

The Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools

School Mental Health Award Final Assessment Validation

School: Wadebridge School

School Lead: Sion Williams

Coach/Verifier: Pam Weeden

Date: 20th June 2020

Competency	Statements as Assessed by the School
Leadership and Strategy	Excelling
Organisational structure and culture - staff	Excelling
Organisational structure and culture - pupils	Excelling
Support for staff	Excelling
Professional development and learning	Excelling
Support for pupils	Excelling
Working with parents and carers	Excelling
Working with external services	Excelling

Wadebridge School has presented a very strong profile of evidence that demonstrated they are excelling across all eight competencies of the School Mental Health Award. The school has used the framework and content of the Award to very good effect to further develop their mental health and wellbeing strategies, structures and practices from a strong starting point. The school began their journey through the Mental Health Award for Schools process with Pooky Knightsmith and completed the verification process with Pamela Weeden.

It is evident that the leadership within the school value mental health and wellbeing, and are active in identifying ways and opportunities to promote positive MHWB in staff. MHWB is embedded in school improvement and development planning as one of the school's three key strategic priorities; Governors play a key role in monitoring progress and impact, having the skills and knowledge to challenge leaders effectively. Emotional intelligence, self-awareness and resilience are key components of job descriptions whilst MHWB feature in staff development plans, ensuring that MHWB is linked to performance and support. The fact that MHWB is so well embedded into strategic planning and filters down into levels of operational planning means that it underpins decision making, development opportunities, curriculum development and the forward direction of the school. There is an extensive team of trained staff Health Champions in place who play a key role in leading on the development of policy and practice within the school; their roles are well embedded. The champions ensure MHWB is kept as a key focus area of



conversation within the staffroom and that the subject is included in staff meeting agendas. Staff have access to a range of activities to maintain and develop their physical, emotional, spiritual and mental selves; coaching is available along with space for reflective practice and broader systems such as returning to work following maternity/paternity leave and access to a nursery. MHWB is highly valued and a key driver for change; likewise, it is seen as a reason for good retention of staff. The school shows evidence of some innovative thinking, particularly in the field of flexible working.

Leaders are proactive in monitoring staff attendance data and intervening quickly where there are concerns or patterns; support is implemented with occupational health support being accessed where MH or stress related reasons for absence are cited. Pupil absence is equally robustly monitored and intervention is rapid. There are a high percentage of staff with part time contracts in school and leaders are keen to embrace innovative ways of working. Good partnerships with union representatives work towards ensuring staff wellbeing through exploring approaches to flexible working with some examples of strong impact for staff. Further to this, the school has been involved in research carried out by the NFER on part-time and flexible working, and has been identified as an example of good practice:

Chris Wilson, Business Manager at Wadebridge School in Cornwall, said: “For many years, Wadebridge School has embraced part-time and flexible working amongst its staff as a way of enabling them to strike, where possible, a better work-life balance. This has been something we have implemented at our school for a very long time. As a result, we have found that not only do we have a happier and healthier workforce but that there can be financial benefits to the school, for example reducing staffing costs.”

Leaders are quick to challenge use of flippant or derogatory language, which may cause an offense or encourage a stigma with respect to mental health and wellbeing; this extends to staff and children alike and is now a part of the culture of the school. The head provided an example of an individual who had referred to the term ‘OCD’ when describing something about their classroom and have been openly challenged in a staff meeting. Young people in school have the confidence to talk openly about their own lived experiences with mental health issues, share their views, set goals for themselves and challenge stigma. The work that the school has done means that MHWB is open and an overt part of what the school is all about. Staff and pupils alike have the language and confidence to discuss the subject with knowledge and confidence; systems are in place to offer support, continue to build knowledge and provide optimal conditions for further growth and development at quality first level and where specialist support is required. The school remains committed to ongoing growth and this award simply marks a milestone in a continuous journey.

With respect to pupil support, alongside academic development, the curriculum includes numerous opportunities for children to learn and refine character skills, resilience, and the ability to identify and articulate feeling and emotions. Further to this, resilience and character traits form part of the school’s award systems whilst MHWB form a regular part of the school’s assembly planning. There are layers of trained staff in school equipped to operate a range of strategies and work with pupils to support positive behaviour change as well as offer help and access to specialist support with issues relating to MHWB, including CAMHS. The school has an integrated Health Centre which acts as an on-site base for external agencies and those commissioned by the school. The student support team make prompt referrals to Early Help Hub, MARU, HeadStart Kernow, Kooth, and the school nurse, with almost all of the subsequent support taking place on school site. The impact of this is that intervention is quick and additional stress is avoided.

