

School Trailblazer: Burntwood School

Emotional Wellbeing in Schools Workshops Report

June 2019

1. Project context and background

2. Equalities Monitoring

3. Understanding emotional wellbeing

4. School environment, ethos and values

5. Support at school

6. Young People's Voice

7. Evaluation

8. Next steps: School action pledge



Wandsworth Clinical Commissioning Group

Start well, live well, age well



1. Project context and background

Emotional Well-being

This partnership project between education and health has the ambitions over three years to reduce levels of self-harm, improve emotional resilience and enhance the wellbeing of children and young people, by developing prevention and early intervention initiatives, primarily through a 'whole school approach'.

The purpose is to foreground and strengthen the young people's voice in the design and delivery of this project and support the schools to develop their involvement approach. This includes embedding co-production principles and enabling the young people's voice to influence decisions and actions right from the start.

Building on the SWL framework for involving young people in the Trailblazer emotional wellbeing project in schools, the NHS Wandsworth Patient and Public Engagement and Equalities team have been working together with each of the school clusters in Wandsworth to audit the involvement of children and young people in their emotional wellbeing work and to develop their action plans for achieving the project ambitions over the next three years.

To enable this, the Patient and Public Engagement and Equalities team have:

- collaborated with individual schools to map and understand existing mechanisms for engagement, channels for influence, consent processes, and previous engagement around emotional wellbeing and resilience;
- co-designed and delivered focus group workshops, together with the schools, to amplify the young people's voice and gather insight and ideas on four key themes including; the school environment and values, support at school, peer support and strengthening their voice;
- Provided this written report to each of the schools summarising insights gathered, key themes and pledges for action resulting from the workshops.

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2. Equalities Monitoring

Emotional Well-being

Burntwood School is a girls' secondary school and sixth form with academy status. They are a rights respecting school awarded by UNICEF and recognised as an inclusive community. Their mission statement highlights their aims to provide:

'The best education today for the women of tomorrow'

Attendees: We worked together with 14 female students of mixed ethnicity in school year 9 aged 12-14 completing KS3.

