

Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS)

Reassessment Report

School name:	<input type="text" value="Newfield School"/>
School address and postcode:	<input type="text" value="Old Bank Lane, Blackburn, BB1 2PW"/>
School telephone:	<input type="text" value="01254 588 600"/>
School website:	<input type="text" value="www.newfield.org.uk"/>
Head teacher:	<input type="text" value="Rachel Kay"/>
Award coordinator:	<input type="text" value="Jennifer Riley"/>
Award verifier:	<input type="text" value="Dr Helen Mills"/>
Date of reassessment:	<input type="text" value="18/04/24"/>

Commentary on the mini-portfolio of evidence:

The detailed portfolio of evidence and presentation delivered by Jennifer Riley (Award Coordinator) and Rachel Kay (Head Teacher) demonstrated in detail how the passionate wellbeing teams and staff have addressed the areas for development from the previous verification and achieved the award framework objectives. The school 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 this wonderful school.

Since the last verification, the school has experienced many challenges and changes in Headship. The current Head Teacher, in collaboration with her team, has introduced an aspirational school vision, values and strategy that demonstrates commitment and a thorough understanding of the latest evidence and practice to improve staff, student, family and community mental health, placing wellbeing at the heart of everything they do.

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 family, calm, positivity, happiness, fun, love, community spirit and aspiration. It was clear to see the interpersonal, caring, respectful and trusting relationships between staff, pupils and parents, demonstrating a family atmosphere where everyone knows and supports each other. Children were engaged and encouraged in learning, calm, happy, safe, nurtured and the members of the student council who showed me round the school communicated confidently, displayed exemplary behaviour, were polite, and demonstrated independence, respect and kindness.

The school environment is communication friendly, warm, clean, spacious, positive, calm, and promotes sensory integration and the use of PECS. Wellbeing, class charters, class targets, all about me, curriculum intent, wellbeing warriors, random acts of kindness, 5 ways to wellbeing, rights respecting schools steering group, school council, children's challenges and achievements, fundraising, wellbeing support and positivity were displayed throughout school.

The outdoor learning spaces and environment are outstanding, engaging, inclusive and were being used extensively. There are numerous areas which students can access for calm time or reflection as well as the library social areas, corridor areas for movement breaks and breakout spaces. Targeted interventions and support are provided in the hydro pool, two immersive sensory rooms, challenging Autism therapy room and outdoor gym, sensory room swings, move therapy sessions and in school nursing clinic.

The staff room is calming, spacious, relaxing and showcases staff shout outs and action for happiness is displayed. There is a separate area for PPA, a quiet area on the balcony and breakout spaces. There is also a parent calm area and information and sign posting board and a Family Wellbeing Coordinator room.

Commentary on discussions with stakeholders:

The students I met were able to articulate confidently their knowledge of emotions, mental health and wellbeing, described many activities they do to regulate their emotions, the life skills they learn, the activities they participate in to develop their independence, trusted adults who support them and peers who help each other, and the immense care, happiness and sense of belonging they experience in school.

Students commented, "I like staff; they're nice. Best thing in the sensory room is the lights and colours; we get to relax. It's a happy school. I like doing maths. I like lunch time; the nice food and chilling with friends. I like lunch time clubs like singing. I like going to the swimming pool. I like to do things by myself. I am safe in school. To help my wellbeing I like football and boxing and crochet for my anger. At the residential I liked the swings, slides and bouncy castle. My favourite thing is cooking pizza and cooking staff lunch and with the money we made we're going bowling and Nando's today. In RRSA we help poor people. In school council we do about wellbeing and it's good. We are buddies and go into classes and help the little ones. We do take over day and I've been the Head Teacher. We choose a job to do and I organised the cleaning".