The school has recently developed a specialist facility, A3, which caters for pupils who for a variety of reasons are unable to cope in mainstream lessons. Whilst a referral process does need to be followed via



SLT, A3 is an option that is available to any pupil and there is flexibility in how it can be used; for some it may represent an option for some time out whilst for others there will be timetable adjustments to include some lessons delivered in A3. Therapeutic support is also available through A3 in the form of art and access to sensory equipment. The impact of the provision available through A3 has been that all children have made some progress back into mainstream classroom. The school is now involved in sharing the work they are doing through A3 nationally as a model of best practice and as a result of the success they are achieving.

I have no hesitation in recommending Wadebridge School for consideration to be awarded the Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools School Mental Health Award at Gold standard.

Pam Weeden
Assessor
School Mental Health Award
20th June 2020



Competency profiles provided by the school

Leadership and Strategy	
The school has a named senior lead for mental health of pupils and staff	Y
The school has a named Governor for mental health of pupils and staff	Y
Governors understand, embrace and lead the ethos and business case for a comprehensive mental health and wellbeing approach within the school	5
Governors hold school leaders to account for the mental health of staff and pupils	4
Senior Leaders develop and implement the strategies and structures needed to improve mental health in the school	5
Staff have mental health as a core part of their job description and role requirements	4
Leaders' performance management includes a focus relating to mental health	5
The school has a range of robust staff-focussed policies that support mental health which were developed in consultation with all staff groups and leaders and approved by Governors	5
The school has pupil-focussed policies that support good mental health that were developed in consultation with staff, pupils and parents and approved by governors.	4
Senior leaders use regular reports and updates including data about the mental health of staff and pupils to implement future actions, channel resources and commissioning external agencies	4

Organisational Structure & Culture - Staff	
The school is a positive working environment where staff feel safe and supported to be and do their best and to share concerns which affect their mental health	5
Leaders regularly consult with a range of employees from across the school to gain informal and formal feedback on stress-related issues and how to improve and support mental health and wellbeing	4
Communication protocols are well established and adhered to e.g. restrictions on unnecessary emailing in evenings, overnight and weekends	4
Workload expectations are made explicit and are well managed, such as marking & assessment, hours in school, working at home	4
Staff self-care is encouraged	5
Senior leaders model the expectations they have of all staff to promote good mental health	5
All staff in school are responsible for the health and wellbeing of themselves and promoting that of others	5
The norms of professional dialogue are developed and positive language is modelled and used by all staff	4
A culture of tolerance, trust and openness is developed	5
Stigma regarding mental health and support for individuals and groups is challenged	5
Job flexibility is supported where possible within a secure business case	5



Organisational Structure & Culture -Pupils	
The school values, acknowledges and utilises knowledge and expertise of staff, parents and professionals working with the school with regards to mental health and wellbeing	4
Strategies that promote and develop mental health and wellbeing are embedded in the curriculum and is designed to meet the needs of the pupils specific to their social and emotional needs and developmental age	5
The school has clear strategies which are understood by pupils, school staff and parents to support pupils whose mental health is a cause for concern	5
The school has clear strategies on how to support the mental health and wellbeing of pupils with special educational needs, disabilities, disadvantaged and vulnerable children	
The school ensures that pupils expressing concerns are listened to	5
The school has clear pathways and provisions available to discuss mental health concerns, managing student difficulties and create strategies with follow ups	4
Talk about mental health is normalised, any stigma is challenged by creating a culture of empathy and openness through an ongoing forum of discussion and exploration	5
The school promotes of positive and healthy relationships amongst pupils, staff and with parents	5
Pupils are engaged through encouraging pupil voice, authentic involvement in learning, decision making and peer-led approaches.	4

Support for Staff	
A comprehensive staff health and wellbeing offering supports staff mental health	5
The school consistently works towards reducing the stressors that affect staff mental health	5
School has clear pathways to staff support which are understood by all colleagues	4
Access to coaching and counselling is available and encouraged where deemed helpful	4
Staff are encouraged and supported to establish and participate in activities that foster good mental health and wellbeing, based on sound evidence of their impact	5
Successes are regularly acknowledged and celebrated	4



Professional Development & Learning	
The school has a proportion of staff trained in Mental Health First Aid for adults appropriate to the size of the staff cohort	5
The school lead for mental health and other key staff are trained in evidence-based, and preferably professionally accredited mental health and wellbeing training, appropriate to the age group of the pupils in their school	5
The school's named Governor for mental health has training which develops understanding of mental health and wellbeing in schools for pupils and staff and the role of the Governing Body in supporting good mental health	5
All Governors access professional development opportunities to develop their understanding skills in mental health linked to the role of the Governing Body	5
Staff CPD relating to pupil and staff mental health is aligned to clearly defined, expected outcomes which set out the mental health requirements for their role	4
All staff access professional development opportunities to develop their skills in pupil mental health and wellbeing	5
Staff are able to develop their understanding and practice in adult mental health, wellbeing and self-care through effective CPD opportunities and act as role models for pupils	4
Staff have access to information and have the opportunities to develop their practice in relation to new challenges posed by information technology and social media such as cyber bullying	5
All teaching and associate staff have been trained and have a broad understanding of mental health issues and promoting wellbeing in pupils appropriate to the age of the children in the school	4
NQTs and all new staff complete an induction programme which ensures they have the understanding and skills expected of all staff in the school with regards to mental health	4
All staff mental health CPD is underpinned by evidence and expertise, aligned to DfE CPD standards	4
Staff feel supported to take forward any new learning from training into their practice	5