Gender

14



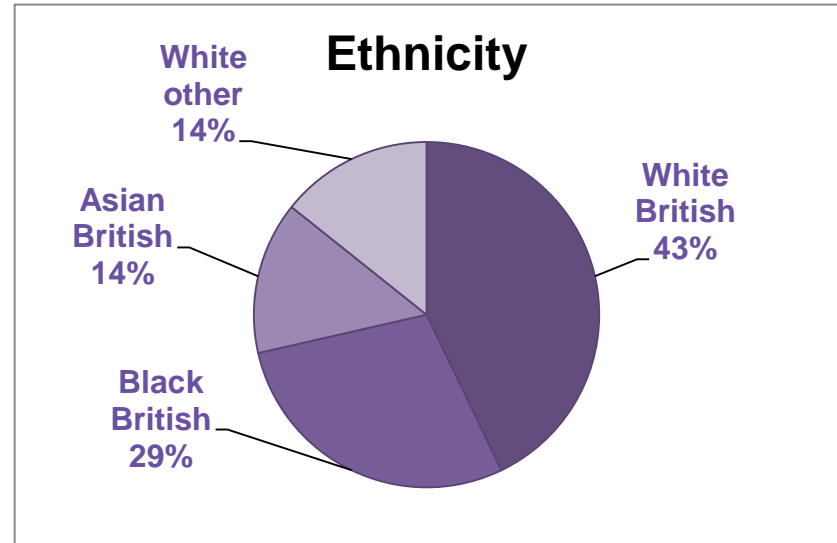
School Year

9



Key Stage

3

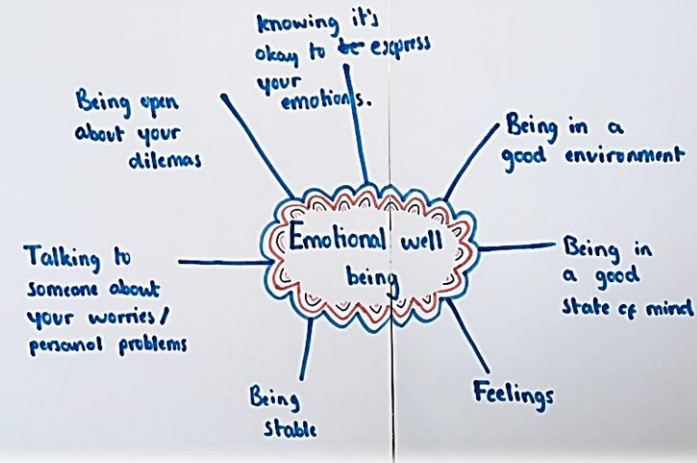


3. Understanding emotional wellbeing

Emotional Well-being

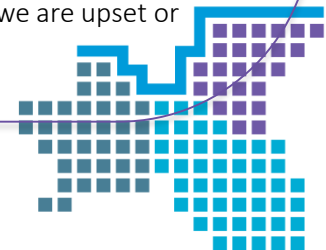
We explored the students understanding of Emotional Wellbeing. We asked the young people map everything that comes to mind when they think of emotional wellbeing. Some of the young people said that emotional wellbeing was about:

- Being able to express yourself
- Knowing its ok to express your emotions
- Expressing your emotions physically
- Being open about your dilemmas
- Having support around you
- Having someone to talk to
- Talking to someone about your worries / personal problems -therapist or councillor
- Being stable
- Being in a good state of mind
- Being in a good environment
- Happiness, sadness, being stable



The young people generated a large range of ideas to define emotional wellbeing demonstrating good emotional literacy. We continued to explain emotional wellbeing in terms of us having control of our thoughts, our feelings and how we act. Terminology was an emerging issue as mental health was determined as something different to emotional health, they explained that emotional health was a softer term and something that all people have whereas the term 'mental' had much more negative ideas attached for the young people.

We discussed the purpose of the session including exploring emotional wellbeing and the importance of recognising both positive and negative feelings and being able to understand how to handle these emotions, how to stay well emotionally, how to share our feelings and get help if we are upset or feeling low for a while.



4.1 School environment, ethos and values

Emotional Well-being



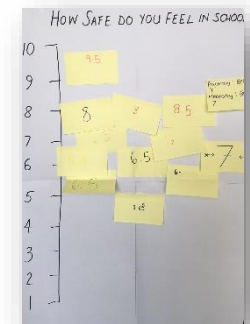
We asked the young people to rate **how safe they feel at school** on a scale of 1-10 with 1 signifying not safe at all and 10 being completely safe.

The scores received were high ranging from 5.6 to 9.5 out of 10 with an average of 7.5.

To explore their feelings in relation to their school environment further we asked the young people to **tell us what they do not like about their school environment.**

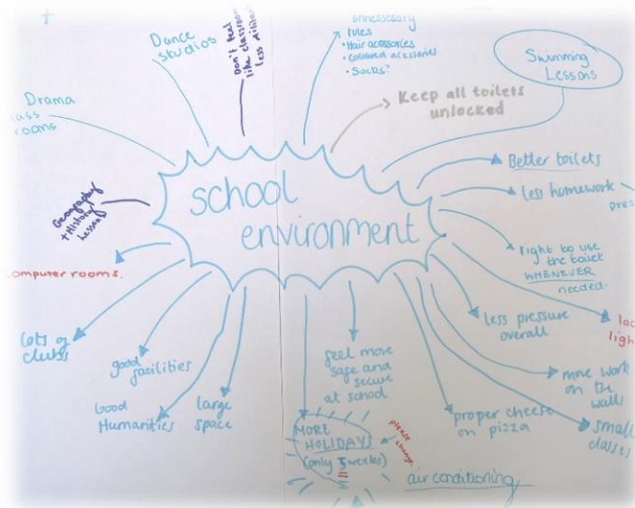
This included:

- Lack of natural light in some rooms (Building 4)
- Too much space to travel between classes in just 5 minutes – need to plan differently
- Places for wellbeing aren't promoted enough
- We need more holidays – currently only 5 weeks
- Keeping the toilets locked - we have a right to use the toilet when we need it – please don't restrict this
- We need better toilets they are very unhygienic at times
- Swimming pool is unhygienic (toothbrush and hair at the bottom)
- Teachers gossiping about students is hurtful
- Unnecessary rules (hair coloured accessories socks)
- There are showers but we cant use them
- Mixing classes destroys friendship bonds



