

# *See Me. See Change.*

## Action Planning Guide



# About this guide

This guide covers all you need to know to effectively plan and run your school Action Planning session(s).

Addressing mental health stigma and discrimination is critical to creating a mentally flourishing school, so now it's time to think about how this could look for your school.

Action planning should bring both pupils and staff together, to work collaboratively to create an Action Plan for your school, thinking about what activities you can take forward together to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination.

Your Action Plan should support efforts to build a positive change across the whole school, where people take action to stamp out stigma and create a safe and friendly

environment; one where everyone can talk about mental health without fear; ask for help when they're struggling – both pupils and staff; and get the support they need when they need it.

Your Action Plan will cover six aspects of the school:

1. Leadership and management
2. Culture and environment
3. Curriculum and learning
4. Wider school community
5. Enabling young people's voices and participation
6. Staff development and health and wellbeing

You can use See Me See Change's [action plan template](#) to support your sessions, or create your own if you prefer.

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# How to action plan

Based on previous activities and work across the school as well as following your See Me See Change pupil and staff sessions, you'll have some great ideas for tackling mental health stigma and discrimination across your school.

The **action plan template** is designed to be a starting point for your plans to create the foundations for a mental health stigma-free school, helping you to develop SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timely) actions. This is just a template, so feel free to adapt to your school's needs, and also to ensure that it aligns with other action or improvement plans for your school.

## SMART stands for:

- Specific** Actions should be focused and not too broad.
- Measurable** There should be a way to monitor and evaluate progress for each action.
- Achievable** The action should be attainable, within your scope.
- Realistic** The action should be possible and worthwhile for the school.
- Timely** Specific 'start' and 'completion' dates or timeframes should be allocated to each action.

You will see that the template is split into six columns. This will enable you to break down each action your action planning group decides to take:

<b>Actions</b> Outline of actions your school will take to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination	<b>Lead(s)</b> Outline who is responsible for each activity	<b>Timescales</b> Provide planned timescales and dates – what can be achieved in one year, two years, etc.	<b>Resources</b> Identify resources required to support actions	<b>Indicators of success</b> Outline how you will know if the activity has been successful	<b>Progress</b> Update on progress for review meetings
E.g. Create and promote a video from the head teacher setting out why they feel it's important to take action to end mental health stigma and discrimination in the school.	Head teacher's name	One month	Camera, room, editing software	Video created and shared – number of views	

## You will need to consider:

**What** the action you are planning to take is.

**Who** is responsible for leading on the action.

**How** long you intend the action to take, and when it should be achieved by.

**What** support and resources you will need to develop this action.

**How** you will measure if the action has been successful.

### Remember:

See Me's approach is underpinned by a growing evidence base which tells us that the most effective way to end mental health stigma and discrimination is to use a blend of three different approaches: education, social contact, and protest / influencing. But what do we mean by social contact, education and influencing?

**Social contact** is when individuals with experience of mental health problems talk and share their experiences. This can extend to listening to, watching or reading about someone's experiences.

**Education** seeks to replace stigmatising attitudes with accurate representations of mental health. Through providing facts and dispelling myths about mental health, people are better able to understand mental health as a whole and also support others who are experiencing poor mental health.

**Protest or influencing** is a statement or action which shows disapproval or objection. Not all forms of protesting involve big groups of people and signs – it's possible to take a softer approach and influence by making small, individual protests and still have an impact.

While some of your actions may not encompass all of the above, focussing on some of these aspects can be really effective for tackling mental health stigma and discrimination.

Think about what school activities, events, information and opportunities your school can plan and run throughout the school year to embed actions. You can learn more from what other schools have done via the [See Me education and young people case studies](#) too as well as reflecting on the discussions and learning from your pupil and staff sessions.

# Glossary of Action Plan terms

Below is a list of terms and their definitions that you will find in the action plan template:

**Actions:** This is what you are going to do. It could be a project, an initiative, a new development, a campaign or an event.

**Lead(s):** This is who is responsible for implementing the action. It could be a range of people, from head teachers and pupils to parents and carers; from a small group to an individual.

**Timescales:** When will this action take place? Think about it in terms of school years, so what will happen next year and the following year.

**Resources:** What resources / information / learning do we have that will be useful to support with implementing these actions? This is also a good place to highlight what you may need that is missing.

**Indicators of success:** How will we know if the activity has been achieved? What does success look like for this specific action?

**Progress:** You won't need to complete this section during the action planning session but should be updated when you refer and update the action plans as they are being implemented.

# Setting up an Action Planning session

So now that we know what action planning is, let's focus on how to set up your sessions in your school.

When preparing your Action Planning session, remember these sessions shouldn't recreate the classroom environment. This is a chance for staff and pupils to work together, so best to avoid teachers standing at the front of the class with pupils sat at desks! This is a great opportunity for co-production between staff and pupils.