Support for Pupils	
Mental health and wellbeing are embedded in the curriculum with supporting activities including assemblies, focus days, lessons and other events where mental health, wellbeing, social and emotional skills, attitudes and values are explicitly taught by well trained and enthusiastic teachers using positive, experiential and interactive methods and resources. This learning is integrated into the mainstream processes of school life	5
Pupil wellbeing is developed through implicit methods of teaching and learning such as: emotional literacy, character strengths, values, virtues, resilience and self-awareness	4
Relationships within the school are positive providing a nurturing, safe and supportive environment which creates a sense of belonging for pupils	5
Pupils understand and can express a range of emotions and are able to share their emotions and ask for help to support their emotional awareness	3
Pupils feel able to disclose incidence of bullying and any form of discriminatory behaviours, they feel their worries and concerns are heard, respected and taken seriously by staff	5
Staff respond wisely to 'challenging' behaviour, both responding actively with clear consequences and also understanding its deeper roots, taking opportunities to model and teach positive alternatives	4
Pupils know how to ask for support and this is followed up by staff	5
There are clear internal referral procedures, understood by all staff, to ensure timely and appropriate support is sourced and accessed for pupils in need	5
Evidence based mental health support services are provided and accessed which draw on a sound understanding of child and adolescent development, such as: drop ins, mentoring, coaching, counselling, pastoral support, mindfulness, self-awareness, empathy and resilience building interventions and wellbeing skills workshops group, peer support, mindfulness, self-awareness, empathy and resilience building interventions and wellbeing skills workshops	4
Where pupils experience mental health difficulties, clear plans and pathways to specialist support exist, using a coherent teamwork approach, including in the involvement of outside agencies such as CAMHS, school nurse or GP. Help is rooted within the school environment	4
Displays and posters provide various information on evidence based mental health support and how to improve wellbeing such as self-help booklets, library books and other media resources	4
Effective early intervention support is provided and evaluated	4
Physical activity and relaxation activities are on offer that improve wellbeing	5
If peer mentoring is used, those who serve as peer mentors have training and a support structure which they can use if needed	4
Pupils are involved in the design of mental health and wellbeing initiatives and are encouraged to give feedback and provide new ideas	4
Achievements and successes of students are recognised and celebrated	4



Working with Parents and Carers	
The school ensures a non-judgemental, warm and welcoming environment exists for parents/carers	5
Parents have access to school mental health and wellbeing policies	5
Effective relationships with parents/carers are fostered and maintained	5
The school is committed to continuously improving parental communication	5
Parents have access to staff or mental health professional/s if they have concerns about their child's mental health	4
Parents are encouraged to be actively involved in the life of the school	4
Parents are involved in interventions that supports their children's mental health and wellbeing	3
Any stigma shown by parents about mental health is handled sensitively yet firmly	4
The school provides learning, guidance and support for parents to help them:	4
The school has effective strategies in working with all parents/carers	4
Systems are in place that ensures parents/carers are regularly updated on their child's progress as well as any concerns that may exist	4
Parents share their views on how to develop the wellbeing of the school	3
Support, signposting and referrals are made for parents who require support with their own mental health or support in their relationships with their children	4

Working with External Stakeholders	
Staff understand the clear referral procedures to access timely external services appropriate to the needs of pupils with escalating or long term mental health difficulties	5
The school has developed strong links with CAMHS and other agencies ensuring regular two-way communication, support and guidance	5
School leaders are shaping local children's mental health policy and services	5
The school is up to date with new legislation and DfE guidance	5
The school is aware of local agencies and organisations which offer mental health support services	5
Specialist organisations work with the school to develop the mental health and wellbeing of staff, children and parents	5
The school is aware of and builds relationships with local community projects, voluntary organisations and networks	4
Due diligence is carried out prior to engaging any external agency / professional providing mental health services to pupils. This involves understanding the evidence base for their proposed work, their qualifications, recent training/CPD, obtaining references, knowledge of their professional body, their supervision structure (including the name and qualifications of their supervisor), who you should complain to regarding any concerns. In addition, the school will carry out their usual safeguarding checks	4
Comprehensive Service Level Agreements are in place which clarify roles and responsibilities and reduce risks. Amongst other things, this will make clear the services being provided, the tools and methods used, issues around confidentiality, how outcome data will be recorded and evaluated and how feedback will take place	5
The school ensures robust quality assurance for all external mental health and wellbeing provision taking place, which is reported and evaluated at senior and governor level	5

