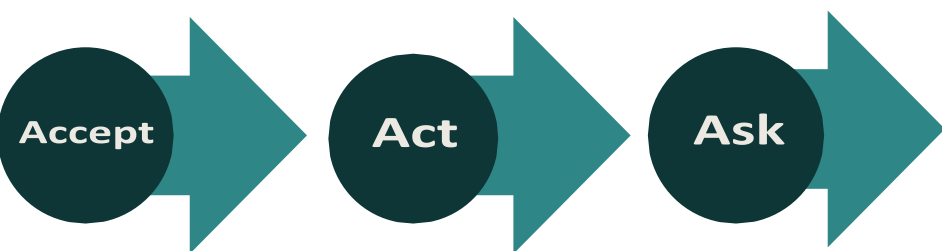


Heads up - It's time to get to grips with Headache in schools



Background Information for staff



Ted
Wragg
TRUST

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This document gives staff a brief background to the project, the types of problematic headache in young people and signposts further action to consider. This project is a collaboration between The Ted Wragg Trust and Dr David Kernick of the Exeter Headache Clinic.

Aim of project

Headache has a significant impact upon the lives of young children, their school attendance, school performance and is strongly correlated with mental health issues. The aim of this project is to raise the awareness of headache as a problem in schools and develop a range of interventions to reduce its burden involving students, staff, and parents.

Background

- Headache disorders are the second cause of disability in the world under 25 years of age according to the World Health Organisation.

World ranking for disability under 25 years old (WHO 2019)	Problem
1.	Road injury
2.	Headache disorders
3.	Self harm
4.	Depressive disorders
5.	Violence
6.	Anxiety

Table 1. World Health Organisation ranking of disability 2019.

- Up to 30% of students have problematic headache two or more times a week with impact on quality of life and school performance.
- The needs of children with headache are largely unmet.
- 11% will have migraine (severe headache often accompanied by nausea, light or sound sensitivity). It is important to be aware of migraine as this can continue into adulthood where it continues to be unrecognised and poorly treated.
- 17% will have tension headache (less severe, no associated features and often associated with stress).

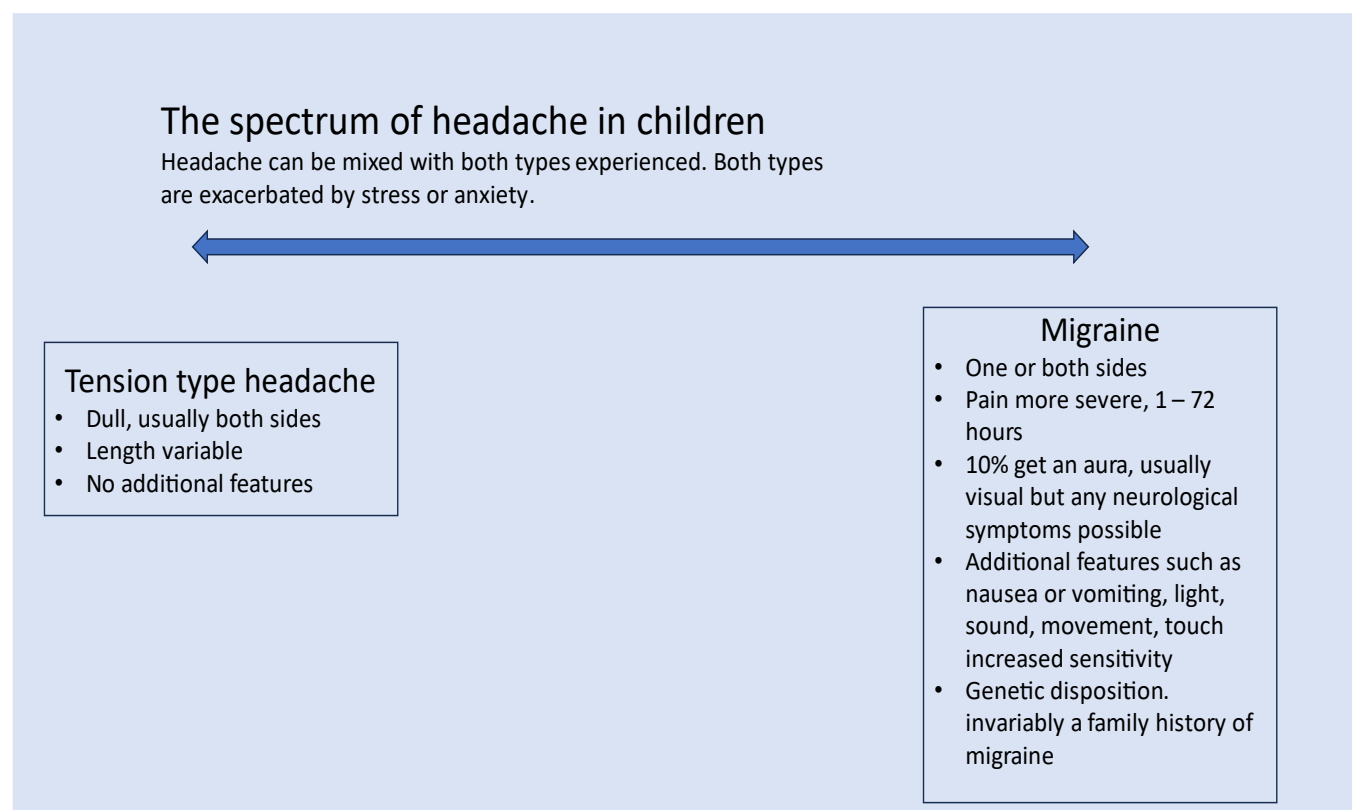


Figure 1. The spectrum of headache in children

- Headache sits within a complex biopsychosocial context which are often bidirectional. See figure 3.

