

Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS)

Reassessment Report

School name:	St Mary's Church of England Primary School
School address and postcode:	Edale Rd, Bolton, BL3 4QP
School telephone:	01204 333494
School website:	www.st-marys-deane.bolton.sch.uk
Head teacher:	Mr R Powell
Award coordinator:	Mrs J Ash
Award verifier:	Dr Helen Mills
Date of reassessment:	7 th November 2024

Commentary on the mini-portfolio of evidence:

The detailed portfolio and presentation demonstrated how the passionate school review team and staff have continued to further develop, review and embed the outstanding mental health and wellbeing provision for pupils, staff, parents and the community, listening to the views of all stakeholders, improving communication, breaking down barriers, building trusting relationships and ensuring every member of the school community experiences a sense of belonging to the school. Furthermore, collaboration and sharing good practice with other schools is excellent.

Commentary on the tour of the school:

All staff members and pupils welcome you with warmth and kindness. The school ethos and environment promotes a sense of calm, positivity, inclusion, happiness, fun, care, community spirit and aspiration. It was clear to see the interpersonal, caring, respectful and trusting relationships between staff and pupils. Children were nurtured, engaged and encouraged in learning, happy, helpful and displayed exemplary behaviour, manners, respect and kindness.

Each classroom has an individualised calm area to meet the needs of the cohort with resources to support regulation, recognition and reward board, reflection area, worry monster/boxes with images of the Wellbeing Ambassadors who monitor it, emotion check in and communication friendly furniture. There are numerous areas that pupil's access for wellbeing, emotional regulation or targeted support, including the outstanding wellbeing room, SEN room and lunch space, interactive sensory room, fish tank, outdoor calm area and appreciation station. The wonderful images of the incredible number of pupil Wellbeing Ambassadors are proudly displayed in the lunch hall. There is also a spacious and comfortable staff room. It was clear from the tour that inclusion, wellbeing positive and caring relationships are embedded throughout the school and are central to its success.

Commentary on discussions with stakeholders:

The pupils I met were able to articulate well their understanding of mental health and wellbeing, how they identify and communicate their emotions, described many trusted adults and Wellbeing Ambassadors they can turn to for support, areas they can go to, activities they do and the skills they have learnt to regulate their emotions and improve their mental health and wellbeing, alongside the immense care, safety and sense of belonging they experience. Specifically, they commented, "Wellbeing is looking after yourself and others, your thoughts and feelings and there's always a solution for every problem. Staff help us; they are kind and notice when we're upset, talk to us for 5 minutes and if we're still not OK, they get another teacher or teaching assistant to help. They are very respectful and always listen to you. We have books and toys in the wellbeing room, and Mrs Ash does wellbeing sessions like making jars with glitter and it calms you down. We learn about wellbeing in PSHE and character in assembly like empathy, respect and helping each other. In PSHE we close our eyes and take deep breaths and think about what we can improve on. I feel successful for being a vice captain. My worry worms get rid of my worries. We check the worry boxes or monster; it's optional to speak to Mrs Ash or the Wellbeing Ambassadors and we talk to the children about their worries and recommend what to do, we comfort them, give out worry books with activities like breathing and think of things they like to do, but if it's serious, we tell Mrs Ash and she sorts it out. We have wellbeing meetings and say what we want improving. I love being a Wellbeing Ambassador and helping people; it makes me feel accomplished and very good about myself. We feel like the chosen ones; we're responsible and resilient. We all feel proud. If Mrs Ash catches you being kind, she gives you a 'Be Kind' badge. Behaviour is very good. We want everyone to feel welcome. Our school is a good community to be in. It's inclusive and we accept everyone. It's like one big family. You feel safe and happy here".