4.2 School environment, ethos and values

Emotional Well-being



Aspects of the school and the school environment and ethos they find are positive included:

- Lots of clubs
- Feminism
- Large space
- Good facilities
- Computer room
- Drama and dance classrooms
- Swimming lessons
- Good library
- Good productions, plays and musicals
- UNICEF
- Charity work
- Enthusiastic teachers
- Art classrooms with lots of supplies

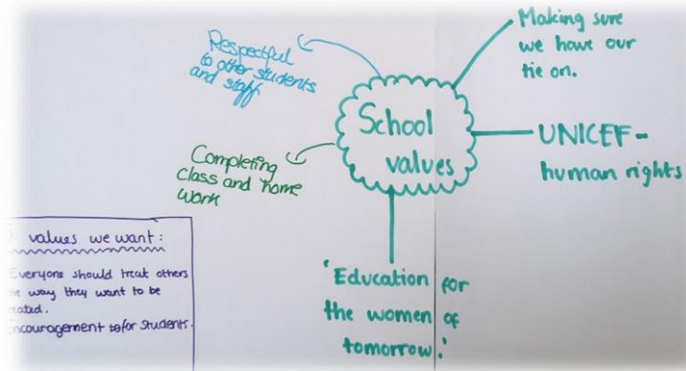


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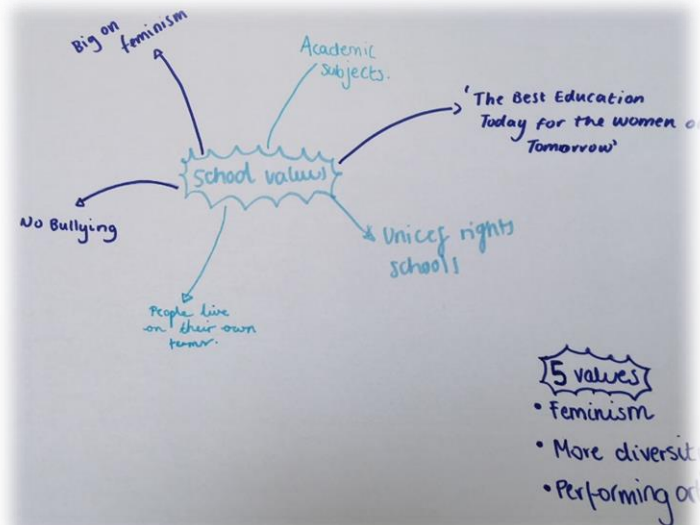
4.3 School environment, ethos and values

Emotional Well-being



We discussed the school values and which ones were easiest to recall. The young people told us that the school values are:

- Being respectful to other students and self
- UNICEF – Human Rights
- Completing class and homework
- Making sure we have our tie on
- No bullying
- People live on their own terms



The young people were asked if they felt anything was missing especially in the context of our session on Emotional Wellbeing. They said they would add the following:

- Anti-bullying: everyone should treat others the way they want to be treated themselves
- Encouragement for students
- Feminism
- More diversity
- Commitment to performing arts.



5. Support at school

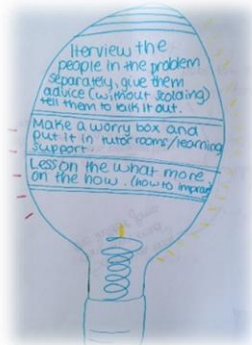
Emotional Well-being

Do you feel your teachers' pay attention to you and your behaviour and help you understand if you are not behaving well?

- Yes, sometimes. There are teachers we can go to and discuss things.
- The punishments are more negative for example they are *don't do* rather than *do this* instead.
- There is more isolation rather than dealing with the problem of someone's behaviour.

If you are feeling sad or upset, can you get help and who can you approach for support?

- The support is good (the students listed the names of numerous teachers) they also felt that *that there is not a clear path for help – it is not explicit enough.*



How do you report bullying and isolation at school?

- Many of the young people said they felt fear of telling a teacher because it is likely you would get picked on more.
- Older siblings getting involved can really make things worse.
- It would be helpful if teachers could spot this happening early on.

