

Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS)

Verification Report

School name:	Crawford Village Primary School
School address and postcode:	Crawford Village, Skelmersdale, Lancashire, WN8 9QP
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Award verifier:	Dr Helen Mills
Award adviser (if applicable):	N/A
Date of verification:	29/02/2024

Commentary on the evidence provided:

The award evidence collated by Miss Davies (Wellbeing Award Coordinator) was outstanding. All staff, governors, pupils and parents spoke with great enthusiasm, pride, openness, and honesty during the interviews. A genuine sense of belonging and a strong team approach was evident, demonstrating the school's ability to work effectively as a team. This provided detailed information and allowed the adviser to better understand the context and background to the schools outstanding developments and achievements.

Strengths identified during verification:

Outstanding leadership, led by Miss Davies, is a critical factor in understanding the success of the school in promoting emotional wellbeing and mental health as core to the whole school community. Miss Davies' passion and drive have been pivotal in gaining momentum across the whole school ensuring mental health and wellbeing is a priority for everyone and this is reflected in the outstanding whole school community Change Team. The skills, commitment, autonomous style and approach of the Head Teacher, alongside the dedicated Change Team, Staff, Governors, and the whole school community, have created innovative ways of working and a seamless and consistent, welcoming, happy, caring, loving, supportive, safe, non-judgemental, engaging, aspirational, nurturing, inclusive and creative culture.

The school's motto, values, wellbeing vision and strategy, are all reflected in the positive, nurturing, inclusive culture and ethos of the school. This culture and ethos are central to the success of the school and have created a sense of belonging and shared responsibility, referred to during the visit as 'family'. Throughout the award process, the school has demonstrated continued and innovative progress to support and improve the wellbeing and mental health of the whole school community. The result offers a powerful template for how emotional wellbeing and mental health of pupils, families and staff ensures outstanding whole school progress and academic achievement.

An open door policy, voice, listening to the needs of others, and effective communication, have led to trusting relationships between the whole school community, and are very much part of how the school has achieved a shared sense of belonging where children, families and staff are confident to share their experiences and if needed, ask for support. The award evidence and interviews demonstrated how extensive, innovative and open this feature is, with staff going above and beyond what is expected to ensure that the whole school community is supported. The numerous opportunities that promote wellbeing have led to children and staff developing the skills needed to monitor their own feelings, confident to ask for support and to use techniques to regulate their emotions. Experienced and knowledgeable staff are available to swiftly support those children who need it, whilst staff communicate wellbeing messages, promote positivity, resilience, and offer support to the whole school.

Children feel extremely safe and happy in school, have many friends, and articulated well how the school supports them with their emotional wellbeing and mental health and how they are confident to identify and express their feelings, to regulate their emotions, ask for support and actively help each other. Pupils commented on the enjoyment and satisfaction they get from learning inside the classroom and outdoors, how they try their best, can talk openly about their feelings, are proud of their celebrated achievements, and described numerous tools that they can use, activities they can do and trusted adults they can work with to promote their wellbeing. This has enabled the day-to-day and longer-term emotional wellbeing and mental health activities to flourish and was evident throughout the verification with the promotion of positivity, daily affirmations, the zones of regulation, fundraising, the 5 ways to wellbeing, artist of the term, aspirations, achievements, transformative therapeutic spaces, coupled with a sense of calm and nurturing relationships, with children demonstrating exemplary behaviour and manners, kindness, respect, confidence, resilience, engagement and enjoyment in learning. The opportunities for pupil voice and leadership are remarkable, with children taking pride in carrying out their chosen roles.

The Self Love Club Leaders commented, "I thought it would be nice to share a smile and cheer people up. I wanted to help children to feel safe and make sure nobody is left out. I feel really happy, excited and proud of myself making people happy. In Summer, children come to the Cloud if they feel sad, angry or worried and we help them do calm colouring, use the worry doll, the chime and crystals. We now have Worry Warriors and we pop in and tell them our worry. Wellbeing is a great idea. Class 1 feels really calm".