The passionate and highly trained staff at this wonderful school go above and beyond what is expected of them to ensure children and their families flourish. Staff genuinely care for every child and each other. Staff feel listened to and appreciated, value the importance placed on their wellbeing, the support and training they receive and commented on how well they support each other and how approachable the Wellbeing Team and SLT are. Staff commented, "Everyone in school is passionate about wellbeing and we all have the same goals. Pupils feel happy and safe. The Wellbeing Ambassadors are amazing; they're really enthusiastic and care. The wellbeing team delegate tasks and it works well. Staff know they can talk to the wellbeing team. Planning and reports have been reduced, we don't do things for the sake of it and we've had outside mental health and wellbeing workshops for Y5 and 6 that's helped our wellbeing too. We are very well listened too; we make suggestions and changes are made. We've been included in the new vision. We can talk to the Wellbeing Lead and SLT and they put things in place. Wellbeing assemblies are linked to collective worship. Emotion coaching training was really valuable for staff and parents who want more and we're doing it; coffee mornings are going well. Dinner staff are managing behaviour and building relationships. We've put into practice emotion coaching and think more about why they might be behaving. Everybody understands it and is on board with it, staff are sending children to their key workers more, the children are regulating and feel safe and calmer, listened to and know that we understand them and are aware of their triggers and deal with it so they can work. We're on top of SEND with early identification and reviews, we have really good links with external agencies, staff come to us, they go above and beyond, the curriculum is adapted to the children's needs; it's fun, engaging and inclusive. Staff are really supportive of each other, we listen to them and make changes, teachers plan with special needs assistants and are empowered. Wellbeing is central to everything and the children can talk about it. We notice the little changes in children. Parents sit with Mrs Ash and they get space, they share with us all, they have that safe space. We are a little family".

Governors value and support the staff and prioritise whole school wellbeing. The Governors commented, "Staff reports and workload have been reduced. There's been a lot of work to encourage openness. The Wellbeing Team are proud of what they do. Everybody is made to feel welcome. Everybody has great respect for Mrs Ash. It's the children's safe zone. It's the community spirit; one big family. Pupils, including those hard to reach, have a massive pride in their roles. Staff have the empathy and patience. It's very inclusive. Pupils know who they can talk to; they have chosen key workers. They've put so much emphasis on wellbeing; they really care and do so much extra, funding trips etc. It's a fabulous school and the children are fantastic".

Parental praise for the staff and the support they provide to children and their families was exceptional, with breaking down barriers, building trusting relationships and clear communication playing a key role. Parents have many opportunities to be part of the school community and have developed a sense of belonging. Parents commented, "Mrs Ash and Teachers have been so supportive; I come in and have a chat. My daughters having bereavement sessions and it's helped so much, brought out her emotions. They brought my older daughter out of her shell and she's now an Ambassador at High School. There's an open-door policy; they're more like friends, you can open up, it's confidential, it's a safe space. They helped me with forms and got my daughter her diagnosis and got her a specialist school; they always included her. My child is a Wellbeing Ambassador and tells me he helps children. She says I've been helping a new boy; she can't wait to come to school; she's very happy and safe. Any issues get sorted straight away. We come in to school for the children's events like choir, stay and read, musicals; it helps with their confidence. Put me forward for school bank, she's there if you're struggling; there for you and the children, all the staff are like that. You build a bond with them. They ask you how you are and if you need anything; you build those relationships".

Strengths identified during reassessment:

The Wellbeing Lead has demonstrated outstanding leadership, passion and drive. The motivated Wellbeing Team have continued to prioritise mental health and wellbeing, and ensured it is firmly embedded across the whole school community.

The trained Pupil Wellbeing Ambassadors are outstanding and take pride in supporting their peers.

The schools' wellbeing vision, strategy and regular monitoring of stakeholder voice, are reflected in the inclusive, caring, kind, positive and nurturing culture and ethos of the school, and are central to the success of the school, and have further strengthened the sense of belonging and shared responsibility, referred to during the visit as 'family'. Throughout the award reassessment, the school has demonstrated continued and innovative progress to support and improve the wellbeing and mental health of the whole school community.

Staff wellbeing continues to be prioritised and budgeted for. Staff training in mental health and wellbeing is high quality and has included emotion coaching and access to MindEd. Staff have been given autonomy to develop classroom wellbeing initiatives and therapeutic environments including wellbeing check ins and worry boxes.

The school has continued to work proactively to develop parental engagement and effective communication including delivering workshops and hosting coffee mornings, signposting and completing referrals for mental health, SEND, financial and welfare support.

