

**MORTAL
FOOLS**

About

MELVA

FREE

mental health activity programme
funded by North of Tyne
Combined Authority

"Melva is simply the best drama
intervention I have ever seen.
The rewards are instant
and long lasting"

Primary Head Teacher

**NORTH
OF TYNE**

**COMBINED
AUTHORITY**

What's in this pack?

This pack provides key information about:

- What the Melva programme is and how your school can access this **FREE OF CHARGE**
- The activities, resources and training your school will have available from the programme
- The Melva Activity Timeline for the 2023-24 academic year
- How to apply for this **FREE OFFER** and what we require of participating schools

"It's a great resource for helping children identify and understand worries, where they come from, and how to address them effectively"

Parent of Melva Participant



About this offer



NORTH
OF TYNE
COMBINED
AUTHORITY

A message from Kiz Crosbie, Mortal Fools CEO:

We are delighted to be working with North of Tyne Combined Authority (NTCA) for our Melva programme 2023-24.

Both Mortal Fools and NTCA are committed to finding innovative ways to tackle the national mental health crisis amongst children and young people, including practical support for teachers.

The funding support NTCA have provided enables us to make the Melva programme available **free of charge** to **50 schools in Newcastle, North Tyneside and Northumberland** – putting these important resources in the hands of those who need them the most.

Melva Supports your Mental Health Award...

For those schools undertaking the **Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools Award**, completing the Melva programme can be used as part of your evidence portfolio. It specifically contributes to the *Organisational Structure & Culture – Pupils* and *Support for Pupils* categories.

Click here to find out more about the award and how your school can be involved.

"The children love Melva. The format is engaging, it's attractive and it explores topics like anxiety in a relaxed and fun way!"

Deputy Headteacher

Usual £ per year

£750

Schools who take part in 23/24 will also be eligible for a renewal discount in 24/25



What is Melva?

Brave

isn't how you feel,
it's what you do!

Melva is a creative, web-based programme, which uses storytelling as an engagement tool to improve children's knowledge and understanding of mental health and wellbeing and self-management techniques

The programme centres around the character of **Melva Mapletree**: a nearly-11-year-old girl whose struggles with anxiety, trauma and bereavement (or 'worrits' as she calls them) are keeping her from doing new things - or even leaving her cottage!

Through creative storytelling, engaging characters, and practical activities, children learn about how to recognise, understand, talk about and manage their mental wellbeing and deal with their 'worrits'.

Key features of Melva:

- **Child-friendly language** enables open conversations about worries and anxiety in a way that doesn't feel daunting or exposing and gives young people and adults a shared language.
- **Engaging storytelling** supports young people to learn through fictional characters and apply this to their own life, helping them to self-reflect and develop empathy.
- **Practical activities** which focus on early intervention teach children effective self-management techniques to address their physical and emotional responses, before they become a significant problem.
- **Repetition and reinforcement** of key learning through different stories and approaches helps consolidate learning whilst keeping children engaged.
- **Fun and silly characters** make learning fun, which not only supports wellbeing, but also increases children's capacity for learning.
- **Learning opportunities for teachers**, ready-made resources and being part of a *Melva Community* help school staff feel supported in tackling mental health topics in school.

Neuroscience is clear that learning happens more quickly and more effectively when we're having fun.



Why Melva, Why now?



As of November 2022, it is estimated that at least 1 in 6 children aged 7-16 are likely to have a diagnosable mental health condition¹.

That's an average of 5 children per classroom

It has never been more important for us to find new ways to talk to and teach children about mental wellbeing from an early age.

The Melva programme focuses on **early intervention** for children aged 7-11 (Key Stage 2), using recognised and recommended **mental health first aid strategies**, communicated in a child-friendly and accessible way.

Melva is for **all children**, not just those who are struggling.

It focuses on teaching children the basic skills and understanding they need to keep themselves well, whatever challenges they might face in the future; supporting them to develop resilience pathways and positive emotional responses and relationships.

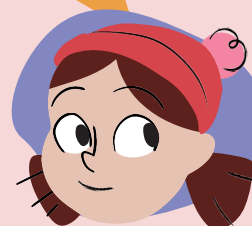
"I learned that being afraid of something doesn't mean you can't do it"

Melva Participant

You can read more about MELVA on our dedicated website:

www.melva.org.uk

There you will find testimonials, research and themes information, and you can watch our information videos.



¹ Digital NHS UK - Mental health of children and young people in England, 2022 follow up to the 2017 survey (highlights)

What does your school get access to?