The next pages will help to provide an overview to some of the key considerations for to plan, prepare and run your Action Planning sessions.



Watch this video to learn more about co-production from the Scottish Co-Production Network.



# Select action planning leads

Identifying an individual or a group of individuals to lead when you are together can help ensure that everyone feels involved and able to contribute. These leads will organise and run the session for everyone involved.

Both pupils and staff should have an equal platform to guide and run the session – we would suggest inviting one pupil and one teacher to volunteer to co-lead each action planning group (some schools may organise more than one action planning group, depending on numbers of staff and pupils involved).

We suggest **no more than 10 people per action planning group** in order to ensure that people feel they can contribute and work together effectively.



Action planning leads should create an open and inclusive environment, ensuring that individuals are engaged, respected, progress at their own pace and have an option to opt out if needed.

Take collaboration seriously and invest energy and time in it. Collaboration is based upon the ability and the belief in the intelligence and worth of individuals, and is not created simply by modifying existing structures – it often entails a change in attitude and outlook.



## Top tips for staff and pupils co-leading the session

See Me Youth Champions have produced a video with top tips for staff and pupils leading Action Planning sessions.

We would encourage all action planning leads to watch this video in advance of the Action Planning session to ensure the core conditions to work together effectively are in place.

Click on the screen below to watch the video.



# Top tips for effective pupil and staff collaboration

The next pages offer a range of guidance drawn by See Me Youth Champions to help you prepare and plan for your session as well as include some important tips to create the most conducive, supportive and collaborative space for all involved in the action planning.

## Safe space

**It's good practice to identify a safe space that any member of the session can use to take time out if needed:**

- The safe space must be empty, quiet and accessible.
- This safe space should be made known to the group before the session begins and if any member of the group needs to leave or take time out, know that a teacher / colleague will come to check on them in that safe space.
- Have some mental health first aiders or equivalent in place, ahead of the session or as part of session if required.
- Staff should be aware of safeguarding procedures both for children and adults and / or have designated support staff to follow up on participants should they need it.
- Have a contact list of relevant support within school and agencies outside of school to signpost to if necessary – some suggestions can be found [here](#).

## Create a 'working together commitment' for the group

**A 'working together commitment' should be made together with all members of the action planning group, and should be a set of principles that the group follows throughout the session. Below are some suggestions of what to include:**

### Keep confidentiality

What is discussed in this space will remain confidential; however, if anything concerning is raised by a member of the group, this will be raised with a relevant member of staff.

### Be mindful of the language you use

Use mental health-friendly language throughout the session.

### Listen to and respect others

Actively listen and don't interrupt one another.

### Collaborate

Pupils and staff could also suggest some further ways of working, what they expect and ensuring the best is brought out of everyone during the session.



## Sharing experiences

You may have members within the sessions with experience of mental health problems and stigma and discrimination, and who want to share their experiences with the group when action planning. Members of the group should know that it's okay to share, but make sure that they are okay to share and that they understand a few ground rules.

- For all participants in the session **it should be made clear** that there is no expectation for them to share their experiences, but if they want to do so they have control over what they share. They should never feel pressured to talk or disclose to others.
- **Be mindful** of potentially triggering topics (e.g. self-harm, phobias, etc.). Don't discuss methods in relation to self-harm, suicide, eating disorders.
- **Have an awareness** of the balance between what is okay to share and what might be too much.
- **Share experiences** of stigma and discrimination specifically, rather than experiences of mental health more generally.
- **Ensure confidentiality** where possible, but if there is anything raised that is concerning for that individual's safety or others, they will need to raise it with the relevant member of staff.
- **Don't share names** when giving examples – focus on the issue, not the individual, and protect confidentiality. Remember, creating a positive and inclusive environment for all is key to the sessions.
- **Be mindful** not to take anything personally when pupils and staff share their experiences, and be open to listening and understanding what they say. Focus on how things can be improved in the school so everyone can have positive experiences.
- If helpful, you can **print the ground rules** and have them handy during the Action Planning session(s).

## Plan ahead

Action planning leads for each group should meet before the session. These leads will facilitate the session for other pupils and staff.

It's important that these leads take time to get to know each other; consider group dynamics, as well as planning the structure for the session (including some breaks) and what roles the leads each will take.

It's really important to identify who does what during the session and ensure that it feels like there's equal weight to facilitation time. Making sure everyone feels comfortable with what they're tasked to do is key to a successful session. Also remember to keep it light and fun as much as possible.

There are lots of ways to gather the group's ideas and bring them together. Group voting, sharing ideas via a **Google jamboard** (a digital collaborative whiteboard) or using pens, post-it notes and flipchart paper to capture ideas if you're running an in-person session. You can find lots more ideas [here](#).

