



Welcome to Edition 4 of the MYRIAD Newsletter

Welcome to the MYRIAD newsletter! Earlier in the year we were out and about piloting our **teenage brain workshops**, which you can read more about below. We are now undertaking our latest round of research visits with schools who joined the project in 2017 and enjoying seeing our research leads, participating pupils, and teachers again. We have also had some changes to the team: in February we said goodbye to Jen Baker-Jones and welcomed new Research Assistant Lucy Radley (photo below).



Teachers Completing Questionnaires

For schools who joined the project in 2017, we recently sent out questionnaires to the teachers participating in our research.

Our study teachers have questionnaires to complete about their own wellbeing and we have also asked teachers to complete questionnaires about pupils taking part in the project. Both types of questionnaires are crucial as they enable us to understand teachers' experiences and perspectives. If you have questionnaires to complete, we would be extremely grateful if you could do this as soon as you can.

Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) Provision

We are gathering information about PSHE provision in all of our participating schools and this is an essential part of the project.

The information is collected via an electronic survey and/or a phone-based interview with Research Assistant, Louise Aukland (find out more about Louise by reading the Q & A on the next page). Following the discussions, a PSHE report is compiled for each school, covering the three broad themes of leadership and strategic approach; curriculum content and delivery; assessment, evaluation and consultation. Louise will continue to monitor PSHE provision in the MYRIAD schools over the course of the project, enabling the researchers to track any changes that might impact on the emotional wellbeing of the study students.

A huge thank you to those schools who completed their PSHE discussions for the academic year 2017-18! There are still a few schools who are yet to complete their discussions. If you are a PSHE Lead who has not yet completed your discussion and you are able to spare a few minutes to receive a phone call from Louise, please do contact us. We hope to send out the 2018/19 questionnaires during this summer term.

Celebrating our Partnership

We are always looking for ways to show our gratitude and celebrate our links. We have produced some documents that you will hopefully find useful, they can be personalised for your school so you can add them to your evidence files or include them as a supplement to your school policy documents:

- **SMSC** - a short evidence document outlining how working with MYRIAD can contribute to each of the headings in SMSC. This could sit alongside your policy and be used by your SMSC coordinator.
- **Gatsby Benchmarks** – an outline of how working on MYRIAD links in with benchmarks 5 and 7.

We can also provide the following:

- **Workshops** – we can deliver workshops in your school, inspiring an interest in research and science.
- **Information about Oxford University** – each school in the UK has a 'link college' in Oxford which can be contacted. There are also more resources available here: www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/teachers
- **MYRIAD Banner** – a free banner you can display in your foyer or hall to show you are engaged in research with Oxford University.



Get to Know the Team

Q & A with Louise Aukland, MYRIAD Research Assistant



How did you come to work on the MYRIAD project?

I have been interested in the MYRIAD project since its infancy. As a PSHE, science and wellbeing teacher I continued to monitor MYRIAD's progress and when a job became available and my family situation meant that teaching was increasingly difficult, it seemed a natural move!

What does your role in the project involve?

I undertake the PSHE discussions – a thorough process in the baseline year, with continuous monitoring thereafter. I also coordinate our public engagement activities such as the MYRIAD Research Challenge, Teenage Brain workshop, and focus groups with young people.

What is the best thing about your role?

Having been a secondary school teacher for 15 years and PSHE coordinator, I am fascinated to hear how different schools incorporate social and emotional learning into their school day. It can differ considerably between schools, yet with the hustle and bustle of classroom teaching, you so rarely get the opportunity to stop and reflect on other ways of doing the job. My role gives me the chance to do exactly that and I'm loving it!

What do you like to do in your spare time?

I work two days a week for MYRIAD and have three other part time jobs. I am also a trustee of a charity, run a youth group and spend time with my husband and two young boys. If I can fit it in, I love exercise and a bit of amateur dramatics, but to be honest there isn't much spare time!

University of Oxford Launches Two New Schemes to Increase Accessibility to Students from Under-represented Backgrounds

Opportunity Oxford is a residential study programme for pupils from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. **Foundation Oxford** is a year-long programme for students who have experienced personal disadvantage or disruption to their education. Find out more at www.ox.ac.uk/news/2019-05-20-two-new-oxford-initiatives-help-students-under-represented-backgrounds

4th Ultimate Wellbeing in Education Conference

Liz Lord (MYRIAD Schools Liaison) spoke at the conference. The day was put together by Sir Anthony Seldon and there were a variety of speakers, including Damian Hinds, Secretary of State for Education, who spoke about the importance of good mental health in education. The conference was attended by school leaders and teachers who gave an enthusiastic response after hearing about MYRIAD.

GLAD Study

Want to take part in some research yourselves? The GLAD (Genetic Links to Anxiety and Depression) study, the largest study of anxiety of depression to date, is recruiting. The project is investigating how our genes can influence the development of anxiety and depression. Participants need to have had clinical anxiety and/or depression, be aged 16 and over, and live in the UK. Find out more at <https://gladstudy.org.uk/>

Any Questions?

Please get in touch with the MYRIAD team at myriad@psych.ox.ac.uk

MYRIAD Research Challenge

We are really interested in finding out what young people think we should be researching so we have been asking pupils participating in our project what questions are important to them. So far, 787 pupils from 25 schools have taken part in the MYRIAD Research Challenge and suggested at least one question to us. The main theme that came up was issues at school, which included exams, school pressure and bullying. Other themes were emotional wellbeing, friendships, sleep, and social media.

The next stage is for young people to vote for which questions are their favourites. The most popular questions will then be answered by young people and the data will be made available to schools and young people, so they can be researchers too.

Teenage Brain Workshops

We have been piloting some workshops on the teenage brain in a few schools. Participating pupils aged 11-15 had the opportunity to learn what is special about the teenage brain through a carousel of activities, including some psychological tests being used by the MYRIAD project. The activities the pupils took part in involved making brain hats, exploring risk by inflating (and sometimes popping!) balloons, and trying to maintain their concentration whilst being distracted by different sounds. The researchers had as much fun as the pupils, here they are modelling their brain hats!

