

Commissioners Report for WellBeings

The following report has been prepared following the implementation of the WellBeings programme to a cohort of 30 funded schools within the Tees Valley region.

The WellBeings Programme Overview

WellBeings is a strategy that promotes wellbeing for all in education settings and supports increased emotional regulation, improved behaviour and nurtures children to thrive.

WellBeings has the ability to add additional capacity to the system without drawing on additional resources and staff working in the mental health sector.

It acts as a preventative model that aims to empower and equip all to be responsible for their mental and emotional awareness and the tools to choose safely and responsibly their consequent actions and behaviours. Thereby preventing and reducing the pressure on teachers, parents and referrals to specialist services and mental health interventions.

Objectives of the scheme

- To develop self-awareness in children and their school communities so they can safely emotionally regulate and increase emotional resilience.
- Children, parents and teachers have awareness of social and emotional behaviours and are equipped with mindfulness strategies and tools that enable chosen responses rather than emotional reactions to challenging situations.
- It provides a digital and sustainable model.
- Universal prevention and targeted early intervention.
- To reduce the number of referrals to specialist services.

How the programme has met these objectives

Objective: To develop self-awareness in children and their school communities so they can safely emotionally regulate and increase emotional resilience.

We did this by providing regular opportunities and encouraging children and staff to express their emotions in a variety of ways including art/language/movement etc.

Evidence

Exercise – Flavours of Feeling: using coloured jellybeans as a means of exploring emotions.

“Some of our favourite coloured jellybeans are red, blue and green. Our good feelings are happy, loved, kind, nice and excited. Some of our least favourite coloured jelly beans are white, yellow and orange. Our bad feelings are disgusted, sad, angry and empty.” *Grangetown Primary.*

Exercise – Connecting the Dots – exploring feelings experienced in school.

“We had a discussion and these are a few of our answers: Frustrated - stuck on a question; when no-one wants to play with me; when someone pushes me; when you're told what to do Sad - when someone makes fun of me; when someone ignores me; when you get hurt; when someone isn't listening Chilled/calm - when I do wellbeing with Jo; when I do Maths; when I read; eating dinner Scared - when there's a question I am really stuck on; when you join a new class; when there's an argument; when you have to speak in front of everyone.” *St Josephs RC Primary.*

Emotional Visitors. Noticing and describing emotions using similes / poems.

"My hands feel like pins and needles My heart feels like a cheetah I am burning like the sun My hands feel like lava My heart is beating like a drum My heart feels like fire My feet feel like icicles My stomach felt like a whirlwind My feet are as cold as ice My hands feel like the sun My legs are trembling like a rough sea I am shaking like a washing machine It feels like my hands are on fire It feels like my feet are in ice cubes My face goes red like a tomato My hands are frozen like ice I am excited as a mad scientist creating a new potion." *St Josephs RC Primary*

Your body, your home. Where does worry visit you? Becoming familiar with emotional energies.

"Tingly neck and throat, swirly tummy, head ache, dizzy, light headed, grind teeth, chin wobbles, pick nails, shaky, need to go to the toilet, cold/chilly, sweaty." *Grangetown Primary.*

Can you name some comfortable emotional visitors? What about uncomfortable ones? Share them here...

"We agree that jealousy is a very uncomfortable emotion. It makes us feel angry and sick, it gives us worms in our tummy, and it makes us want to hurt someone or something. We are comfortable with happiness and excitement; these are our good feelings." *Harewood Primary School*

Noticing the colour of your emotional fish. Comparing colours of emotions using fish.

"I felt happy. It made me feel excited. It was a yellow fish. I was scared the fish would bite me. I felt relaxed it reminded me of the blue sky. I felt scared it was a red feeling. I felt relaxed because of the water the colour was peach. I felt excited about the fish in the waterfall, I felt relaxed because of the birds singing. I was happy. I saw all the colours of the fish. I felt excited. Make your sister's bed. Clean the house with my mum." *Brougham Primary School*

Noticing emotional visitors using the analogy of creatures.

"Elephant - Feeling heavy and slow. Tiger - Feeling energetic. Lion - Feeling brave and excited. Lizard - Feeling colourful." *Highcliffe School*

How did you feel and do you want to feel? Share them here...

"I feel tired "Cassie" - I feel happy "Ada" - I feel sad "Elodie" - I feel relaxed "Burhan" - I feel a bit sleepy "Jonas" The pupils in Reception at Harewood Primary school shared their feelings after a snowy dinner time (hence some sleepy and tired children)." *Harewood Primary School*

Facing fear when trying new things.

"Thomas from Highcliffe Y4/5 worried about climbing a 200metre wall at climbing club. Felt nervous and fast heartbeat before he started but he got to the top and felt proud of himself. Naomi Year 4/5 felt nervous about netball club. Her heart was beating faster and she had lots of thoughts going round in her head. She was glad that she went and felt proud of herself scoping her first goal." *Highcliffe Primary.*

Musical Doodle. Finding My Feet.

"Our children really enjoyed listening to the music and doodling. Some children drew patterns and others drew pictures of what they thought about. One boy said 'the music made me think of a talking tomato...its funny, that's why I was laughing' Other children said 'it made me feel good.' 'it made me feel happy.' When looking back at the pattern one of the boys had drawn he said 'it looks like a jigsaw.'" *Highcliffe Primary.*

Objective: Children, parents and teachers are equipped with mindfulness strategies and tools that enable chosen responses rather than emotional reactions to challenging situations.