The effective promotion, training, resources and strategies in place for the community has ensured that pupils, their families and staff understand the importance of positive mental health and

wellbeing and are able to ask for help, look after their own and others wellbeing and improve resilience. The support given to parents and pupils is exceptional, with staff going above and beyond to break down barriers and establish trusting relationships.

The school has continued to provide a wide range of activities and opportunities for the whole school that support wellbeing, highly trained staff, support systems, robust provision and monitoring of strategies, policies, action plans and interventions. Outstanding community links, partnerships, collaboration, sharing good practice and stakeholder voice are further strengths of the school.

The pupils are delightful, kind, happy, respectful and engaged in learning, the unconditional love and care they receive from the passionate staff, is considered to be a contributing factor. The school has drawn together the threads that connect all the different work done and aspirations, and is able to demonstrate positive change in children, parents and staff. The school understands the importance of looking after the whole schools' mental health and wellbeing, and how this supports children to feel heard, loved, safe, happy, secure, included, connected, valued, and celebrated, enabling them to thrive, shine and achieve.

Impact:

The stakeholder questionnaire comparison of results demonstrated impact in all areas.

Investment in staff wellbeing, training and professional development has resulted in staff valuing the importance of managing their own wellbeing and reduced workload, which has further strengthened staff's sense of belonging, pride, motivation and job satisfaction.

Whole school promotion, activities, programmes and training in wellbeing and mental health has increased whole school community awareness and removed the stigma attached to mental health. This has resulted in people having open conversations, recognising their feelings, confident in asking for support or supporting themselves and others, using a range of regulation techniques, contributing to improved confidence, wellbeing, resilience and enjoyment in learning. This has led to a shared responsibility and ownership that promotes and empowers everyone to take responsibility of their own and others wellbeing and mental health.

Staff have increased understanding of mental health, are confident to talk about their own mental health and are implementing emotion coaching techniques. Staff are confident in recognising the factors that affect their children and family's mental health and know how to refer for support to ensure that children and their families receive support quickly, preventing escalation of mental health issues.

The welcoming, inclusive, caring, happy, positive and nurturing culture and ethos of the school, trusting relationships and effective partnerships across the whole school community has ensured that children, families and staff feel safe, supported, secure and happy. The whole school team at St Mary's Church of England Primary School work passionately to make a positive difference to the lives of all the pupils, parents and staff.

The wellbeing vision is firmly embedded, prioritising whole school community mental health and wellbeing, investment in passionate and nurturing staff, creative curriculum including PSHE, SEND provision, informal and formal support, robust monitoring systems and targeted interventions. This has resulted in all pupils, including those with additional educational, wellbeing and mental health needs, being provided with a safe space and for interventions to be delivered, enabling their needs to be met. This has promoted confidence in children's ability to talk openly about their feelings, to

manage their own mental health, and to support each other, demonstrating developments in their social and emotional skills and resilience, enabling young people to thrive, shine and achieve. St Mary's Church of England Primary School is a safe haven for every member of the school community, where everyone experiences a sense of belonging and has the opportunity to shine.

Areas for development:

Consider introducing the online 'Zumos' wellbeing checks, zones of regulation or 'My Happy Mind'.

As already highlighted by the school, further develop a therapeutic environment and sensory garden to promote a trauma informed approach.

Wellbeing team to complete the free Place2Be online Mental Health Champion training/equivalent and perhaps introducing a termly staff wellbeing buddy role.

As already highlighted by the school, continue to strengthen parental engagement. Promote parental feedback from coffee mornings, training, meetings and workshops via the effective school newsletter.

As already highlighted by the school, update the school vision statement with all stakeholders.

As already highlighted by the school, fund the Wellbeing Lead role full time. Ensure the Wellbeing Lead has ring fenced time for supervision/reviewing of case load.

Subject to funding, consider becoming a specialist provision school.

Verifier recommendation:

I am delighted to recommend that St Mary's Church of England Primary School retain the Wellbeing Award for Schools for a further period of three years.

Head teacher comments:

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