young people to think about ways they can manage their stress levels. I think the tools in this app will be really useful".

Young people's comments on the app:

When asked what students had used the app for, the most popular answers were as follows:

- Games
- To work out how I'm feeling
- Mood meter
- Mindfulness exercises
- Help with general wellbeing
- To help when I'm worried about my feelings/stress

When asked 'what was it that made you want to use the app?' responses included:

- Anxiety
- To control my anger
- Thought it might be a good way to relax
- Stress around exam times
- Peer pressure, being a certain way or looking a certain way
- Helps me calm down

Quotes from young people:

"There are lots of different features on the app, I struggle sleeping a lot and so the meditations are really useful to me. I used it last night and I fell asleep in ten minutes and it normally takes me two hours".

"I suffer from anxiety a lot and it helped me calm down when I got really stressed out"

"It's a safe place for you and its personal on your phone to use wherever you want to"

A student at Peterborough Regional College shared her experience of the app, this was captured in an interview shown on BBC Look East earlier this year:

Melissa uses the Thrive app regularly, she feels it helps her cope with her anxiety. "By using the app I can care for myself rather than relying on other people, I can monitor my mood, if I'm dipping in my mental health I can speak to somebody, for example call the Samaritans, speak to someone at College or a youth worker". Melissa states its useful to have an app that has so many things within it and its possible to find a way of coping. The app can tell her when to get more help or just find some time for herself.

Another student at the Deepings School provided the following statement:

Thrive helps me when I feel upset or anxious. It has games which take my mind off it and gets me to lessons. It has sessions like breathing and meditation which calms me down. It also has a mood meter that you tell it your mood and how you feel, it gives you ways to deal with it.

It gives you goals to complete and you get points to use on the app. The games are like a word search to take your mind off it.