A wide range of different tools were provided for them to work with to allow for individual sensory modalities and different preferences.

Evidence

Examples of specific strategies and tools being practiced and noticing the causes of emotions.

Pausing Practices – Clap and Feel

“It helps to calm me down. It helps you make the worry feelings go away super-fast. It makes your hands feel tingly. It makes your hands feel fizzy.” *Grangetown Primary.*

Feel the Ground Beneath Your Feet

“Year 2 children at Highcliffe Primary did this on the carpet in the class. They enjoyed the feeling of the carpet on their bare feet. Some found the feeling of gently rocking with their eyes closed a bit of a weird sensation. We talked about trying this grounding technique out on different surfaces and many were keen to try it on the grass.” *Highcliffe Primary*

Smile

“Smiling makes us feel relaxed because we know someone is being nice. Smiling makes us happy because people are being friendly. Smiling makes us feel relieved because bad feelings go away. Smiling makes us feel better when we are unwell.” *Harewood Primary*

Hold and Let go. Releasing and Relaxing (especially when you feel worried)

“Made me feel: Calm Ready for my next lot of learning. All of the air came out of me. All of the stress came out of me every time the breath came out of me. Relaxed. Kind of tired. Less irritated.” *Normanby Primary.*

Volcano Breathing

“Volcano breaths made us feel relaxed and calm. Lemonade bubbles - destress, stress releasing as the bubbles burst, calm and relaxing, sleepy feeling, peaceful, made my mind slow down.” *Normanby Primary*

Journalling, Art & Discussion Prompts. – Volcano Drawing.

What things make you feel like a volcano? You can share them here...

“When my brother hurts me. When Mum says I can't play on her phone. When I can't sleep.” *High Cliffe Primary.*

Grounding- strong and stable like a Tree.

“We enjoyed the Audio Practice, Strong and Stable like a tree because it helped to clear our mind. It was very calming. We liked the eye tracing exercise because when we were drawing the object with our eyes we couldn't hear or feel anything else around us. It takes us to a completely different place and blocked out anything else we might have been thinking about at the time. The activities helped washing away any bad feelings and made us feel calm and peaceful again.” *High Cliff Primary*

Objective: To develop self-awareness in children and their school communities so they can safely emotionally regulate and increase emotional resilience.

As children became familiar with the different tools so they started to recognise when they could be most appropriately used to help avoid possible reactive (habitual) behaviours and develop a safer, conscious responsive.

Evidence

Breath Awareness. Counting Breaths with Awareness.

“We thought this might be useful before a meeting, performance. Maybe when starting a new school/year Moving house Stressed Angry Sad Scared.” *St Josephs RC Primary*

Colour in Nature.

“Thank you for helping us to learn and help us to calm down. We really enjoy your videos, especially the blowing candle video, as they help us to manage our emotions.”

Breath Awareness. Pencil and Palm Roll.

Can you decide, when in the school day might be a good time to practise this?

- “After playtime if someone has been annoying you. If you've had or are having a really busy day and you feel stressed. When reading to help you calm down and focus. When you are feeling upset.” *Normanby Primary*
- “The children said before we start any work in our books it might help us to relax and focus.” *Harewood Primary.*
- “On a morning when breakfast time might be a little bit stressful with siblings – Aoife
After we have eaten our lunch, that would be good time – Bogdan.
After losing a match or game in P.E. – Skye.
At the end of the school day - to make you feel ready for going home and ready for the next school day –

Poppy.

- At the end of playtime to help me feel ready for learning again – Amber.
- During indoor playtime if we want some time on our own. – Connor.
- When I feel unhappy, it would help me breathe my sadness and stress out – Ollie.” *Brougham Primary.*
- “The children said before we start any work in our books it might help us to relax and focus.”
Highcliffe
- “Before a lesson starts as the teacher is speaking. Break time/ lunch time. Just whenever you feel stressed, this slows your breathing down. Use it to focus during work if you are distracted. If you are lost in secondary, you might do this to help calm down and focus. On the bus on the way home to calm down.” *Lockwood Primary.*
- “When finishing one activity before moving onto the next activity. When you have a few moments to wait. When you are feeling cross.” *Highcliffe.*

Mindful listening.

“Y4/5 Highcliffe Primary We can be chatty and found this a good exercise to try and listen more carefully. We still got distracted by things that were going on but we started the activity well. The main distraction was background noise. Sienna said she was trying to picture the scene as Joshua was reading.” *Highcliffe*

Reflection. Circle of Control

How can this help you? Where and when can you see it helping you?

“Try to think about our actions and what we can do to help ourselves in each situation.”

Sense awareness. Getting away for a minute in your classroom.

When would this help you?

“When we start to feel a little angry or scared.”

