

Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS)

Verification Report

School name:	Cliftonville primary School
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Head teacher:	Claire Whichcord
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Award verifier:	Malcolm Goddard
Award adviser (if applicable):	Malcolm Goddard
Date of verification:	17/9/21

Commentary on the evidence provided:

This was a final verification visit following an interim assessment where around 75% of KPIs had already been signed off. Evidence provided was clear and concise at both interim and final. The evidence for final was presented as a series of supplementary documents.

Oral evidence from stakeholders, during the learning walk and during the presentation triangulated well and the coordinator and other leaders were able to expand on answers on request during the presentation and throughout the day to add detail and colour. The walk allowed the advisor to see the many physical improvements made to support the schools work on wellbeing.

Stakeholder questionnaires throughout the process were used effectively to guide areas of focus. By the end of the process all group responses showed improvements to a high level of satisfaction with the most significant change amongst pupils. The school went above and beyond the minimum requirements of many KPIs guided by the detailed action plan drawn up with the advisor at the initial visit.

Stakeholders were very positive about the support received from the school and recognised that provision had developed and evolved over the last year in response to both the award and the covid pandemic. There was a strong sense of being a cohesive team.

Leaders recognised many of their own next steps and fully engaged with the advisor to fully develop these for the final report. The involvement of the executive head at the presentation allowed discussion of how the school might support others within the trust to take place.

Strengths identified during verification:

- The wellbeing lead has been in post for two years and has used the award process to guide and support her work. There has been very significant impact.
- There is highly effective leadership of wellbeing at the school which is very visibly supported by other senior leaders. This has raised the status and the profile of the team and the process.
- The schools longstanding vision and values have wellbeing at their heart and underpin what the school and its leadership team are seeking to achieve.
- Leaders value the wellbeing of all members of the school community and are willing to invest time and energy in supporting all members of the community. It is ok to seek support at Cliftonville and that support will be forthcoming. This was commented on by all stakeholders.
- Leadership structures are strong and well established. They provide capacity and clarity so that support is available, and teachers understand who they can turn to for support for themselves, students, or families.
- Support for students and families is carefully coordinated across the areas of SEN/Parental support/Wellbeing/Safeguarding through regular communication and inclusion team meetings to draw together key elements and agree next steps. This is an example of best practice.
- There are well established clear mechanisms for students, parents, and staff to have a collective voice and stakeholders feel their voice is heard by leader and their concerns and ideas responded to.
- Through emotional check-ins using zones of regulation, teachers understanding their roles in supporting wellbeing and the very visible presence of leaders around the school everyone knows who they can turn to for support at Cliftonville. There is a culture that it is OK to ask for help and you will be supported.

Impact

- Wellbeing has been a key feature of the SIP in the last two years. The focus has ensured the school was in a good place to respond to the increased wellbeing demands of the pandemic.
- The profile of the wellbeing team and wellbeing has been raised through establishing a physical wellbeing hub in the schoolhouse which has drawn the team together under the strong leadership of the wellbeing lead appointed two years ago.
- Staff recognise that leaders value staff wellbeing and have a greater understanding of their part in this. Staff are good at supporting each other as a team. The expanded staff space is visible evidence of this.
- Members of the wellbeing team have been empowered to develop their role and champion wellbeing within the school and the wider trust. The school is now seen as taking a leading role in supporting their partner schools to develop and enhance wider provision across the trust.
- The school has developed a very clear strategy document identifying what they have in place and what their next steps are. This will be a helpful document to steer their future development of wellbeing alongside this report and to share responsibility and leadership even more widely.

- The school have been responsive and proactive in addressing key wellbeing themes within their community in a sensitive way which has engaged the whole community. They are engaging with parents to find ways of supporting and enabling groups of parents.
- The school has been highly effective in engaging external partners in the local and wider community. Many of these partnerships have provided direct support and/or resource to members of the school community. The school now has an active voice within the wider community around wellbeing and mental health.
- Many innovative projects and partnerships have been established developing new ideas, processes, use of space and partnerships. Leaders are open to trying new ideas and are always on the lookout for an opportunity to enhance what they can offer.

Areas for development:

In line with the schools own identified next steps:

- 1) Identify the best ways to engage further with parents and families around wellbeing through:
 - developing a programme to support parents to support their own children alongside current external advisor
 - finding the right topics to engage the wider parent body
 - facilitating all parents that might wish to, in using zones of regulation at home alongside use at school through training sessions and guidance materials.
- 2) Continue to develop external spaces for wellbeing and outdoor learning empowering each year group to develop their own bespoke space to meet their own needs and wishes.
- 3) Train up peer mentors and support them to develop their roles in supporting other students throughout the school.
- 4) Develop the role of the school and leader across the trust to support the other schools in the trust on their own wellbeing journey making use of the wealth of expertise, resources and documentation developed at Cliftonville.

In addition:

- 5) Leaders to develop the business case for investing in wellbeing to share with governors identifying the benefits to the school which might include for example, a USP, access to external resources, savings through reduced staff absence and turnover and the impacts of wider partnerships.
- 6) Consider combining the various tools used by the school to discuss wellbeing into an explicit, cohesive language taught consistently across the school so that staff, students, and parents have a common understanding and vocabulary. This might combine the 5 ways to wellbeing, zones of regulation and the school's own values.

Verifier recommendation:

Recommend that Cliftonville Primary School receives the award for a period of three years.

Request the school write up their experience of developing partnerships into a summary (1 side A4) of the process and the benefits to the school so that the advisor can share this as a model of best practice with other schools.

Head teacher comments:

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