The committed and highly skilled staff at this school go above and beyond what is expected of them to ensure children and their families flourish, this is balanced by the significant drive placed on employee engagement to continue to improve staff wellbeing. Staff support each other extremely well and feel part of a supportive team. Staff value the Head Teacher, Wellbeing Lead and SLT, specifically, their leadership, autonomy, trust and the importance they place on everyone's wellbeing. Staff appreciate the changes introduced including the staff forums, wellbeing check ins, training, improved communication, and the range of support they receive from SLT, the Wellbeing Warriors and Family Wellbeing Coordinators and each other. Staff genuinely care for every child, their families and each other.

The Governor commented, "Wellbeing is embedded in the Head Teacher report and meetings and we are given the information. Blown away with the Head Teachers knowledge and understanding of wellbeing and the importance of staff wellbeing to help the children's wellbeing. Pupil wellbeing is really important; if they're not settled, they can't learn. The Family Wellbeing Coordinators presented their work and we were really impressed, they have meaning and purpose; they're two

really enthusiastic characters who have great relationships with staff, parents and pupils. The holistic and person-centred approach is genuine and focuses on the psychological safety of everybody involved. Staff forums are really beneficial, and they feel heard; it's important for staff morale. The passion to make sure everyone is OK; there's conversations on every level. They understand behaviour is the children's communication and the zones of regulation are embedded in the culture; development and understanding of emotions, PSED and cultural capital link to wellbeing. Effective recording systems are in place and signposting to outside agencies, CAF's and Early Helps".

Staff commented, "We want to be here with the children. We make sure the children are happy and safe; there's great intent. Check in feelings encourages the students to identify their feelings and we do it too and the children are doing it themselves. We are trauma informed and understand that we need to regulate to educate. Rachel has given us permission to change seating arrangements to help the children regulate. We're hoping to have three Thrive Practitioners. The children are the best thing. Staff morale is fantastic; we support each other as a team and keep each other going; we know if someone's not right. Leadership are responsive to people's needs and are approachable; they are here for us, empathetic and approachable. Staff forum helps us to communicate and you can bring someone with you for support. Wellbeing breakfasts are good to mix and get to know each other; it's a nice atmosphere. We get termly chippy dinners and pies. New staff have support buddies. I struggled with my mental health and everyone helped and supported me and I don't fear speaking up. We all get mental health and can spot when someone isn't OK; the Wellbeing Warriors helped me. The Wellbeing Warriors are mental health 1st aid trained and we deliver inset days. Jenny sends us loads of mental health and wellbeing training, monthly positive quotes and the happiness calendar. The silent fairies leave us gifts and make us feel better. We have amazing staff. We all bounce off each other. We are one big happy family".

Collaboration with outside agencies and the local community, providing in school nursing and clinics continue to be outstanding, reducing family stress and ensuring the children and their families receive the best care, support, opportunities and respite.

The Family Wellbeing Coordinators and outside agencies commented, "The Disability Team, Apple Trees respite and the Family Wellbeing Coordinators meet weekly and complete respite referrals, child in need meetings and reviews and we run a sibling holiday group; the children get to share their similar experiences and the attention is just on them and parents appreciate it. Newfield use Apple Trees facilities weekly and the children have fun; we use the same approach and parents know we work in collaboration. Families say Apple Trees is an extension of our family; it's reassurance for them having that circle of support. Having the Family Wellbeing Coordinators as the main contact makes it easy to share information. Collaboration is outstanding and we have close relationships; the families are at the centre and we make things better for them and we do direct work. Parents are comfortable to talk to us about issues. We are great advocates for each other's service. We're not judgemental. We organise regular coffee mornings and we leave them to it, people from the dads and lad's sessions said it's a breath of fresh air. We have informal and formal coffee mornings including transition into adult social care, invite school nurses and speech and language who complete referrals; it's reassuring for the parents. We're still in touch with families whose children have passed away; we become a family".

Yet again, parental praise for the staff and the child and family support they provide, was exceptional, with trusting relationships, listening, caring, breaking down barriers, advocating, clear communication, the introduction of the Family Wellbeing Coordinators and sharing strategies playing a key role. Parents have many opportunities to be part of the school community, including

accessing coffee mornings, wellbeing workshops, outside agency links, all of which have further strengthened the sense of belonging, referred to as family.