Waves

“We think wave breathing is useful. We will try to use it when: we get to the end of a lesson to reflect on what we have learnt. we are at home. we are starting to feel angry.” *St Josephs RC Primary*

Tapping with Amanda & Rachel

“When you're really mad it will help you calm down. When you're anxious When you're overexcited When you're sad When you're frustrated When you're stressed or tired When you're in a maths problem When you're nervous.” *St Josephs RC Primary.*

Counting Breaths

“It cooled me down. It feels like resetting my mind. I feel calm. It made me feel peaceful. I now feel ready to learn.”
Highcliffe Primary

Objective: Children, parents and teachers have awareness of social and emotional behaviours and are equipped with mindfulness strategies and tools that enable chosen responses rather than emotional reactions to challenging situations.

Children were also encouraged to talk about the tools and techniques they use that help them choose how best to respond to a situation or 'Hot' emotion.

Evidence

Mental Health Awareness Week. Antidotes to Anxiety.

"I feel anxious when I speak to someone and I don't know how to answer them. It makes my body feel fizzy."

"To help me not feel as anxious, I look around to see if I can get any ideas to help me."

"I breathe in and out to help me when I feel anxious."

"When my brother walks to the shop sometimes he has shaky

legs, and he finds it hard to speak. He usually takes someone with him to help him stop feeling anxious or nervous."

"My sister feels nervous and anxious when she is around lots of people. She carries a squishy with her or fiddles with her hands to help her if she does feel anxious." *Grangetown Primary.*

Objective: It provides an emphasis on prevention together with a greater resilience within the community.

As children practiced and became more familiar with a range of tools so we began to see evidence of growing self-regulation. Children began to choose, without prompting, how best to respond instead of reacting to a given situation. They also began to teach the tools to others such as class friends, siblings and parents. This also illustrates how greater resilience within the community can be gained by the simple and very natural process of sharing techniques that work for them.

Evidence

Starfish Breathing

"After learning the starfish breathing this week some of the children have used it independently in their home lives. For example: when younger siblings were winding up their brothers and sisters, they then used it to calm down rather than react. when someone got hurt. when trying to go to sleep. when playing a game. when they got told off." *St Joseph R.C. Primary.*

Lazy 8 Breathing

"We found the Lazy8 breathing calming and one child showed her Brownie pack how to do it too." *St Joseph R.C. Primary*

Pencil Roll

"The children loved the pencil roll, and I have noticed some of them using it during lessons."

Foot Stamp

"We have been using this when we feel angry or upset. Some children have encouraged their peers to use it too." *sbcschools.org.uk*

The Gift of Confidence

“Your visualisation really helped us to feel more confident before our KS1 Christmas concert and, although we had some last-minute nerves, we went out on the stage and were brilliant!” Highcliffe Primary.

What’s in your Settle Suitcase?

“Things have changed since my nanny died. In my settle suitcase that helps me I have my teddy called Monkey, my toy car, pictures of nanny.” *St Benedict’s RC Primary School.*

React or Choose to Respond?

“Some people in our class get in more trouble by acting on their emotions but at the moment we have been learning about hormones and mood swings so this will help us.” *Harewood Primary.*

Focusing and Concentrating

“Children are working on using the breathing techniques in their daily routines.” *Harewood Primary*

Body Tapping with Amanda & Rachel

“The reception children at Harewood Primary School enjoyed tapping themselves into their favourite colours. Their favourite part was helping their friends change colour.” *Harewood Primary.*

Relaxing Your Shoulders.

“It relaxed my feelings - I would use this again when I am feeling stressed or angry. I liked this, it got all of the worries out of my head. I would use it again in my house when I am tired. It made me feel calm - I would use it when my brother and sister are having a fight with me. It made me feel calm - I would use it again when my dog is annoying me! It made my shoulders feel relaxed - I would use it again at night in my house. It made me feel tired - I would use it again in bedroom during the day and at night. It made me feel calm and relaxed - I would use it when my sister is annoying me!” *Normanby Primary.*

Less Panic and More Calm for SATs.

“Wonderful! A calm mind, can bring clarity and greater confidence which can be a massive help in working with SAT questions! It is one of the greatest techniques I have been using. I have brought my friends this week and we are practicing with Mrs.....” *St Benedicts R.C. Primary.*

Objective: Teachers experience improved psycho-social and physical wellbeing, improved self-care, a reduction in mental health problems.

Teachers proved quite reluctant at commenting on how they were engaging with the programme but we did capture a few.

Evidence

Window Tracing.

“Our teacher uses this regularly when she goes on courses to help her focus.” *St Josephs RC Primary*

FROG

“Getting through the week as we begin to celebrate Easter. Final push today and tomorrow. Feels like Friday should be here. So I’ve decided to light a candle and listen to FROG. This is a refreshing change to sitting and going through emails and scheduling replies, last minute planning for Relax Kids at Lunchtime.” *St Benedicts R.C. Primary.*

Mindfulness for Staff WellBeing Expectations

"I'm melting ☹️ it's made me think of doing the module at the end of the day and inviting Staff to join me if they would like to." *St Benedicts R.C. Primary*

FOG

"Teacher thoughts: How wonderful to see some boys and girls taking a moment to close their eyes. I felt the ground meeting my feet- it was a new sensation." *High Coniscliffe Primary.*

Story 1 Old Ma – Audio Practice 1

"I feel that this practice is very grounding in terms of it promoting calmness and a sense of being with yourself in the present moment and conscious of your physical self." *Harewood Primary*

Objective: Encourage and develop mutual support, kindness and compassion for children, peers, teachers and families.

