

Mrs Jane Wainwright
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The Health and Wellbeing Service
Children and Families Dept
Leeds City Council

Date: 30th November 2023

Healthy Schools Status external validation visit

Dear Mrs Wainwright

Thank you for inviting me to re-validate Healthy Schools Status at your school on the 13th of November 2023. I had a valuable experience talking to parents, pupils, and staff. Please convey my thanks to everyone who made the visit so enjoyable.

I can confirm that the validation was successful and am therefore pleased to inform you that St. Bartholomew's Primary School now holds Externally Validated Healthy Schools Status. It now also holds PSHE, School Food, Active Schools, and MindMate Friendly Status.

The decision was based on information and evidence from a variety of sources, including the school's self-validation using the School Health Check, secondary sources, pre-assessment paperwork and meeting and a timetable of interviews for both PSHE and SEMH (social, emotional, mental health) themes. Interviews took place with a range of stakeholders including the senior leadership team, parents, governors, teachers and non-teaching staff and a wide range of pupils.

Strengths:

General:

- Everyone is warm and welcoming at this school. The school is very much about everyone and is extremely pupil-focused and inclusive.
- The pupils I met were happy, confident, articulate, polite, friendly and demonstrated a good knowledge and understanding of health and wellbeing.
- There is strong leadership of Healthy Schools and there is a commitment to ensuring that everything that has been put into place is embedded and sustainable going forward.
- The organisation and good communication ahead of the external validation visit meant that everything ran smoothly during the visit which was really appreciated.
- The consistent use of the MHMS Survey. 259 pupils completed the MHMS Survey in June 2023, and this is completed year on year, giving a real insight into the needs of the pupils and using this to inform developments and planning.
- The school has good communication channels with parents.

- There is a very thorough Healthy Schools action plan in place across all four areas which demonstrates a clear commitment to continuing development.
- The quick guides for parents are an easy and digestible way for parents to get relevant information around various aspects of school policy and practice.
- The school website is up to date and makes great use of photos. All parents spoken to on the day commented on how they use the website to find out any information they need.
- Staff have fostered a fantastic team ethos, are very supportive of each other, friendly, happy, approachable and know their pupils and families well, which ensures everyone feels valued.

Personal, Social, Health Education (PSHE):

- PSHE has a high profile in the school, with strong leadership. The school has worked hard to ensure there is a consistent, whole school approach to PSHE and assessment and this is clearly working as staff and pupils spoke very confidently about the curriculum.
- PSHE has designated time in the curriculum and is delivered to all pupils for 1 hour per week, which again demonstrates the high profile of the subject in school.
- There is a clear, planned approach for PSHE which ensures teachers are clear on their expectations and feel confident in their delivery.
- PSHE is needs led and proactive, using the My Health, My School (MHMS) Survey data to shape the long-term plan but it is also reactive, with extra lessons often being delivered to meet specific needs of each class or local need e.g., knife crime, gangs.
- Monitoring, evaluating, and assessing of PSHE is regular and thorough and in line with other subjects.
- There is consistent, effective use of pre- and post-assessments across school within PSHE.
- All children spoken to on the day were very clear on what PSHE is and could recall examples of learning from PSHE lessons.
- Staff feel well supported to deliver PSHE and have received relevant training.

Healthy Eating:

- Take up of free school meals is consistently high and was at 100% this year and 97% last year, showing the work the school does to support families to access their entitlement.
- The enthusiasm, passion and commitment shown by the Healthy Eating Lead drives forward change and a positive ethos towards nutrition.
- The school demonstrates several examples of best practice in consistency to healthy food across the school day such as discouraging sweets at birthdays and working with visitors to ensure they understand the school's policy in relation to using high fast/sugar food as rewards.
- The school proactively links with external agencies to support healthy eating and wellbeing such as Leeds Rhinos, The Classroom Kitchen, and the HENRY programme.
- The School Food Policy is well written, comprehensive, and put into practice as a part of school life, with the aim of improving healthier choices.
- Pupil voice is strong, and the School Food Ambassadors act as group of young people to influence change. They work in partnership with school catering and provide recommendations to improve school food, which, where possible, are acted upon by school.

