

Biddenham International School and Sports College



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We do a lot for student wellbeing and I think obviously that does end up taking the priority doesn't it? I was quite conscious that I don't do enough for staff wellbeing so I was really keen that's the area that we really could grow and really support."

Key tags

Secondary school; East of England; founding school; ▲ above average number of students eligible for FSM; ▲ above average number of students speaking EAL; ▼ below average number of students registered with SEND.

Intent

The school joined the Well Schools community with an initial focus on pupils' access to sport and physical exercise but Well Schools also filled a gap in terms of developing an approach supporting staff.

Implementation

Well Led:

The main aim was enabling staff to have "positive feelings" about their workplace. They wanted to value the importance of recognising that staff include support staff as well as teachers, and that they should be "doing more to staff praise". For example, they have changed "teacher praise sheets" to "staff praise sheets" so all students could recognise all staff and each half term pupils are encouraged to write what they appreciate about staff on these praise sheets. A specific Wellbeing lead role has been created, and they use the Well Schools framework to influence their work.

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Opening minds, transforming lives...
'success for all' is not just a mantra, but
infuses all we do."

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When you deliver them [staff praise sheets] to the canteen staff and they read one and have never had one before, you know how good they feel, so I think these have a wider impact on staff rather than teaching staff, acknowledging everyone."

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We start very simple, we do a wellbeing tip of the week for example, every week, as part of tutor time the whole school, and this, last week was mental health week and focused on loneliness. It was just listen to this podcast or here's some films that we recommend or, little things that they can do daily.”

Well Prepared and Well Equipped students:

The school focus on embedding mental health support and making it part of a weekly routine for all pupils. They consider what aspects of wellbeing might be most relevant for their pupils, for example exam stress support. They offer directed mental health support for those young people who may be experiencing greater challenges e.g., counselling, small groups focusing on developing skills such as self-esteem building. The school is also establishing healthy habits, they look for opportunities to combine pupils having time to engage with nature and look for ways in which physical activity can be integrated into their daily lives, for example “we do a mindfulness club on a Tuesday but always focus on outside mindfulness like mindful walks, writing chalk things on the floor that record information.”

Impact

The school have really raised the profile of Well Schools and it is recognised as part of their future wellbeing policy. One of the key aspects of being involved in Well Schools was the opportunity to reflect on current practice. Well Schools has been informative in providing a more structured framework to use when thinking about what they are already doing to promote wellbeing and what they can do more.

The Well Schools framework helped identify areas to improve and where to introduce targeted wellbeing initiatives. By finding out “how do staff actually feel” and using this knowledge to expand the ideas such as “staff praise sheets” as a way of showing appreciation of the whole staff, not just teachers.

The school are looking forward to using the Well Schools community to make positive connections with other schools and have a space for sharing ideas, highlighting good practice, and what has worked well in similar schools.

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I think sharing that good practice, knowing that we're all probably in in a similar situation, and, what's worked in other schools and what I can use in my school as well will be good.”