Examples are provided below of comments generated from a variety of kindness practices which included encouraging children and teachers to notice opportunities for spreading kindness to others but also discovering those activities that make them feel good and thereby helped to increase their resilience.

Evidence

Daily Happiness Habits – what are your emotional boosters / drainers today?

"Boosters - seeing friends, hugs, Roblox, blankets, being at home, being at school, helping other people, taking a deep breath.

Drainers - doing lots of hard work, when someone dies, when you go on a long walk." *Grangetown Primary*

Animal Mindfulness – How do animals help, support and soothe you?

"I like stroking their fur. Stroking my guinea pigs makes me feel relaxed. Watching my goldfish and changing the light on his tank. Rabbits because I like stroking their droopy ears. I like squirrels and thinking of them makes me calm. Watching turtles and dolphins. Going to my Grandma's and looking after a parakeet. I like dogs and cats. My crazy puppy makes me laugh. I like stroking lambs. I like visiting my Grandma and watching the dog run around in circles. When I visit my Auntie's and her dog goes mad jumping up and down. I like birds because when they sing it's calming for me. Birds because I like watching them fly around. I like dogs. They calm me down. Whales because the noise they make is funny and calming." *St Josephs R.C. Primary*

Recognising Glimmers.

"Smell of freshly washed clothes. Sister not coming in my room. Smell of a freshly valeted car. Like it when your brother shuts the door after himself. Feeling the soft grass between toes. Making sandcastles. Birthday approaching. Smelling shampoo. Watching my sheep and lambs skipping about in the field. Abby the dog. Kisses and cuddles from younger siblings." *St Josephs R.C. Primary.*

Kindness Ripples.

- "Asking if there are okay? Saying well done. Helping people with sports painting stones and handing them out. *St Josephs R.C. Primary.*
- If you run to the cars first, you could be kind and pass the car to the slowest person to have a go first. Share with people and take turns. If your friend gets wet cuffs in the water tray, you could offer to pull them up. If there was a queue for the toilet and someone was needing it more than you, you could let them go first." *Harewood Primary*

Giving and Receiving Kindness

“Year 2 Brougham Primary School Clean the table after tea. I tidy up my toys at home. Play with my brother and sister when they are on their own. Clean the dishes. Play with my cousin so they aren't lonely. Go to bed early. Clean my bedroom and help with chores. Sharing with my family. Go and get things for mum when she needs them. Clean my brother's room when it is messy. Help someone when they are stuck with their work.” *Brougham Primary.*

Self Praise

- “Well done to me for saying my 10 times tables! Well done to me for doing a pull up on the climbing bar! Well done to me for doing tricks on the trampoline! Well done to me for hanging upside down on the climbing bar! Well done to me for my art certificate! Well done to me for being a nice person. Grangetown Primary.
- Well done to me for: nearly doing a flatback, getting my first assist for my football club, doing a cartwheel, doing a handstand, riding my bike without stabilisers, riding my scooter, learning to tie my shoelaces, tricks on my scooter, doing a wheelie on my bike, keeping myself safe, moving up a stage in swimming and swimming 400m, winning my first ever claw machine at the arcades, setting up a TV, going to Beavers' Camp, building a lego car, presenting to our TRUST.” *St Joseph RC Primary*

Stamp your foot and connect with the world

“We loved this. It felt so good thinking we were connecting with people around the world. So simple but so effective.” *sbschools.*

Kindness and Gratitude

Three Things...

“Lambs running races across the field, my son sunny days, play dates dogs, most animals sleepovers, cats and playing playing with my little sister when my dog jumps on me when I play on my bike at my Nana's dogs, swimming and sunny days football, playing with my little brother stroking the dog my brothers jumping on me guinea pigs, hopping, my Grandad's dog, ducks the puppy I used to have, going outside and seeing my Auntie my whole family scoring penalties, rabbits, transport my family, teddies and rabbits my family, play dates and stroking my dog.” *St Joseph RC Primary School.*

Kindness and Gratitude.

“Elf stayed until New Year's Day Went to the arcades. Went to the park. Walked the dogs .Getting a new house. Went to Dad's house. Played with my brothers. Went to the inflatable waterpark. Went to Alphamere. Watched Youtube. Went to the Lake District. Went to my Nan's for Christmas. Played on PS4. Got a desk on Christmas Day. My dog got better from being ill. Played with my Grandad's dog, Rosie. Went on a ferry to Amsterdam”. *St Josephs RC Primary.*

Alphabet Gratitude

A-Air because it helps us breath
 B Bees for honey and listen to them buzz
 C cat because I get to stroke her
 D- dirt bike because it keeps fit
 E elephants because they are great animals
 F- family because they keep me safe
 G- Grace my sister because she is kind
 H home because I have
 somewhere to live
 I imagination because we get to imagine things and stories in our mind
 J Joshua because he plays with me
 K kangaroos
 because it was on the masked singer
 L life otherwise we wouldn't be here and explore the world
 M Mummy because she takes me to school
 everyday

N Nintendo switch to play on
O Oxygen we need to breathe
P poo because it helps us survive
Q Queen for being a great monarch
R robots because they know a lot of stuff
S school because I get to learn
T Toys to play with
U umbrellas keep me dry
V vultures to help in the
army
W willow my dog because she makes me laugh
X x-rays to check our bones
Y You because you help me learn
Z Zachary is my friend." *adastraschools*

Objective: Together children, parents, carers and educators can have fun reading the stories and practicing the tools but also collectively learn to support each other in pausing at challenging times, and if necessary, grounding their attention in some neutral area of the body such as the foot, hands or breath or in some aspect of the environment.

