

Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS)

Verification Report

School name:	Beccles Primary Academy
School address and postcode:	Ellough Road, Beccles NR34 7AB
School telephone:	01502713281
School website:	Beccles Primary Academy (becclesacademy.org)
Head teacher:	Heather Thorne
Head teacher's email:	
WAS coordinator:	Sue Manders
WAS coordinator's email:	
Award verifier:	Jackie Lamb
Award adviser (if applicable):	N/A
Date of verification:	14 th June 2022

Commentary on the evidence provided:

Beccles Primary Academy is an excellent school in terms of Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health (EWMH).

EWMH is an integral part of the school and its ethos, it is not an 'add on'. The school have valued EWMH and understood its importance for some time, however during the pandemic the school became the 'hub of the community' and has remained so, continuing to support and care for all its stakeholders.

The portfolio and additional evidence was extremely organised, abundant, clear, and relevant. It reflected the excellent work being carried out by all the staff under the strong and caring leadership of the head teacher and the skilled support of the 'mental health champion and family wellbeing lead' (WAS coordinator) Sue Manders. During the school visit it was clear that staff, pupils, governors, and families all value the school's focus on the EWMH of the whole community.

The head teacher, WAS coordinator, staff, parents, and pupils, who provided evidence for the verification, demonstrated an impressive understanding of the EWMH needs of all their peers, colleagues and families, and the wider community. There is evidence throughout the school and in the portfolio that EWMH is about the *whole* person and their connection to the school and wider community, enabling empowerment and supporting resilience.

Strengths identified during verification:

The school's vision statement describes fully what the school believes in, and it is evident that this is put into action every day. EWMH permeates everything they do at Beccles Primary Academy. The approach to EWMH is proactive and embedded in all areas of the school. EWMH are strategically evidenced in the school's development plan and policies and there is a real sense of all the staff working as a team. The school provide regular opportunities for pupils to garden, cook, look after animals, take part in music and sport, yoga and mindfulness, all adding to their EWMH and giving them strategies to manage their own wellbeing in the future.

EWMH is part of school life, learning, and it goes beyond the school gates. The pupils talked about being supported by staff and caring for each other. A parent shared how her family was supported when her older son attempted suicide, even though he didn't attend the school. The head teacher and WAS coordinator support families with many different aspects of their lives, all of which, impact on the EWMH of the children and the community, for example: delivering food parcels and laptops during the pandemic, providing free school uniforms and food via the 'shop', parent drop ins and training courses, and the list goes on ...

Staff, parents, governor, and pupils, all praised the school and the ways in which it supports the positive EWMH of everyone and has systems in place when individuals need help. The whole school community is regularly consulted on their views and are encouraged to share them and seek help when required.

Parents reported that they felt that their children were very happy and safe at school. They praised all the staff and particularly Sue Manders and the head teacher. They were keen to tell me about all the help and information they receive and how and why this is an excellent school.

Staff could not praise the EWMH support in the school highly enough. They shared the many ways they feel valued, including the frequent but unexpected 'treats' They also explained that there is a culture of looking out for and supporting each other. Staff have completed EWMH training and feel empowered to support children with difficulties and how to refer on if required.

The pupils are well informed about EWMH and actively involved with all areas of school life. From the pupil questionnaires and talking to pupils, it is evident that they feel empowered and that their voice is heard. The new 'wellbeing champion' role for pupils is clearly popular and will be expanded during the next academic year. Another initiative that is working well is the virtual 'worry box'.

There is evidence of joint working with a wide range of external agencies and other schools. Strategically, within the school, the work, and initiatives already in place are continually being scrutinized and analyzed, ensuring continued progression in all areas of EWMH.

Areas for development:

The school identified the following areas for development:

Consolidate and continue to monitor the work and initiatives already in place.

Recruitment and training of more pupil wellbeing champions, including half termly meetings.

Introduce more parent courses.

Consider a menopause policy or include in the wellbeing policy.

Consider how to develop work with parents that encourages empowerment and independence.

Further explore how the trust participates in local commissioning arrangements and consider how the school can influence decision making.

Verifier recommendation:

I am delighted to recommend that this school be awarded the Wellbeing Award for Schools for a period of three years

Head teacher comments:

May we use your comment for website/marketing purposes? **Yes / No** (please delete)