Parents commented, "I wanted my son to be around these people [staff]; they're all so happy. We get a lot of support; they've been there when I need it. She can't wait to come to school. If you ring, they get back to you. Coffee mornings are great, we meet other parents who understanding and share things; it's like a family. Dads and lads helped me to open up and it's nice to socialise, you feel that people are going through the same things as you and they reassure you, it helped me to come to terms with my child's disability and it's good to express yourself. When he's here [at school], he's really happy; the communication book/app lets us know what they are doing. I can't praise them [staff] enough; it's the peace of mind, outstanding communication and trust. They will ring and ask your advice. I'll be broken hearted when she leaves. You're welcome, you're understood, you're not a burden. It's a family. It's a special place. They work with the problem and ask how can we help you? I can see how happy she is; you can see it in her face. They love coming to school on the bus. For your child to come home happy is such a delight. Definitely see progress, she's potty trained now, becoming independent and I'm proud I've accepted it. School was a major factor in calming me and being positive. She understands PECS, now, next and finished, and she now holds my hand and gives me hugs. They ask are you OK? They guide and tell you you're doing a great job. The staff are high quality; they are learning. We work together. They care for you as a family".

Strengths identified during reassessment:

The Head Teacher and Deputy Head Teacher/Wellbeing Lead have demonstrated outstanding leadership, passion and drive, these skills and qualities have ensured that mental health and wellbeing is a priority for everyone and embedded across the whole school community.

The caring, positive, respectful, kind, giving and nurturing ethos of the school, alongside the newly developed vision and employee engagement strategy are central in creating a shift in culture, and is further strengthening the sense of community, connection and shared responsibility, referred to during the visit as 'family'. Throughout the award reassessment, Newfield School has demonstrated continued and innovative progress to support and improve the wellbeing and mental health of the whole school community.

Whole school community promotion of mental health and wellbeing and targeted interventions are highly effective. The PSED curriculum is effective and includes signposting to wellbeing. Furthermore, the PSED teacher has been awarded TLRs, demonstrating the importance placed on delivering this subject.

The indoor and outdoor learning spaces and environment, alongside access to community spaces provide outstanding opportunities for children to regulate, develop and achieve life skills.

Staff training in mental health and wellbeing is high quality and has included coaching for SLT, regulate to educate, zones of regulation, Thrive, trauma and mental health first aid. The appointment of the Head Teacher with extensive understanding of emotional regulation, two Family Wellbeing Coordinators, the Wellbeing Warriors and the continuation of the Wellbeing Lead role, demonstrates the school's commitment to drive forward wellbeing. Staff wellbeing is a priority and now includes a wellbeing induction for new staff, a staff forum, improvements to appraisals, employee assist, counselling, staff shout outs, staff social get togethers, wellbeing check ins, a drive on employee engagement and the wellbeing coordinator sends regular wellbeing information and training.

Students have an active voice in school life and participate with pride in the Rights, Respecting schools Award and School Council.

The school has continued to work proactively to further develop parental engagement including hosting coffee mornings, dads and lads' sessions and wellbeing workshops, health and care clinics and referrals, effective communication, social media, wellbeing newsletters, school website signposting for support including mental health, financial and welfare support. The Family Wellbeing Coordinators provide effective promotion, support, workshops, reviews, resources and strategies for the community and has ensured that children and their families understand the importance of positive mental health and wellbeing and are able to ask for help, look after their own and others wellbeing, reducing stress and improving resilience. The support given to parents and children is exceptional, with staff going above and beyond to break down barriers and establish trusting relationships. Furthermore, outstanding community links, partnerships, collaboration and stakeholder voice remain strengths of the school.

Collaboration with the LA emotional health and wellbeing pilot project and the introduction of a mental health support team worker providing direct work with children in school demonstrates continued commitment to further improve in this area of work.

The students are delightful, kind, happy, respectful and engaged in learning in this magical, safe school. The unconditional love and care they receive from the passionate staff at Newfield School, 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, connected, valued, and celebrated, enabling them to thrive, shine and achieve.