- Lunchtimes are calm, well organised, relaxed and make a positive contribution to pupils' wellbeing and behaviour. Pupils can sit with friends and those who eat a school meal can sit with their peers who eat a packed lunch.
- The lunch menu is varied, balanced and culturally appropriate.
- Overall, the school has a positive ethos towards healthy food and there is a clear and consistent whole school approach, supported by staff and leadership.

Physical Activity:

- The Physical Education (PE) section of the website celebrates the experiences of the children through photos and videos which is great and there is some important information included on the page.
- The long-term plan for PE is good and provides a balance of activities with a focus on skills needed to play a range of sports.
- PE is clearly valued in school and a clear policy has been put in place.
- There is a clear strategy in place to provide extra-curricular opportunities for children guided by pupil voice.
- All staff deliver across school which gives consistency in delivery.
- The sports premium document is extremely detailed, one of the best I have seen.
- The outside area is great with lots of opportunities to be physically active.
- The opportunity provided for all pupils in year 5 and 6 to go swimming for two years.
- The targeted clubs which are offered and the opportunity for all pupils to go mountain biking and ice skating.

Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH):

- SEMH is high on the agenda and the school has worked hard to provide a good universal provision for mental health, including consistent delivery of the MindMate and mental health lessons as well as an additional 30-minute SEMH lesson each week for all pupils.
- All children spoken to were very clear on what bullying is and what to do if they saw it happening. They all agreed that bullying didn't really happen at this school and if it did, it would be sorted out quickly.
- There is an extensive range of in-house interventions available to support pupils with varying aspects of their SEMH.
- The two adult Youth Mental Health First Aiders in school offer daily drop-in sessions for Year 5 & 6 pupils. This is an excellent provision which is clearly valued by the pupils.
- All children spoken to said that the ask-it-baskets and worry monsters in place in each class really support them as they know there is always someone to talk to and that they will be listened to.
- Parents feel comfortable approaching the school when they, or their children, are experiencing difficulties and know that they as parents, alongside the child, will be supported. They also reported that the Headteacher is very approachable and visible around school, as are all the staff at the start and end of the day. They find all this support invaluable.
- Staff wellbeing is high, and staff all reported feeling fully supported by the leadership team with various examples of support given including the use of the staff pulse survey and the support from the dedicated wellbeing team.
- Relationships between staff and pupils, parents and staff and staff are really nurtured here and the open-door policy for all stakeholders supports this.

- The SEMH lessons linked to the school attributes really embed these values and help the children to have a deeper understanding of what they mean in practice.

Quotes from the visit:

Pupils:

'I like the PE we do in school because we do different sports in different terms.'

'We go to Mission Out which is physical activity with high ropes and climbing and it builds your courage there.'

'Swimming at school is beneficial because if we were in a river then we need to learn how to swim. We learn lifesaving skills.'

'We have an SEMH lesson every week and we say what we liked and disliked about the week.'

'If I saw bullying happening, I would tell the teacher. You could also tell the MindMate Ambassadors or talk to Miss Lawson or Mr Needham.'

'We have an emotion board, and you could point to how feeling. Some people have a stress ball to help with anger or a stress toy to help them calm down.'

'You feel like you are able to talk to staff and can say what you want to say. We can say the whole the problem.'

In RE we celebrate differences and if don't know that religion, then sometimes pupils in our class tell us about the religion if it is their religion.'

'If you don't want to talk, then you can put it in the ask it basket. She (the teacher) will then read it out loud, and if someone wants to say who wrote it they can and she will explain how to help.'

'We learn about the school attributes like ambition, courage etc. and what they mean and how we can be like that.'

'In SEMH and PSHE you get the confidence to speak up in front of people and if you're not confident to speak up, that's fine but you can if you want. You learn things you don't know.'

The best thing about this school is:

'The teachers and the food.'

'The school plays because they are fun to join in with.'

'Reading; I like the new library.'

'The clubs after school because it gives you a chance to learn and also, I really like football, so it gives me a chance to play more football.'

'I like learning about Human Rights in PSHE.'

Staff:

'The general culture of the staff is looking after each other.'

'The ask it baskets get used really well, especially during puberty topics. They have been really good, and puberty is one of my favourite topics to teach.'