Participating schools will receive a unique school login for the full Melva online portal, where they will be able to access:

- 3 different Melva programmes, each designed to be delivered over the course of 8 lessons and adapted for different age groups
- A bank of extension activities and themed assemblies
- The Melva Teacher Area, housing all necessary resources, evaluation documents and admin guides
- A simple evaluation report at the end of the year produced by Mortal Fools (subject to proper and full completion and submission of evaluation requirements)

Access lasts for **1 academic year** (until end of August 2024), and participating schools will also be eligible for a discounted renewal price if they choose to continue using the programme the following year (£600 reduced from £750).

Support for school staff:

With statutory services in such high demand, it is falling to schools to support children with their mental health, in place of trained mental health practitioners.

We know this can come with its own anxieties and challenges, especially when considered alongside the epidemic of stress and burnout that teachers and schools staff are already facing.

With this in mind, we have deliberately factored staff support into the programme. Throughout the year, your staff will attend:

- Introductory sessions to support the implementation of Melva in your school
- Digital and in-person Teacher CPD Sessions
- Bookable 1:1 surgery slots with the Melva team
- Facilitated conversation with other schools using Melva to discuss your experiences and common issues arising around mental health and wellbeing in schools

A full timetable of events is provided in this pack.

Melva Timeline

North of Tyne Offer



This free offer requires schools to deliver the Melva programmes during the Spring Term.

We specify this to allow time for school staff to get familiar with the content in the Autumn Term to align delivery with Children's Mental Health Week in February, and to facilitate collective activities for participating schools throughout the year.

Autumn Term 2023

This term is the time to start getting familiar with the resources, meet other schools who are using Melva, and take part in your first Teacher CPD session

Note: All activity this term is delivered online.

Oct

24th October, 10:00 - 12:00, Onboarding session

Introduction to the Melva programme and team

Nov

15th November 15:30 - 17:30, Digital CPD Session

Emotional Resilience: Staff Mental Health & Wellbeing

Dec

29th November, all day, Digital drop-in surgery

Book in up to 25 mins of 1:1 time with the Melva team

Spring Term 2024

Delivery Window

With Children's Mental Health Week in February, this is the perfect time to deliver the Melva programme in your school and take advantage of the support and learning opportunities available.

5th - 11th February
Children's Mental Health Week

Jan

10th January, 15:30 - 17:30, Kick o° Session

Practical demonstration of the platform and an opportunity to ask questions

Feb

23rd January, Full Day In Person Session

Full day CPD session for teachers and school staff with practical sessions and facilitated conversations.

Mar

6th & 8th February, all day, Digital drop-in surgery

Book in up to 25 mins of 1:1 time with the Melva team

Apr

25th March, 15:30 - 17:30, Melva check in point

Facilitated conversation with all schools to discuss their experience using Melva and common issues around mental health and wellbeing in schools.

Summer Term 2024

Summer term is your time to reflect, evaluate and plan for the next year ahead.

24th - 28th June
World Wellbeing Week

May

16th May, 10:00 - 11:30, Digital Showcase

For current, new and prospective schools, we'll demonstrate the programme and talk through any changes and updates to the platform

Jun

5th June, 15:30 - 17:30, Summer check in point

Facilitated conversation with all schools to discuss their experience using Melva and common issues around mental health and wellbeing in schools.

How can my school take part?



Licences are limited and will be allocated to eligible schools on a first-come-first-served basis. In order to be eligible for a free licence, your school must be able to commit to the following:

- Allocation of at least 1 member of staff to lead on the programme delivery (i.e. ensuring Melva is delivered within school)
- Allocation of at least 1 member of staff (who will be delivering Melva in school) to attend the in-person Teacher CPD day and digital onboarding / kick off sessions*
- Delivery of at least 1 x 8-lesson Melva programme with at least 30 students, in the suggested delivery window (from January 2023 onwards)**
- Completion and submission of the necessary programme evaluation data, which includes simple baseline and programme end assessments, and end of lesson feedback.

How to apply:

To apply for a free licence, please complete this simple expression of interest form: www.melva.org.uk/north-of-tyne

This form will ask for basic contact information for both the school and nominated Melva Lead Contact, as well as information about:

- how many young people will benefit in your school
- how you plan to use the programme in your school, and
- confirmation that you are able to commit to the above requirements.

Please note: When you click to complete the form, you will be taken to an external website called goodcrm.co.uk. This is the contact relationship management software used by Mortal Fools to store your information securely in our database, and your information will not be shared with any third parties.

Notes for schools:

* If your school has scheduling conflicts for these sessions, you can still apply to take part and we can explore alternative arrangements. **Please indicate date issues in the "any other information" box on the expression of interest form.**

** We have stated 30 minimum because we need to ensure we reach a target number of children through this project, however small schools who may struggle to work a minimum of 30 children may still apply. **Please describe your delivery plan in the "How will Melva benefit your school" box.**

**NORTH
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Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Northumberland
County Council



Our profits go to charity

**You can read more
about MELVA on our
dedicated website:
www.melva.org.uk**



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