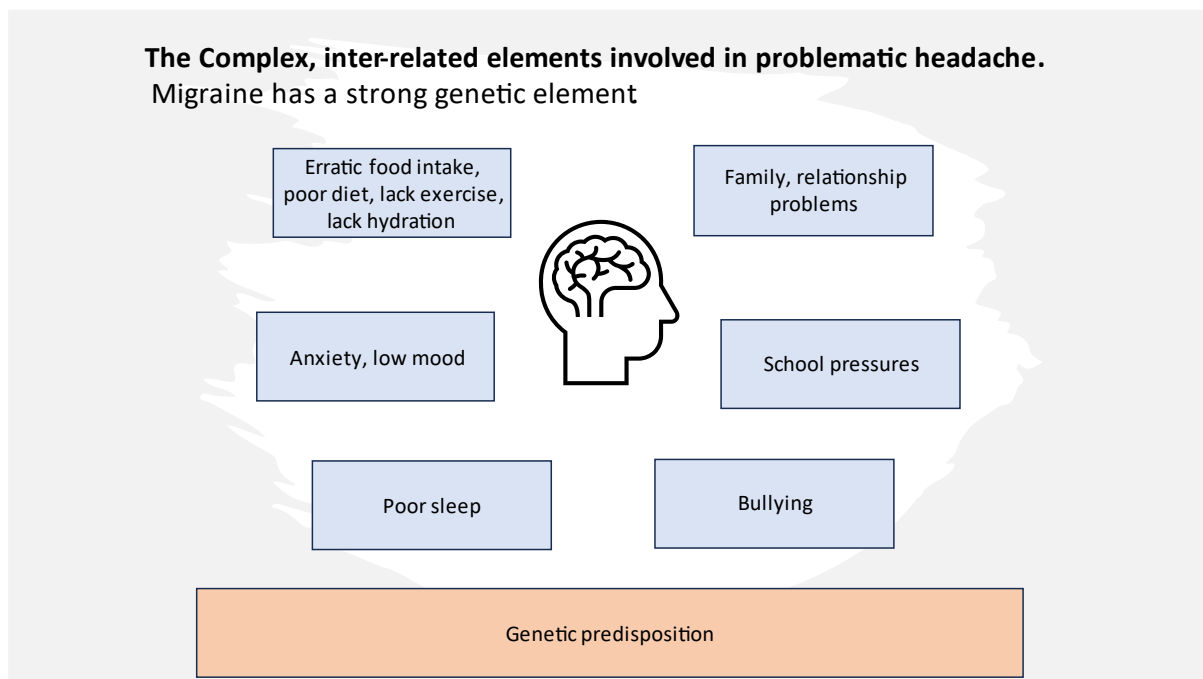


Figure 3. Headache sits within a complex biopsychosocial context. Migraine has a strong genetic element.

- Accompanying mental health issues are often associated.

Disorder	No headache	Tension headache	Migraine without aura	Migraine with aura
Depression disorders	12%	20%	27%	43%
Anxiety disorders	17%	26%	30%	48%
Anxiety and depression	5%	9%	11%	26%

Figure 2. Mental health disorders associated with headache. (Homer 2022).

- Fortunately, serious causes of headache are very rare but some things to look out for within the school context are headache that is progressive or associated with new behavioural problems, poor balance or co-ordination, abnormal eye movements or visual problems.

What to do if you identify a child with problematic headache

- Be aware students may be reluctant to seek help.
- Be aware of other factors as in figure 3.
- Signpost them to student's section of web site.
- Consider submitting a health care plan.
- Consider letter to parents. (See letter to parents in this section).

If you want more information on headache in young people, see section on parent information.

The HeadsUp headache toolkit for schools.

INFORMATION FOR SCHOOLS	Material
Project information	Video about programme Document
School headache policy	Document
Teaching resources	Lessons for KS3, KS4 (in progress) Power point for headache education
First aiders	Headache algorithm

Addressing the personal
needs of staff with
headache

Manage your migraine
handbook

Personnel

Lisa Whitworth is a teacher in the Ted Wragg Trust and leads their Health and Education programme.

Dr David Kernick is a GP with a special interest in headache and runs the NHS Exeter Headache Clinic.

A video for school staff and parents explaining headache can be found at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wAUQX6hwKTw>

And a longer video on

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BR72YupDmh0>