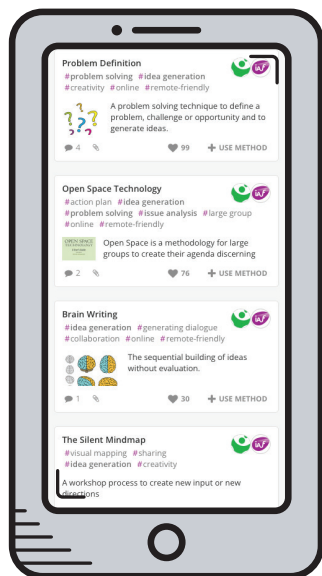
Make sure that action planning leads clearly communicate to their action group the plans ahead for the session too, to ensure that everyone is ready, briefed and also looks forward to it!

# Structuring the Action Planning session(s)

Do what works best for your school in terms of action planning set-up; every school is different, so identifying the format and how you will run the session(s) will vary. Here is a suggested rough structure of how you could plan it:

## 1. Break the ice

It's a good idea to start the Action Planning session off with a team-building activity or ice-breaker to connect as people. Some ideas for warm-up or teambuilding activities can be found [here](#).



## 2. Ask 'why?'

Take time initially to consider why it's important to take action against mental health stigma and discrimination, and make sure everyone understands that all actions should contribute towards this.

This can be a useful guide to help focus actions and refer to if the group goes off on tangents.

### Take time to reflect

Reflecting on what the school has already done and is doing to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination can be helpful to get the group going.

Then you could think about the aspects of the school that could improve to ensure it's more mental health inclusive.

## 3. Generate ideas

For the first half of the session, you may want the group to generate some ideas for each section of the action planning template, e.g. what could the school do in terms of leadership? What could the school do in terms of learning? Or engaging the wider community? This could be done on flipchart paper or jamboards.

If you have multiple action planning groups, you could organise stations for the groups to move around so they are getting the opportunity to feed into some or all of the six areas of the whole school approach. If helpful, you could ask a person in each group to stay in one station and quickly summarise to others what was suggested so far and invite additional feedback and ideas.



## 4. Develop the ideas

The second half of the session could be focused on developing some of these ideas further, working in pairs or threes to think about who would lead on it; what exactly you plan to do; timelines for the activity, and what you will need to achieve it.

## Tools / resources needed for the session(s)

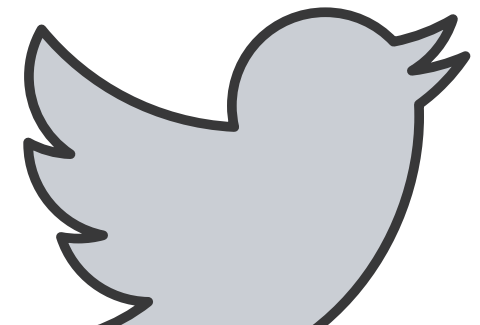
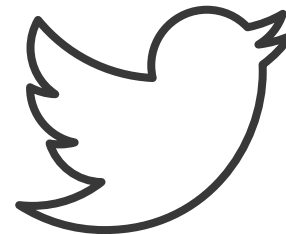
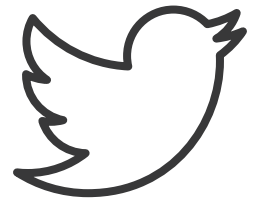
Below is a list of suggested resources and requirements for the Action Planning session(s):

- A quiet and safe space for the group to work
- Copies of the blank action plan template
- Copies of the Action Planning Guide (this document!)
- Access to a computer(s) or tablet(s)
- See Me See Change Staff and Pupil Session Workbooks
- Pupil and Staff action planning jamboard links – these could be printed out or have access to via computer
- Post-it notes (for in-person session)
- Flipchart paper (for in-person session)
- Pens
- Evaluation and feedback forms.



## Considerations following the action planning

- Discuss with the group how you are going to share and engage the wider school in the action planning to tackle mental health stigma and discrimination.
- You could update the school via the school bulletin and via assemblies.
- You could organise follow-up drop in sessions for people to feedback further ideas or thoughts on the Action Plans.
- Share your work with See Me – you can send your completed Action Plans to [info@seemescotland.org](mailto:info@seemescotland.org) for any feedback or support.
- Be sure to **tweet us too** during any events or activities happening in your school – we'd love to see what your school gets up to!



# See Me

End mental health  
discrimination

Thank you for taking the time to participate, reflect and learn about tackling mental health stigma and discrimination. You are now part of the **See Us** movement for change in Scotland!

Together we can create the movement to end mental health stigma and discrimination. Contact [info@seemescotland.org](mailto:info@seemescotland.org) with any questions you may have, or to share your insights.

Additional resources and support can be found at  
[www.seemescotland.org](http://www.seemescotland.org)

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