

The West Partnership presents:

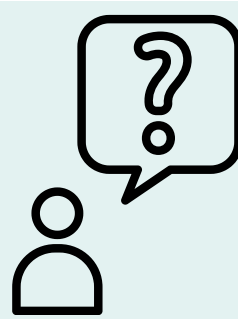
Williamwood High School, East Renfrewshire Council

Implementing a whole school approach to wellbeing

The storyboard details how the team at Williamwood High School have implemented a whole school approach to wellbeing. We hear how the school has put in place a number of policies and practices to ensure the wellbeing of pupils, staff and the wider school community.

What was the problem?

The COVID19 pandemic has posed a number of challenges to health and wellbeing. While the physical health impact of the pandemic may be skewed towards older adults, the impact on mental health and wellbeing is likely to have been more universal. During this time, schools have taken responsibility in ensuring the welfare of their pupils and staff, while also considering ways in which the wider school community can be supported. Indeed, as the pandemic's impact has been far reaching, a whole school approach to wellbeing has been required to meet the needs of pupils, families and staff.



Why is this important?

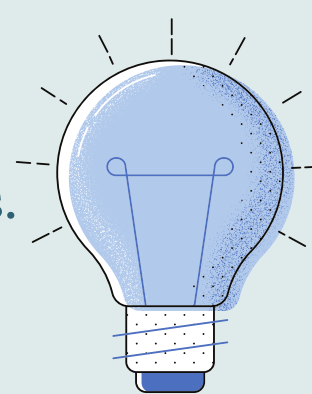
A whole school approach to wellbeing is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, staff have a shared duty of care regarding their pupils wellbeing and, therefore, wellbeing is the *responsibility of all*. Secondly, wellbeing is intricately linked to the progress of pupil's learning. Progress in learning is unlikely to happen if fundamental wellbeing needs are not being met. Thirdly, a whole school approach to wellbeing has been necessary to respond to the needs of pupils during the pandemic.



Aims of the change to practice

The project had a number of aims:

- 1) To put in place policies, processes and practices that would support the wellbeing of pupils, staff and parents.
- 2) To evaluate the impact of various interventions and adapt according to evidence



Whole school approach

Williamwood have been systematic in the implementation of a whole school approach to wellbeing. The school has put in place cultures, policies and practices around wellbeing, which start from the schools ethos and values and end with high specific intervention to meet needs of the school community. The school's ethos of nurture and support is reflected in the comprehensive training that staff have undertaken. For example, 60 members of staff have taken Scotland's Mental Health First Aid training, with an array of other training opportunities spread among staff. Building the capacity of staff has been a key strategy in the schools whole school approach. For pupils, the school has had a number of support channels that were set up prior to the pandemic. In the context of lockdown, with school delivered remotely at times, the school has pivoted their pupil support into online delivery where appropriate. Much of this support has been delivered using Google Classroom, with young people having the opportunity to virtually meet the schools pupil support practitioners. Weekly online support groups for pupils also ran and the school moved much of its transition programme to online. Online channels have also been used to engage with parents. The school has ran a parent conference since 2015, with the aim of supporting parents to support the wellbeing of their children. In 2020, the conference ran online, with videos and resources emailed to all parents after the event. When in-person schooling has ran, the school has offered a number of face-to-face support channels for pupils. Irrespective of delivery, a systematic approach has been adopted as a way of measuring the success of interventions.

Using data

The team at Williamwood have been keen to understand the impact of their various interventions. To ensure interventions target those who need them, the school has implemented a tracking system that uses a school-designed health and wellbeing questionnaire. The questionnaire draws from a number of sources, including the SHANARRI indicators, to identify the needs of pupils. Pupils have an interview with PTPS after completing the questionnaire. This meeting is used to identify appropriate interventions and signpost support and resources. The school has used the SHANARRI indicators as a way of capturing whole school wellbeing across a number of variables. The approach generates cohort level statistics, such as 95% of questionnaire respondents said they felt included. These cohort level figures are then used as benchmarks to evaluate the impact of interventions over time. The school has also put in place group sessions that focus on a particular mental health/wellbeing theme (such as anxiety, resilience etc). Pupils who engage in these group sessions are evaluated using recognised measures (Spence Anxiety Scale and Wagnild and Young's Resilience scale for anxiety and resilience respectively) prior to engaging in the interventions. After the intervention is complete, the same tests are repeated. Evidence from these group sessions suggests the interventions are reducing anxiety and increasing resilience.



What are the key points you have learnt?

The team have identified several key learning points. Firstly, they stress the importance of designing interventions prior to the collection of any data on pupil's wellbeing. The team believe that the value of the questionnaire lies in its ability to link survey outcomes to interventions that are then tested for effectiveness. Secondly, the team at Williamwood recognised the need to build capacity across their staff. This involved the training as already mentioned, but also in linking to appropriate externally provided support services. The school has developed partnerships with their authorities Education Psychology service and also with external partners like Scottish Women's Autism Network. Finally, the team at Williamwood have also placed importance on pupil voice and in facilitating pupils leading some of their own wellbeing work. Senior pupils have developed a mental health forum, which collectively wrote an action plan on ensuring mental health among pupils. Pupils have also run a mental health festival and in October 2020 delivered a whole school Be Kind Campaign.



What next for the project?

Moving forward, the team at Williamwood have identified a number of areas in which work will continue to develop. Firstly, the team will continue to build staff capacity through further professional development. Secondly, the team will continually use evaluative methods to engage in a process of continual self-improvement. Finally, the school will continue to embrace pupils as equal partners in ensuring a whole school approach to wellbeing.