'You, Me and PSHE makes it easier. We make changes to the sessions and do one off sessions too if we need to.'

'We have had training for RSE, and the children are really mature.'

'I think the PE lessons are really good and MUGA makes it much easier.'

'Year 3 and 4 will have an intervention club too called health and wellbeing. The kids really enjoyed it and are now more engaged and more positive in lessons.'

'PSHE has always had quite a high profile in school but since the change of leadership the profile has increased because in the past it couldn't impose on other subjects but now there

is the appreciation and acknowledgement of the fact that if PSHE isn't right, then staff won't be able to teach other subjects.'

'School is a much calmer place.'

'The intent of the curriculum and the attributes all meshes. If SEMH isn't right, then the academic isn't right.'

'The children use what they learn in PSHE throughout their life in school.'

'Because the safeguarding team are part of PSHE, they realise the impact of how PSHE and safeguarding go hand in hand.'

'SEMH becomes a natural part of school life and has a positive effect on the children and their learning.'

The best thing about this school is:

'The kids because they've got such an array of personalities and characters.'

'The staff because it's a community and we all back each other and help each other. We can always go to another unit, and they will help you out.'

'The ethos is getting better with parents, and they can speak to us now. Everyone is backing each other, and we are all on same page.'

'The parents are so grateful for what we do at school.'

'The children appreciate what we do and they want to learn.'

'PE obviously. I am not in class on a Tuesday, and I just get to take children out and do sport and the children love it. The children get really excited about extracurricular clubs. The clubs are free as we use the sports premium funding, so the children get the opportunities.'

'The caring nature of the teachers. Children leave our school better than they came. We produce well rounded, nice children and the children feel cared for and loved.'

'Children feel safe and know what they can and can't do. We all know our children and so does the headteacher.'

'Every teacher goes above and beyond because that's the kind of staff we get.'

Parents and Governors:

'It's nice that the teachers notice what the kids are eating; they take an interest.'

'We were consulted on the packed lunches. Just having some guidance has helped and now all the children have got similar in their lunch boxes.'

'With birthdays children now can't bring in unhealthy items and that is fine as it takes the pressure off and the cost of it and I prefer it. It is one less financial concern.'

'If there any safeguarding concerns, the school is on it immediately; I was so impressed.'

'The school has set up the Year 5 & 6 drop ins at lunch times so they all know they can go and talk to someone. Lower down the school they do nurture groups. There has been a big push as of late on SEMH and I am very supportive of that as a governor. It is another extension of how staff are always thinking about how we can do better and involve the children in that too.'

'My Nana used to work at the school, and she passed away this year and the school supported with breaking the news to my child and they supported me too as a parent. It felt like a family away from the family because the Nana was known at the school. I can always find support here.'

'In 15 years, I have never come across bullying here. With the school being so diverse, there isn't much room for them to see anyone different from them. They don't have room to think about that because they are so used to being around different cultures.'

'The children are so proud to be pupils here and so happy here.'

'With SLT being visible on a morning, it gives parents the opportunity to raise concerns. The headteacher is always floating about outside and she is very friendly; she is there for you.'
'The school is brilliant.'

The best thing about this school is:

'I can't fault the school as a school. I came here and really enjoyed it. We all thoroughly enjoyed the school. I always knew I wanted to send my children here. It is more inclusive and diverse.'

'It is multicultural and that's my main thing. But when my eldest went to secondary, she suffered bullying which was such a difference.'

'The most important thing is that school feels like a beacon. There is a generational element. I have fond memories of being here and that's what is the most important thing and that drives the governing body here.'

'They do a really good job of letting children be who they want to be and let them shine. The teachers do gather feedback to see if something has gone well. I just love it.'

'They do a lot for parents too, there are a lot of courses. Some of the classes are ones we chose like the cooking class.'

'It is a community, the school. They involve the parents with and without the children. You know who the teachers are.'

'I have never had an issue and I've been doing this run for over 15 years.'

'I will be gutted when my child leaves.'

Thank you once again to all concerned who took part in the re-validation process and for making me feel so welcome on the day. I wish you every future success and look forward to supporting you as you continue to embed whole school health processes and move onto the Health Champion Model.

Yours sincerely

The Health & Wellbeing Service