In this way they gain the opportunity to choose with kindness how best to respond to the situation in a way that supports their collective wellbeing.

Evidence

Stories, Poems, Pictures, Metaphors – Trees

"So simple but effective! Going to use in reading sessions too for inference" *adastraschools*.

Smile

"We really enjoyed the poem. We passed a smile around the classroom and soon the whole class were infected. Then we became infected with the giggles. A great 'feel good' session. Thanks so much." *Highcliffe Primary*.

Story One of Mindfulness for Kits – Old Ma

- "I found the story exciting, I liked when he climbed right to the top of the tree." "It makes me feel calm-the story." "It's funny. It helps us learn to be kind and helps us with friendships" "It's a good story. I liked the action." *St Josephs*.
- We give the story a double thumbs up. Listening to the story being read was a lovely calming experience. We liked that he used the technique in the story. We completed the technique as a class and felt refreshed, calm and relaxed. *Brougham Primary*
- We loved the story. Hobb's feelings resonated with a lot of us and it was good to explore his actions in a non-judgemental way. We noticed how the birdsong seemed to change depending on how Hobb was feeling and how we might interpret things people say and do differently if we are feeling angry. We used the analogy of a storm in our heads and found that FOG really works!" *Highcliffe*

Story 1 Old Ma. The Intention Game

- "We loved the game! We are going to start thinking about what our intentions for the day are :) *Brougham Primary*.
- The children told me they noticed: tingling in feet air on knees feeling warm tight shoulders an overwhelming calmness I felt like I was flying it made me feel cold. *Sbcs Schools*
- Focuses the mind and uses the senses to be self-aware." *Harewood Primary*.

Audio Practice FOG 1

- “If we keep our feet firm on the ground, it helps us to feel calm. I chose to really concentrate on the feeling of the floor on the bottom of my feet. It is very relaxing. I really think the FOG technique works. This technique makes me feel relaxed. I felt so calm, I became sleepy. I think the technique works because I can feel the pressure being released through my feet. *Brougham Primary*
- It made me feel calm. I felt sleepy. I felt like I was floating. It felt relaxing when I closed my eyes. I felt good. It made me feel happy. It gave me good thoughts.” *Sbsc Schools*

Audio Practice FOG 2

- “The children responded in much the same way as audio 1. Many said they preferred this one and found it easier to follow. We talked about how hard it is to keep our concentration on one thing, that other thoughts keep popping into our heads. I told the children that this is fine but to try and let them pass by and not become a focus. *Sbscschools*.
- I feel this practice promotes self-awareness, calmness and self-regulation skills. *Harewood*.
- This one felt calm and relaxing: these strategies are helping because if you ever lose something in class and feel really stressed you can use the strategy to calm down and stop having a conflict with someone. When we were listening, it made us feel like we were lying in the air with lots of trains going by - like we were able to be cushioned in a place of nothingness while the world was busy.” *Highcliffe Primary*.

Emotional Buttons

Thoughts included... Animal cruelty, Stealing, Brother messing up the room when I have just tidied it. Being called a weakling by my brother. When I am hungry. My sister pulling my arm and tripping me up. Being pushed over. Being laughed at. Bullying and when friends run away. When others run over the mud to push in the line. Being ignored. When my sister gets more treats. *High Coniscliffe*.

Story 2 Mindfulness for Kits

Children become aware that there are various ways of breathing. Children become aware of their own breathing and how to breathe to feel calm and peaceful. *Harewood Primary*.

Objective: The programme gives access to a preventative model to all children, their parents and staff who haven't been identified as requiring an intervention. It supports a universal approach to mental health and wellbeing strategies which can significantly improve wellbeing and educate children on the importance of self-care from an early age.

Hopefully the above examples and evidence illustrate how we have provided a means of promoting improved wellbeing and educated children on not only the importance of self-care (from an early age) but provided a rich array of tools and practice opportunities. This has allowed development of greater self-awareness and introduced a range of soothing tools to support self-regulation thereby acting as a preventative model to all who engaged regularly with the practices.

Objective: It equips and invites parents to accompany their children on this wellbeing journey. Giving parents the skills and tools in becoming emotional coaches by feeling confident to use and share emotional regulation techniques and positive role modelling in self-care and wellbeing.

[See evidence of teacher/parental involvement here.](#)

Your emotional creatures

I asked my son what animal he was and he said 'snail' because he was so tired and felt like moving slowly. I asked him again and he said 'cheetah' because he wanted to run fast with a football. So our animals (and emotions) might change throughout the day!

Initial Targeting of Schools

Primary Schools within the Tees Valley region were invited to register their interest in the programme. This was promoted across various communication channels to ensure reach to the maximum number of schools within the region. This included:

- Direct mail – emails were sent to all schools within the area – targeting either mental health leads or the Senior Leadership Team.
- Social Media – the programme was also promoted on various social media channels
- WellBeings website - <https://wellbeingschools.co.uk>
- Shared and promoted by MHST and other service managers via email and online training slots.