Do you have ideas for how support at school could be better?

- They felt that the fear of reporting bullying can be avoided by teachers meeting with the young person reporting in confidence to explain and agree the options and process before any action is taken.
- Keep students identity anonymous when they report problems.
- Interview all the people in the bullying problem separately.
- Make a worry box and place it in both the tutor rooms and the learning support office.
- Reduce telling us just what to do and increase more on the how to do things differently.

💡 - Bring parents of the children in no matter the circumstances.
- Have a certain number of chances.



6. Voice

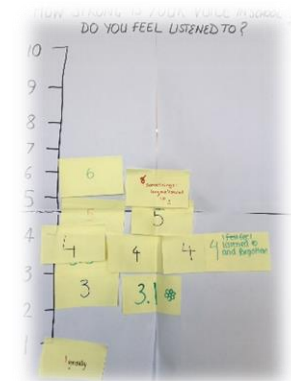
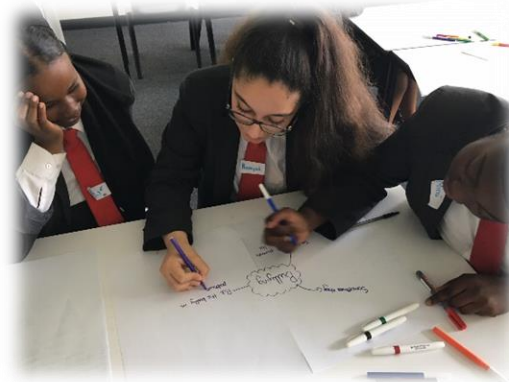
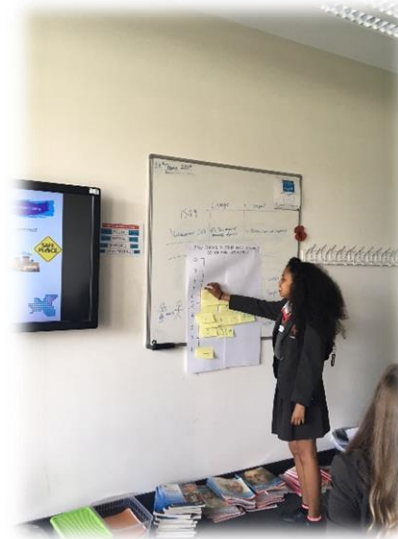
Emotional Well-being

We asked the young people to rate how listened to they feel at school on a scale of 1 to 10 with not being listened to at all being 1 and always being listened to completely being 10.

The scores ranged from 1-6 out of 10 with an average of 3.5.

We explored some of the reasons for the lower scores and ideas they have to improve how strong a voice they have at school. These included:

- Introducing a worry box.
- Increase the opportunities to have a learning mentor
- Increase opportunities for discussion about *how to do things* differently as opposed to the focus on *what*.
- Strengthen the role and influencing ability of the school council membership.
- More voting and debates in class
- More sessions to discuss emotional wellbeing and things that can help us.



7. Evaluation

Emotional Well-being

We conducted the evaluation together as a group to close the session.

We asked the young people about the session and they told us:

- That they were happy to speak to both their teachers and the NHS staff about emotional wellbeing.
- They understood the purpose of the session.
- There was nothing they would change about the session.
- They enjoyed discussions.
- They would speak with a teacher if they had any troubling thoughts.



8. Next steps: school action pledge

Emotional Well-being

- The school will review this report at the next School Council.
- This report will be shared and discussed with the young people who took part.
- Support will be given for the young people to get together to discuss emotional wellbeing on a regular basis via the School Council.
- Responding to the lower scores in relation to student voice, further exploration will be undertaken perhaps to widen the sample with a student questionnaire on this area of student life in addition to considering implementation of the ideas generated by this workshop group (listed on page 9).
- Revisit the antibullying policy and support students to further understand it to reduce their fears perhaps in an assembly to reach all students.
- Increase the promotion of wellbeing spaces and places for support both in and out of school.
- Consider reviewing the environment in the washrooms and introducing monitoring to reduce opportunities for bullies to intimidate other students.