When asked, 'What do you like the best about your school?', the children commented, "How calm it is. The decorations, flowers and plants, the little positive comments, worry jars, zones of regulation charts and calming tools. The worry jar helps you share your worries and the teachers check in on you. Today I'm a bit yellow as I'm really excited about the Wellbeing Warrior Club. Everyone feels included. I love learning. I love art. The facilities are amazing and the bathrooms are really nice and have happy pictures in the toilets. Lots of awards like star of the week, pride, values and team points and you feel really proud when you get them. Singing times tables. All nice and calm children here who help others. I love it. The positive affirmations. Everybody hugs. Loads of fun activities. In Class

2 you get snuggles and cuddles. All the happiness. It feels like the school is smiling. All the love shared”.

Children commented on the staff in school, “They’re kind and helpful. They cheer you up when you’re sad. They’re the greatest part of the school; there when you need them. They’re really helpful with my Cerebral Palsy and ADHD needs. They always come in with a smile, never shout and sort everything out. We can trust everyone”.

Significant investment in the therapeutic environment, facilities, wide range of activities, staffing, with formal and informal support systems, was apparent during the school verification. The award process also highlighted the multiple examples of outstanding 'wellbeing' practice. Many of these have a major impact on the whole school community. From the moment you enter the school, you are welcomed with warmth and greeted with children’s self-portraits. Further examples include the dedicated Change Team, Self Love Club Leaders, Playground Leaders, Eco Council, Sports Council, School Council and Pupil Parliament, individualised class zones of regulation and toolkits including calm areas, Staff Worry Warriors, Wellbeing Club, Mental Health First Aider and Lead Wellbeing Lead who is also an Orange Badge Holder to support people with suicidal thoughts, celebration assemblies, a rounded and engaging curriculum, SEND provision, Lego therapy, Nurture groups, Craft Club, Compass Bloom provide targeted interventions, PSHE, regular whole school wellbeing sessions, cultural capital, dress to express day, children’s mental health week, NSPCC events, day of disabilities, picture news, worry jars, promotion of school values, promises, growth mindset, and the 5 ways to wellbeing, childrens individual goals displayed, outdoor Cloud space, Forest school, gardening club, trim trail, buddy bench and chickens, yoga, meditation and calm music, lunch time activities, cultural opportunities, trips, and numerous parent, family and community sessions. Many of these have a major impact on the whole school community. Furthermore, the excellent stakeholder questionnaire results, demonstrated how well staff in school support pupils, families and each other.

The school has worked proactively to develop and act upon stakeholder voice, parental engagement, effective communication including the outstanding and informative wellbeing tab on the school website, the wellbeing newsletter, and community links. The numerous sessions for parents to attend and be part of the school community, the warm welcome, the open door and support given to parents is outstanding, with staff going above and beyond to establish trusting relationships.

Parent praise for staff in school was exceptional with everyone valuing the sense of belonging they and their children feel. Parents commented, “My daughter has additional needs and its wonderful how they support her; she went to Worry Warriors and talked about her worry; it’s nice she has that outlet. The SENCO knows so much about special needs. It’s that warmth from staff and parents; it’s a nice community to be part of. The relaxed woodland environment, meditation and yoga in class, the attention of staff, the outdoor space and Cloud; it’s a safe space for the children to go, they’ve introduced self-love club leaders, the children feel they are part of it. The wellbeing newsletter to parents helps with communication. Parents are so happy and comfortable coming into school. Everyone wants the best for the children; they’re dedicated. We wanted wellbeing to be engrained in our ethos; this is what we do. Miss Davies told us about the award. I’m privileged to be a part of the school; it feels like a family. They’re so invested in the children. Children’s wellbeing is a priority; it’s that continuous nurture. The Teacher picked up traits of dyslexia and delivered it to him and celebrated his uniqueness and he’s never been worried about tests. The Head Teacher supported my daughter emotionally and went above and beyond and she’s flourished. The regular EHCP meetings with the SENCO start with my child’s personality. The Head Teacher is in the playground, everyone is involved. That special feeling you get; you belong. Children support each other, modelled from the

staff. I trust them impeccably; they've supported us with adoption and you don't need to ask. Staff are wonderful. It's so inclusive; magical, the children are so happy".

