

Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS)

Verification Report

School name:	Marlbrook Primary
School address and postcode:	Green Croft, Hereford HR2 7NT
School telephone:	01432 266643
School website:	https://www.marlbrookschool.com/
Head teacher:	Mrs Tracey Kneale
Head teacher's email:	
WAS coordinator:	Ruth Turner
WAS coordinator's email:	
Award verifier:	Therese Hoyle
Award adviser (if applicable):	
Date of verification:	09.07.21

Commentary on the evidence provided:

Ruth Turner, the award adviser, worked hard to review, prepare and present evidence.

The portfolio evidenced a range of comprehensive documentation reflecting a school which strongly believes in the vital role it has in supporting the emotional wellbeing and mental health of all.

The evidence was of a high quality, very thorough, accessible and well presented, with all KPI's met.

A clear long-term strategy has been developed in relation to supporting the emotional wellbeing and mental health of the school's community. Because of this, work in this area will continue following the final verification.

Strengths identified during verification:

Marlbrook Primary School offers a safe, secure, supportive and nurturing environment for the children, staff, parents and the whole school community and needs to be praised for the work it has done in embedding positive structures and developing strong relationships that support mental health and wellbeing and enable children to learn, flourish and achieve their full potential.

A strength of the schools is its whole school ethos and values culture- resilience, kindness, understanding, honesty, appreciation, and imagination which the Headteacher and stakeholders have worked hard to develop and embed.

The leadership team, parents, staff and students endorsed the positive environment that has been created.

Parents and governors

The parents and governors commented on 'wellbeing being at the heart of everything they do.' They praised the school for its ability to meet the needs of their children, support them in developing strategies to manage life's ups and down's, help them grow in confidence and give them a happy and safe place to learn, grow and develop.

Andy Goode the Chair of Governors commented that 'the school offers a holistic approach, where everyone is taken into account.'

Parents value the student support team, who 'are at the gate in the morning,' and ensure parents feel supported and their voices heard.

Throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, the school has adapted to meet the needs of parents and children and they feel the school has been extremely supportive with regular phone calls, home visits and the use of SeeSaw to share children's learning and communicate with parents.

Parents are further supported by the student support team and leadership team who organise welfare packages, vouchers, food parcels, Christmas gifts, free trips and residential.

The leadership and management

The wellbeing of all is the central principle of the school on which all other developments are built upon.

Andy Goode the Chair of Governors commented on 'the strong leadership of Tracey Kneale, the headteacher, who always rises to the challenge and puts staff and children's wellbeing above all else.'

Leaders have a very clear vision of how to further develop the school's provision to support emotional wellbeing and positive mental health. This is exemplified in the current strategy for this academic year and longer-term plans.

Leaders model the standards expected within the school. All staff are treated with respect by the senior management.

Staff

Staff Wellbeing is considered a priority within the school.

There are tangible rewards in place with personalised Christmas gifts, fruit in the staff room, doughnuts, Pizza's on a Friday and more recently there was a financial payment for appreciation of their hard work over Covid19.

The staff work well together and are clearly very supportive of one another.

The staff feel valued and listened to by the school leaders. There is an SLT open door policy to meet staff need and a coaching system in place.

There are regular opportunities to discuss and review staff social, emotional, mental health and wellbeing needs and actions are taken to address any issues.

The teacher appraisal is comprehensive and has been adapted to include wellbeing.

Counselling is also available to support the wellbeing of staff.

Staff recognise the important role they have to support the emotional wellbeing of pupils and families.

The school prioritises professional learning and staff development. This starts from induction onwards and includes emotional wellbeing and mental health training, with further opportunities offered in topics such as self-harm, bereavement etc.

Pupils

The pupils thrive, with so many positive wellbeing practices – values/rules displayed throughout the school, Circle Time, Pupil Voice, Wellbeing Champions, Emotional Literacy practices, Positive Playground practices for lunchtimes, nurture support for vulnerable children, anxiety strategies, self-esteem building activities, counselling and so much more.

When the whole school was placed into strict bubbles pupil voice went online with school council meeting on Teams. This proved very successful, and children really enjoyed having their meetings online, where they were able to share, listen to and ask questions and these were then followed up by class teachers within a smaller class student council meetings.

In September 2020, the school embarked on a whole school project – Colour Monsters, which has supported the development of emotional literacy in the children. The project has been the context for many pieces of work and continues to work as a theme throughout the award.

Pupils clearly enjoy learning and whilst visiting the school, there was clear evidence of strong relationships between staff and pupils.

Staff go the extra mile, meeting the needs of students emotionally and educationally.

As a result of the development of positive behaviours for learning and excellent relationship throughout the school community, behaviour is outstanding. Regular assessments are conducted in this area to ensure the wellbeing of all is maintained.

All have clearly worked hard on the award programme and the positive leadership behaviours need to be celebrated. The role and impact of Ruth and Tracey, the leadership team, the change team, the staff and parents at Marlbrook Primary School, together with support of governors has been critical in the excellent results achieved.

Impact:

- The Wellbeing Award (WAS) co-ordinator, headteacher and change team have been highly efficient and effective. Because of this effective management, staff feel both involved and well informed about the development of effective pastoral support for the pupils.

- The Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS) has provided a framework against which the school has benchmarked its practices and has given them clear and helpful signposts and enabled them to improve their practice.
- The school has a wide range of interventions to support pupils emotional wellbeing and mental health.
- Parents are extremely grateful to a school team who are very approachable, helpful and allow their children to thrive in a positive environment.
- Staff feel clearly supported by the headteachers and senior management team.
- Credit needs to be given to all at Marlbrook Primary School for the work that has been done to achieve the wellbeing award and its ongoing impact on children's learning, wellbeing, self-esteem and all their achievements.

Areas for development:

This is a school which shows excellent practice and has created an environment and ethos across the whole school effectively promoting good mental health and wellbeing.

The first area to consider is sustainability. Whilst the leadership team has a good plan for moving forward with wellbeing in 2021-22, which includes development of a forest school, outdoor play and learning and lunchtime provision, we need to expect turbulence and change, and we would suggest the leadership considers where problems could arise and plan ahead.

The school has strong links and relationships with parents, carers, outside agencies and the community and we would encourage you to maintain and develop these further.

We would suggest you showcase the outstanding emotional wellbeing and mental health work with Herefordshire Local Education Authority.

Verifier recommendation:

I am delighted to award Marlbrook Primary School the Wellbeing Award for Schools.

This reflects the school, staff, students, parents' and governors' commitment to emotional wellbeing and mental health and your achievements across the school. I saw a wide range of good practice and would encourage the school to capture their experience in a case study, to share with colleagues and Optimus Education.

This award covers the following 3 years. I look forward to the work the school will undertake over this time.

Head teacher comments:

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