Impact:

Newfield School achieved all the areas for development highlighted in the first Wellbeing for Schools verification report and more.

Effective leadership, the new school vision, values and strategy, investment in staff wellbeing and employee engagement has led to a shift in culture that facilitates autonomy, communication, reflection, challenge, teamwork, solution focus, growth, purpose and confidence whilst promoting a sense of belonging and psychological safety for everyone. This has resulted in staff valuing the importance of managing their own wellbeing, communicating confidently and has further strengthened staff's sense of belonging, pride, motivation and job satisfaction.

Whole school promotion, effective communication, 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 staff, students and parents having open conversations, recognising their feelings, confident in asking for support or supporting themselves and others, using a range of regulation techniques, contributing to improvements in student's regulation of emotions, wellbeing, happiness, confidence, 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 awareness and understanding of mental health and are confident to talk about their own mental health. Staff are confident in recognising the factors that affect their children and family's mental and physical health and provide outstanding support or refer for additional support to ensure that children and their families receive support promptly, preventing escalation of mental health issues.

The nurturing 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 Newfield School works passionately to make a positive and meaningful difference to the lives of all the pupils, parents and staff.

An embedded welcoming, caring, happy, positive school ethos that prioritises whole school community mental health and wellbeing, investment in passionate and nurturing staff, the outdoor and indoor learning spaces, a personalised curriculum including PSED with wellbeing topics built in, experiences and enrichment activities, social events, informal and formal support, outstanding collaboration with health and care providers and targeted interventions has resulted in all students, including those with additional 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 identify their emotions and co or self-regulate their emotions, and to support each other, demonstrating developments in their social and emotional skills, confidence, independence and resilience, enabling young people to thrive, shine and achieve. Newfield 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:

As already highlighted by the school, train additional staff on Trauma, review the Wellbeing Warriors role and provide dedicated time for them to be available, splitting roles for pupils and staff, continue the work on employee engagement, staff forums to become solution focused (e.g., staff to write down issue and provide a solution) and provide supervision coaching for class teams/peer support.

Consider developing a wellbeing hub for staff with the Wellbeing Warriors being available at specific times to hold wellbeing conversations and signpost to further support if needed (see attachment for ideas). Consider introducing termly supervision/coaching for the Wellbeing Warriors. Consider end of day/week debriefs for all staff, perhaps shortening Friday's contact time with children, so this can be achieved.

Consider piloting a staff wellbeing day/hour/morning/afternoon, this would be for staff teams to organise themselves.

Consider alternating staff breakfast days so that all staff can access them, perhaps an afterschool coffee and cake event.

Whole school staff to complete the following training; free Place2Be mental health champion, Sumo and Mind and Body Ready to Learn programme (Yoga/Mindfulness).

In line with the Employee Engagement strategy, introduce Coby's circle of control to staff.

Consider employing cover teachers/support workers to alleviate staff shortages.

Consider delivering parent workshops/coffee get togethers over weekends and evenings.

Verifier recommendation:

I am delighted to recommend that Newfield School retain the Wellbeing Award in Schools for a further period of three years.

Head teacher comments:

As a school we have reflected how the world has changed since Covid. Using a research informed approach we are supporting a deeper understanding of self and co regulation to empower our youngsters to have greater control over their internal and external world.

This is encapsulated in our 'Regulate to Educate' philosophy. This also applies equally to staff as well as students.

Our focus is ensuring wellbeing is part of a wider strategy to develop employee engagement which benefits all those involved in enriching the life of our amazing students and their families.

Whilst we acknowledge that culture and vision comes from strong leadership and a clear moral purpose we also feel that any effective community needs to take shared ownership to achieve this – thus empowering staff and pupils to have a voice and support change for personal and professional development.

We are a restless school and are constantly seeking to improve our offer for pupils, staff and their families.

We are excited about the next stage of our journey.

May we use your comment for website/marketing purposes? **Yes**