Governors further commented, "The children are absolutely loved and cared for; they're the centre of everything. It's a real community. We want to really look after staff; I do regular drop ins and meet with the Head Teacher and we check in with staff to support them and check they're not overwhelmed. So many things were already in place; it was nice to capture and record all the good things we do. We're planning wellbeing drop ins for parents. We do lots of sessions with parents. How welcome you feel; the children are wrapped in love; they do so well academically because of the environment and ethos; that warmth and acceptance, they're able to be themselves".

Attention must be drawn to the value and priority given to whole school staff wellbeing and training. This has further embedded a positive and caring culture. Staff feel that the strategies in place alongside the support from all the staff contribute to their emotional wellbeing, enabling them to provide the most effective support to the children. The Change Team keep staff updated with regular communication, advise and resources to support wellbeing and have cultivated further the caring ethos of the school where everyone, including the School Wellbeing Governor, checks in on each other. The staff room, bathroom and the PPA area have been transformed in to a safe space for relaxation. There is a staff wellbeing board, wellbeing updates in meetings including the promotion of mindfulness and meditation, and opportunities to attend wellbeing and social activities. The Headteacher provides staff with ample PPA and subject leader time and reviewed the marking policy to reduce workload. Wellbeing has improved through implementing the outstanding wellbeing policy that includes a focus on self-care and reflective monitoring sessions, 1-1 meetings with the Head Teacher, yearly wellbeing calendar, birthday and Christmas day of leave, promoting flexible working, providing refreshments at inset days and after school events, signposting during supervision including counselling, providing gifts for significant occasions and significant investment in staff mental health and wellbeing training, including the Wellbeing Lead delivering whole school staff half termly CPD training. The Head Teacher has an open-door policy, listens to staff and has implemented changes to improve wellbeing. The team approach to supporting each other is exceptional and staff are confident to talk openly and honestly about their mental health and wellbeing. Staff know how to manage their own wellbeing and use these strategies effectively. Staff celebrate as a team and socialise together. Staff at school feel listened to, valued, cared for, connected, supported, have a sense of purpose, are passionate about making a positive difference to the lives of the children and families at their school, enjoy their jobs and are proud to work at the school.

"The staff room is our sanctuary. We talk openly as friends. We have a PPA space and are given half a day per week and half a day per subject. We really do look after each other; lots of staff have been here for years. Everybody asks each other how we are. We're all treated exactly the same. We're valued by the staff and children. All staff wanted to drive wellbeing and are all part of the change team. The Governors are so committed. It's really close to Miss Davies' heart and I'm so proud of the way she led staff. It's part of our ethos. I'm proud to be a part off this school. It's like coming into a second family; everyone gives so much love. It's a privilege being part of this team. When walking in that door, you can feel that ethos".

"The Children's Mental Health First Aid course opened my eyes and it's now a passion. We've set up a Worry Club; the children come and chat and are loving it. We donated to a food bank and it made me feel good and it makes a difference. Staff and parents are now knitting for Neonatal and end of life care, the kitchen staff made a hamper; we all do things. Teaching assistants attend staff meetings and are encouraged to do CPD. People have much more of an understanding of mental

health and we notice social, emotional and mental health needs and act upon them. The collaborative process to whole school staff training”.