Registration and Initial Interest

- There were initially 45 schools that registered their interest in the programme. This was collated via a contact form on the WellBeings website.
- Of the 45 who registered, 30 were chosen based upon their location (within the Tees Valley area). These were all Primary school settings.

Programme Usage and Registrations

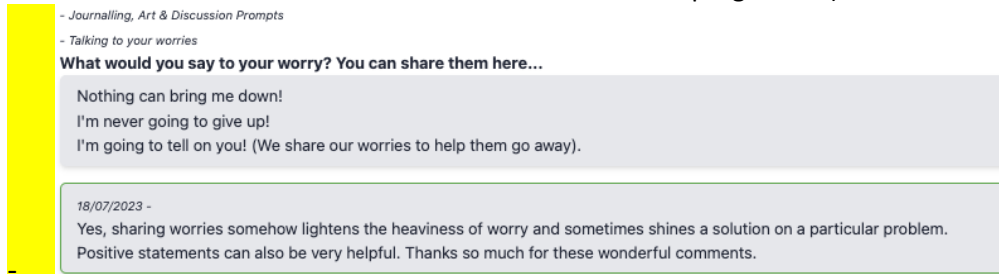
Upon successful registration of the school, these schools were invited to:

- Attend an initial training session to welcome the schools to the Programme which explained in detail the objectives of the programme and the requirements from the school to be eligible for the funding.
- Following the training, the schools registered their staff and completed initial baseline questionnaires (see these later in report)
- Total number of registrations of individual school staff, from the schools, was 369.

Activity and Communications undertaken to promote engagement and interaction with our schools

- Initial School Training where a whole-school approach was outlined and encouraged
- Monthly drop-in sessions offered (these were poorly attended)
- Initial Baseline Questionnaire sent
- Final Baseline Questionnaire sent
 - Link to Questionnaire <https://wellbeingschools.co.uk/end-of-programme-baseline-questionnaire/>
- Interim Feedback Questionnaire
- Weekly Newsletters
- Assemblies – based on key themes/topics <https://wellbeingschools.co.uk/year-6-transitions/>
- Themed practices for National Awareness Days/Weeks (Children’s Mental Health Week, Anti-Bullying Week etc)
- Seasonal themes around growing/changing, new and old, warm and cold emotions.

- Online chat within the portal for staff, pupils and parents to share their feedback on particular modules. This provides opportunity for the WellBeings Team to reply to open conversations and engagement. Below is an example of the Communication Boxes where children and teachers can openly share and comment (significant amount of evidence provided in this report has been collected from these ‘communicate boxes’ within the programme).



- Zoom calls with highly engaged schools and classes.
- Promotional videos to encourage engagement and bespoke congratulation videos for children.
- Certificates sent out to highly engaged users and classes – Well Done, Thank You and Proud of You for both classes and staff members to print off and display in classrooms.



- Based on feedback and comments from teachers, parents and staff, relatable and relevant content for age range and specific needs was created including support for Year 6 SATs and transitions.
 - E.g Headteacher conversation with parent whose daughter was struggling with sleep, we created and shared sleep practices.
 - Emailed new content to all schools to share with parents
- Parent Pages on the WellBeings site for schools to share with their own parents to encourage a whole-school approach. These were also referenced on the newsletters that schools sent out to their parents and included frequent updates giving access to the stories and tools.

<https://wellbeingschools.co.uk/parent-resources-2/>

Areas of Success and Useful Feedback (derived from questionnaires, comment boxes and conversations with staff)

- The scheme has over the course of the year has enhanced the lives of many, many children which is far more than one therapist can do.
For example, a total of 369 school users, sharing with approx. 20 children, equates to 7380 children having awareness of social and emotional behaviours, and equipped with the tools to check and chose their response.
- The scheme has provided consistent opportunities for pupil voice, teacher voice and parent voice through regular online questioning, feedback prompts, consultations, case studies and evaluations.
- The programme has provided swathes of evidence of children supporting each other and increased emotional awareness and of recognising appropriate times and spaces to use self-regulation strategies.

Data feedback from users of the programme:

Initial Training

- 72% of respondents found the training to be effective.
- Comments included:
- “Easy to follow”, “very useful and helpful,” “Very informative,” “The trainer was very warm and approachable.”
- Suggestions for improvement included making the training shorter, providing more explanation on navigating the website, and less on aspects of the delivery aimed at SLT such as encouraging people to use it and monitoring use. Perhaps have separate session for SLT and teaching staff in future.

Logging in and frequency of use

- 96% of respondents had logging into the programme. Of these 63% accessed the programme once a week, 26% several times a week, while 7% used the programme daily. 4% hadn’t accessed the programme at all.

Using the programme.

- 78% found the programme very easy and straightforward to access, navigate and deliver. 17% found it adequate, while 3% found it challenging.

