

# Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS)

## Verification Report

**School name:** Fairfield First School

**School address and postcode:** B619 LZ

**School telephone:** 01527873081

**School website:** <http://www.fairfield.worcs.sch.uk/>

**Head teacher:** Mr Scott Smith

**Head teacher's email:** sds51@fairfield.worcs.sch.uk

**WAS coordinator:** Clare Thurston

**WAS coordinator's email:** cet47@fairfield.worcs.sch.uk

**Date of verification:** 04 June 2019

**Award verifier:** Grace Kew

### **Award advisor (if applicable):**

#### **Commentary on the evidence provided in the portfolio:**

- The portfolio of evidence produced represents an evidence base that reflects a school with a real commitment to the wellbeing of all its stakeholders.
- In addition to the stakeholder evaluations, the school used a range of other methods to collect information from stakeholders. As a consequence, leaders were well informed about the views of all.
- Evidence presented in the folders was very good at demonstrating the school's existing culture of promoting the wellbeing of staff and pupils through a wide range of strategies, activities and provision and how this has merged in with the WAS Award.
- Leaders have carefully monitored progress towards the award and reviewed their action plan frequently.

#### **Strengths identified in the review:**

##### **Leadership & Management:**

- The WAS framework has been used as a diagnostic tool and implemented via the Action Plan and SDP. This is clearly reflected via the school's ongoing monitoring and evaluating systems in place.
- The outside environment offers a wide range of opportunities for pupils to experience and engage in activities to promote their wellbeing and mental health such as the sensory garden, pond, 'friendship' bench, huts, Forest school, gardening, and the 'wellbeing willow'.
- It is very clear that WAS is an integral part of the existing school vision, which is based on promoting confidence, expressing emotions, maintaining positive relationships, coping and managing stresses, and being happy. This is evident through feedback gained from a range of stakeholders.
- The leadership team has involved the staff across the school resulting in a whole school community which has "ownership" of the award. As a staff confirmed, "I am responsible for the nurture and communication groups and ensure that I include activities to help develop the children's self-esteem".
- The governors are passionate about promoting emotional wellbeing and mental health, and they are well informed about progress towards achieving the WAS strategy. This is evident through the commitment and expectations of

governors. As she expressed, “Governors have access to the wellbeing journal, they are updated on strategies that are implemented, come into school for ‘wellbeing’ walks, look at displays and speak to children”.

- Governors are informed about the effectiveness of the strategies employed by the school. The governor was very confident in articulating how the strategy has successfully supported the delivery of the Wellbeing Award and future plans for development. As she stated, “We have a ‘wellbeing’ governor and staff are given extra time to complete work within school time”.
- Fairfield is a school where the wellbeing of its’ stakeholders is at the heart of all that they do. Because of this, the whole school community feel highly valued and involved.

### **Pupils:**

- PSHE is a fundamental subject that is central to the school’s ethos. The delivery of wellbeing and mental health is currently supported through the school’s creative curriculum, and Growth Mindset.
- Pupils have been given opportunities to contribute towards the strategy via assemblies, Nurture groups, Wellbeing Wednesdays, School Council, Wellbeing Worriers, and as part of the ‘Change Team’. Because of this, they have ownership of implementing and embedding the WAS strategy into their day-to-day school life.
- The pupils have access to a wide range of extra-curricular activities and support strategies for their emotional wellbeing and mental health such as yoga, walking a mile, Forest School, and, mindfulness sessions, mindful colouring, art, and gardening. These all have a very positive impact on their wellbeing and mental health. This is evident as you walk around the school and from feedback gained from the pupil stakeholders. As one of the pupils stated, “I like to lie down and ‘cloud’ watch when I need to relax”.
- Pupils’ are provided with opportunities to talk about how they are feeling. Some classes have access to a ‘worry monster’, worry books, ‘Garden of Greatness’ flowers, Proud Cloud, ‘Marvellous Me’ boxes, learning Pit and interest boards. As a result, they feel happy and confident around school and know who to speak to. As they expressed, “We tell the teacher when we are worried about something”.

### **Staff:**

- Staff are very well supported by the leadership team and have access to a range of support mechanisms such as external counselling, occupational therapist, coaching, and dedicated time to write reports during school hours. As a result, they feel valued and confident to share their worries and concerns around wellbeing and mental health. As the staff put it, “Scott is aware of our workload and is very good at supporting us and recognising our efforts – which he expresses via a thank-you email to staff every Friday. “Because of this staff feel confident to open up about what is troubling them.
- Training on wellbeing and mental health has been provided to staff and those that are responsible for leading on Mental Health across the school. Because of this, they feel confident in supporting the implementation of the WAS strategy and feel more able to spot any signs, symptoms and risk factors associated with poor mental health of all the stakeholders.
- The staff team work together effectively and support each other. The shared values of the staff team are clearly evident. As they expressed, “We are a really close staff, we socialise a lot, have a WhatsApp group, and know we can go to SLT or each other for support”.

### **Parents:**

- Parents feel that staff are very approachable, and the school is very welcoming. As a result, they feel secure and supported by the school. In the words of one parent, “We go straight to the teacher, and if they don’t have time, they will always make time”.
- The families’ wellbeing and mental health is further supported via participation in outreach services such as the ‘Wellbeing’ Wednesday, Cinema Night, and coffee mornings. Because of this they feel supported by the school.

**Impact:**

- The wellbeing of the stakeholders has been a key priority even before the school embarked upon working towards achieving the award. A culture of care, and positive mental health has resulted in a team whose morale is high and a staff who are very proud of their school.
- The school is a very welcoming, nurturing and happy school. It is an organised and very effective learning environment. The highest standards of the leaders and staff are reflected in all areas of the school.
- The school has supported the pupils in being able to talk about their feelings. Pupils therefore feel safe to share their worries and concerns with the adults in school and know who to go to for help.
- The whole school community is keen to continue working towards promoting and embedding a culture where talking about emotional wellbeing and mental health is completely eradicated.
- As a result of working towards the WAS award, leaders and staff have a clear view of their effective practice and how they wish to develop this even further.

**Areas for development:**

- Ensure that the strategy for emotional wellbeing and mental health is consistently evaluated and any actions identified addresses the needs of all the stakeholder groups. This must also be explicitly reflected into the relevant sections of your SDP.
- Ensure that specific questions referring to staff wellbeing and mental health are explicitly included as part of staff appraisal to ensure that wellbeing is routinely addressed.
- Explore different ways in which you can engage parents in contributing effectively to the wellbeing strategy and understand what the wellbeing strategy is about.
- Further develop a website directory or list of trusted online resources which provides signposts to appropriate policies, information, services and support on emotional wellbeing and mental health for ALL stakeholders to access.
- Consider investing in the 'Jigsaw' Curriculum for 'The Mindful Approach to PSHE as this will provide the school with a valuable resource that will ensure a consistent approach across the school.

**Verifier recommendation:**

Fairfield First School should be awarded the Wellbeing Award for Schools for a period of three years.

**Head teacher comments:**

We are very proud of the work that we do in school around the Health and Wellbeing of not only our children but that of our parents and staff too. The achievement of this award is down to the enthusiasm and hard work of our staff team and their desire to give our children the necessary skills to play an active role in an ever changing world.

May we use your comments on our website and/or publicity material? **Yes/No.**