Staff spoke passionately about the pupils, and commented, “I’m amazed how much the children use it [zones of regulation] appropriately; it helps and makes a difference and they’re using it outside of school too. Children get snuggle bear for other children. The children say to us, ‘I hope you have a nice day; I love you and how are you?’ I’m a role model for them to have that conversation. The minimal artificial lighting calms them down, we play calming music and do yoga or meditation in a morning. Parents come in to the classroom and talk to us; we have such a great relationship with them. Nursey and Reception children wanted their own zone so we made a tepee, coloured the zones on wooden tree trunk blocks, there’s colouring and a mirror, children can fall asleep in here, we cuddle and talk about how we can help and what they can do and one child tells us how he’s feeling through the puppet. The children came up with their own actions for morning positive affirmations. The children designed and run the Cloud and chose the name ‘Self-love club. The children get continuity; we really do know them. The children do Young Voices; it’s an amazing experience and they grow in confidence. We get lovely comments from others on how well behaved and respectful they are; they’re always first to shake hands and so polite. All the children got involved with the zones of regulation and the Leaders are making changes. The zones of regulation are in schemes of work and the individualised zone areas and problem of need charts are used by the children; they take time out, use the sensory tools, breathing, problem solving and they’re starting to use the language, ‘I’m feeling blue’ and asking to do calming activities. We did a parent newsletter on the zones and it’s on the website. Our children are amazing and they make you smile every day”.

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 school’s mental health and wellbeing, and how this supports children to feel happy, loved, and secure, enabling them to thrive and achieve.

Impact:

The baseline stakeholder questionnaire results set a high bench mark, yet the comparison of results demonstrated further improvement and impact in all areas.

Investment in staff wellbeing and training has resulted in a reduction in staff workload, and an improvement in wellbeing, which has further strengthened staff’s sense of belonging, pride, motivation and job satisfaction.

Whole school promotion, 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 people having open conversations, recognising and expressing their feelings, confident in asking for support or supporting themselves and others, regulating their emotions, using a range of techniques, contributing to improved wellbeing and resilience. 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 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 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 Crawford Village Primary School provide unconditional love and encouragement to each and every pupil, facilitating their self-belief and enabling them to flourish. Staff work passionately to make a positive difference to the lives of all the pupils, parents and staff.

An embedded welcoming, happy, loving, caring, positive school culture and ethos that prioritises whole school community mental health and wellbeing, investment in passionate and nurturing staff, provides a creative and varied curriculum, informal and formal support, has resulted in all pupils, including those with additional needs including wellbeing and mental health, being provided with a safe space 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 regulate their emotions, 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 and achieve. Crawford Village Primary School is filled with love and happiness. This is truly a special school, where everyone experiences a sense of belonging and has the opportunity to shine.

Areas for development:

As already highlighted by the school, continue to introduce therapeutic classrooms, the role of the change team, yearly monitoring of the stakeholder evaluations and implementing stakeholder suggestions.

Encourage all staff to complete the free 'Place2Be' online mental health champion training.

Consider ways to fundraise or reach out for community expertise to further improve the Cloud so that it can be used throughout the year.

Consider delivering parent sessions on the zones of regulation and family Forest School sessions.

Introduce staff names to the class zones of regulation charts.

Display a visitor's book in the school entrance to collect feedback from visitors and parents and display these in the staffroom.

Promote the 5 ways to wellbeing with the whole school community including activities that families can do.

Keep a record of when wellbeing check ins are carried out and consider introducing staff wellbeing buddies and using workplace wellbeing check ins from Mind or Staff NHS website.

Continue to showcase the schools' multiple examples of outstanding practice in emotional wellbeing and mental health work, and share the experiences and approaches with other schools.

Verifier recommendation:

Crawford Village Primary School has achieved the Wellbeing Award for Schools. This award covers the following 3 years. I look forward to the work the school will undertake over this time.

Head teacher comments:

As a school, we are delighted to have achieved the Wellbeing Award for Schools. This has exemplified our unwavering commitment to wellbeing for our whole school family and the whole staff team - especially Miss Davies - have worked incredibly hard to demonstrate and evidence that this is engrained in our school ethos and culture. The report reads beautifully and it is clear the assessor understood our school so well and listened carefully to the views of both adults and children alike.

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