Comments about access, navigation and delivery include:

- Staff reported that, “the resources are easy to find and very user friendly.” That, in spite of being “rubbish at computers, accessing the programme is easy.”. “Once you have logged in, it’s very easy to find different topics and videos”, while “Categories are self-explanatory and good that it ticks them off as you complete them.”
- In respect of delivery, “depending on time, I will choose a shorter activity and sometimes a longer one that you can go into more detail with.” “I have used a variety of videos and exercises with my class.” “Was very useful during children’s mental health week”.
- Staff reported that, “the children enjoy the majority of the activities and find them useful”, that there are, “great videos to share with the children and different ways of being well to meet the needs of all children”, while the “children really enjoyed learning the different wellbeing techniques and using them in their everyday life.” For the younger children, “children in nursery look forward to watching the video’s and joining in with the activities.”
- Staff also stated that, “children particularly enjoy getting responses from their answers.
- Areas for development include: “I have found some useful programmes but it would be better to have it separated into KS1 KS2, so I can find more age related activities.” “When looking for moments to promote mindfulness with my class I look for is it age appropriate, will it engage them and is there something they need to be supported in achieving e.g. resilience.”

When asked whether there were any aspects of the WellBeings programme that you have found the most useful, staff responded with:

- “The resources are accessible and engaging.”
- “I love the breathing techniques and the art ideas. We use them a lot even without the video’s now.
- “EYFS”,
- “The children particularly enjoy the activities that have aspects related to animals and drawing.”
- “The children in my class enjoyed the videos.”
- “The children really enjoy taking part in the breathing activities and drawing.”
- The model of “Bodies a hotel. Feelings are visitors.”
- “Love the Y6 Stuff.”
- “Love the Spring week watch as a structured list of activities for us to work through in a week.”

- “When I am able to link them to the target I am working on with the children and when we provide workshops for the whole school during CMHW.”
- “The short meditation videos to help the children be calm and grounded.”
- “They are easy to use with the children and very engaging.”
- “We have used the breathing techniques and emotions video’s a lot, especially through Children’s mental Health Week.”
- Etc...
- There was also the comment that, “the section for adults has some useful and interesting information” and the plea, “just wish staff would use it more.”

When asked whether the programme is having an impact on your overall school wellbeing, 84% responded with yes.

Staff were then asked to provide more information about their responses and below are a few of the comments made.

They reflect how children are beginning to notice their emotions more, talking about what they feel and beginning to show evidence of self-regulation.

- “Regulation activities have been invaluable.
- Children are sharing calming techniques with each other.
- Children recognise the programme and appreciate it is time for self-reflection and regulation.
- We watch a video on a Friday before going home - I try to pair a video with something we have faced in class, or something I think the children could spend time reflecting on. We then briefly discuss as a class. I hope it has an impact.
- Provides welcome regulation breaks with a SEN support class
- There is a range of activities which are very helpful and we are going to use these more across school and link to our PSHE lessons as it is very useful the links to the PSHE schemes.
- Children's confidence has improved and they are using these techniques independently.
- Children are learning that it is ok to talk about your feelings and learn some ways to deal with different emotions.
- Teachers have commented on how the programme has helped to calm children and the enjoyment children have gained from the activities in the programme.
- Children across school have shared strategies they use to support their positive mental health - rainbow breaths, hot chocolate breaths, figure of 8 and the starfish approach seem to be the most popular.
- Children are much calmer after doing practices. They will refer back to practices we have done before and talk about how they have helped them. Adults gain a similar benefit.
- Children are remembering some of the strategies for breathing.”

And for staff:

- “Staff awareness improved.
- Used as a tool for staff to have a bank of ideas to use with the children.”

For those who said no to the programme having an impact in their school, the following responses we made:

- “I am not using it consistently for it to have an impact.

- Staff aren't using it. I am really embarrassed about it. I would like to be able to share more with parents and support to get more staff using it with children.
- More staff need to be involved in using the programme to have its full effect."

Staff were asked what improvements you would like to see made to the programme, and gave the following comments:

- More visuals for early years- I think they would benefit from seeing pictures rather than someone talking.
- Create a search function within your website to make it easier to access age-appropriate resources.
- I like it when activities can be marked as completed so I can see which activities I have completed with the children, but this option isn't available for all activities
- Easier access for parents and information to share on FB and newsletters.
- Possibly a brief description of the kinds of activities that will be in each module before clicking on it.
- Story books to go alongside programme for Reception, with a cuddly mascot for the class, like a worry monster..."

We then asked, how likely are you to use the programme in the future, they responded?

Absolutely	28%
Very likely	34%
Likely	21%
Somewhat likely	14%
Not at all likely	3%

93% of respondents when asked if they would recommend the WellBeing programme to other staff said yes.

To the question, would you say that the programme has enabled your school to implement a whole school approach, 79% of staff said yes.

Here are some of the comments made.

- "As a teacher we are not specialists on mental health so the ideas within the wellbeing site have meant that it can be taught and delivered well and ensure children are being shown appropriate and effective techniques.
- All staff and children have enjoyed using the programme and this has given children and teachers useful tool to help with self-regulation.
- It's good to know that the people who we work with can all access this facility.
- The school has a whole school approach to wellbeing, it is part of the school's ethos. This is another tool to aid staff in helping to keep children's mental wellbeing at the forefront of our school.
- All staff set aside 5 minutes daily to complete one of the activities.
- I would say that it has helped our wellbeing journey, and works well with other schemes we are using too.
- More staff need to be using the programme to say that the programme is embedded a whole school approach.
- More staff need to be involved in using the programme to have its full effect.
- I would like for Wellbeing to be more of a priority in the whole school approach."

Finally, we asked whether schools would purchase the programme once the current 12 month programme ends.

Absolutely	8%
Very Likely	4%
Likely	42%
Somewhat Likely	29%
Not Likely at all	17%

Comments included:

“I would definitely and get more support from SLT to make it happen.

Although, not sure we would have the money to purchase the programme but would certainly try. Will depend on cost and budget given to mental health and well-being

Budget is extremely tight so would depend on costing

Due to being a small school we would have purchased the programme but having very low funding we are unable to pay for a subscription.”

Analysis and comparison of ‘before and after’ Questionnaires.

Users completed the same questions in September 2022 and again in July 2023. Responses derived from a mixture of Heads, DMHL, Teachers and SENCO.

Most significantly...

80% of staff felt an improvement in their ability to role-model to pupils wellbeing practices, that supported their own mental and emotional health, and their ability to self-regulate.

And there was a further...

80% of staff felt an improvement in their confidence in offering, using and demonstrating emotional regulation techniques with my pupils.

However, it’s interesting to note that there was 0% improvement in staff regularly utilising mindfulness and wellbeing practices for my own self-care and emotional regulation. One member of staff did share with us however about how much it’s helped her own anxiety when she’s experiencing feelings of overwhelm,

*“Hope you are well too. We are absolutely over the moon to be named the most active Wellbeings in the country! The children have been asking me for a few weeks how we were doing with our engagement stars. Thank you so much for the certificates and video, the children loved them. I would be delighted for other schools to contact me/us to discuss the programme. Myself and the children have really enjoyed using it, particularly, the week-by-week activities. **I, myself, suffer from anxiety and have found the activities extremely useful when I’ve felt myself becoming overwhelmed.** I am disappointed that we are unable to continue with it next year as I believe Miss Wright has already informed you. I am moving to Year 1 too so was looking forward to seeing what impact it would have on our younger children and I know the Year 3s (4s) were looking forward to looking at the Mindfulness for Kits activities.”* St Joseph's Primary

Question...	% IMPROVED	% STAYED SAME	% DID LESS
I regularly utilise mindfulness and wellbeing practices with children in school.	60	40	0
I share breath practices with my pupils.	60	40	0
I use outside and/or nature to encourage focus and calmness.	20	60	20
I include opportunities during the school day to pause and pay attention to thoughts and emotions.	40	20	40
I teach pupils to notice and pay attention to sensations within their bodies that indicate emotional activity.	60	40	0
I explain to pupils how they can use their senses to anchor and ground themselves.	30	20	0
I regularly utilise mindfulness and wellbeing practices for my own self-care and emotional regulation.	0	100	0
I role-model to my pupils wellbeing practices, that support my own mental and emotional health, and my ability to self-regulate.	80	20	0
I provide regular opportunities for children to express their emotions in a variety of ways including art/language/movement etc	40	20	40
I embed regular kindness practices within the school day.	0	40	60
I feel confident in offering, using and demonstrating emotional regulation techniques with my pupils.	80	20	0

Areas of Challenge:

- Schools were encouraged to attend with as many school staff as possible, initial training once they'd registered. Some schools didn't adopt a whole-school approach and only one member of staff attended with a view of cascading information to other staff. This member of staff was sometimes not SLT and so the whole-school approach was diluted from the start.
- On occasion, school support staff attended and engaged but not SLT.
- Schools where SLT were not involved and committed to the programme and its objectives from the start didn't utilise and participate, sometimes not at all.
- Some schools were keen to start and not miss out on a funded programme but already had existing levels of provision in their school. Teachers weren't directed to use the WellBeings programme and were inclined to use existing programmes that had been established and cemented in. In these schools, SLT loved what WellBeings offered and it's benefits but didn't want to alter their existing approach.
- Communication with staff was challenging, often calling and emailing schools with little and no response.
- School email firewall filters made it difficult and at times impossible to communicate with staff.
- Attendance at monthly check-ins and workshops were poorly attended by staff due to time, timetable constraints and overwhelmed staff.

Recommendations

- We have noticed that some schools are utilising a large range of what they perceive as mental health and wellbeing solutions. These schools seem to have no overall strategy or clear measured impact to analyse whether the time dedicated to the mental health provision is justified and making a positive difference as a whole-school approach. For example, a school was using 5 different types of 'health and wellbeing' programmes with no analysis nor reason for their choice of solution. E.g. Feedback from SLT when asked why engagement with programme was low:
- *"We have reflected on this, we think it is because we have a strong PHSE scheme already in place, we are also a GOLD P4C school and a Headstart GOLD school. We also have a full-time therapist in school to support as well as forest schools for 2-year groups. I think we may be giving staff too many options. I really like your work but am thinking I may have overloaded staff with resources, does this make sense."*

- There's a need for ease, consistency and for mental health to be a greater priority in schools. Many staff we encountered were engaged in firefighting as a reaction to children's immediate needs, rather than a reflective and strategic approach.
- Schools have not taken up WellBeings in the next year because they do not have the budget, no matter how much they'd have liked it. The positive evidence-based impact that this scheme has had on a great number of children is clear to see in comments and feedback.
- Sustainable approaches to mental health are needed in schools. Not just the responsibility of an individual staff member or solely reliant on specialist provision for individuals, but a common, mentally healthy culture that is the responsibility of all.