

# Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS)

## Verification Report

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| <b>School name:</b>                   | The Mosley Academy                                  |
| <b>School address and postcode:</b>   | Main Road, Burton On Trent, Staffordshire, DE13 9QD |
| <b>School telephone:</b>              | 01283 247465  |
| <b>School website:</b>                | www.mosleyschool.co.uk                              |
| <b>Head teacher:</b>                  | Matthew Baxter                                      |
| <b>Head teacher's email:</b>          | mos-headteacher@mos.jtmat.co.uk                     |
| <b>WAS coordinator:</b>               | Matthew Baxter                                      |
| <b>WAS coordinator's email:</b>       | mos-headteacher@mos.jtmat.co.uk                     |
| <b>Award verifier:</b>                | Dr Helen Mills                                      |
| <b>Award adviser (if applicable):</b> |   |
| <b>Date of verification:</b>          | 26/11/2020  |

### Commentary on the evidence provided:

The evidence collected and presented by Matthew Baxter (Head Teacher and Award Coordinator) was excellent, clear and concise. The staff, governor, pupil and parent interviews were conducted with pride, passion, confidence, openness and honesty. A real sense of belonging and a committed team approach was evident, demonstrating the schools ability to work effectively as a team. This provided detailed information and allowed the adviser to better understand the context and background to the schools developments and achievements.

### Strengths identified during verification:

Outstanding leadership is a critical factor in understanding the success of the school in promoting emotional wellbeing and mental health as core to the whole school community. The financial investment, autonomous style, skills, commitment, and approach of the Head Teacher, Senior Leadership Team, Change Team, Staff, Governors, PTA and the whole school community has created innovative ways of working and a seamless and consistent, welcoming, happy, none judgemental, caring, supportive, safe, nurturing, engaging, creative and aspirational culture.

An excellent and clear wellbeing vision, strategy, school aim and motto, which are all reflected in the positive culture and ethos of the school, are central to the success of the school, and has for a number of years, created a sense of autonomy, belonging, and shared responsibility, referred to during the visit as 'family'. This was once again refreshed during the Wellbeing Award for Schools process, demonstrating continued commitment to further support and improve the emotional wellbeing and mental health of the whole school community. The result offers a powerful template for how emotional wellbeing of pupils, families and staff supports whole school progress.

An open door policy, stakeholder voice, listening to the needs of others, implementing change and empowering people are very much part of how the school has achieved a shared sense of family where pupils, families and staff are confident to ask for or seek support, and staff are confident in identifying those who require support and signposting and/or providing support. The award evidence and interviews demonstrated how extensive, innovative and open this feature is, with staff going above and beyond what is expected to ensure that the whole school community is supported.

Caring, helpful, kindness, happy, confident, trust, safe, respect, friends, family, fun, and enjoyment were key descriptions given in the interviews, and these are core to the positive, creative and nurturing culture of the school. Children feel extremely safe and happy in school, have many friends, and articulated well how the school supports them with their emotional wellbeing and mental health and how they are confident to express their feelings, to ask for support and actively help each other. Pupils commented on the enjoyment and satisfaction they get from learning inside the classroom and outdoors, how they try their best, can identify and talk openly about their feelings, are proud of their celebrated achievements, and described numerous tools that they can use, activities they can do and trusted adults they can work with to promote their wellbeing. This has enabled the day-to-day and longer-term emotional wellbeing and mental health activities to flourish and was evident throughout the verification with the promotion of wellbeing, positivity, aspirations, achievements, coupled with a sense of calm and nurturing relationships, with children demonstrating exemplary behaviour and manners, confidence, engagement and enjoyment in learning.

Significant investment in the facilities, environment, wide range of activities, staffing, training, with formal and informal support systems, was apparent during the school verification, and in provision and monitoring of interventions. The award process also highlighted the multiple examples of outstanding 'wellbeing' practice. Many of these have a major impact on the whole school community. For example, class worry tins, whole school mental health/feelings check in, 101 things to experience before you leave Mosely, 1-1 and group targeted sessions including the Hope and positive play sessions, new sensory room, PSHE Jigsaw curriculum, SRE, Forest school, outdoor learning, creative curriculum strategy and lessons, school trips, fund raising, extra curricular activities, music, singing, art, drama, sport, golden time, classroom rules and charter, the proactive approach to supporting families, parent assemblies, groups, and programmes, an active PTA and parent forum, the importance placed on the school vision, aim and motto, outstanding working relationships with outside agencies and the local community, health and wellbeing activities, reducing mental health stigma campaigns, happy healthy children week, world mental health day, healthy start week, anti-bullying work, COVID mental health recovery curriculum, parental stay and play sessions, achievements and rewards, fundraising, school parliament and ECO squad.

Children commented, "School is a very safe and happy place. All the teachers, staff and our friends are nice. I really like lessons; we learn something new every day. We try our best, 'be the best you can be', and we feel better about it. If we work hard and behave we get golden time to play games, it's fun. We have a mental health check in and can put we need a check in, and if we have a worry,

we put it in the tin, the TA checks them and talks to us, it helps a lot. If we're sad or worried we can express our feelings to an adult or a friend. Jigsaw helps us to talk about our feelings, we have a chime, close our eyes and feel happy and calm, it's a good lesson, it clears your mind. We have golden rules to make sure we don't hurt anyone, are kind, helpful, gentle, honest, work hard and listen. 101 things to do before we leave is fun and challenging and you see what you've achieved. School Parliament vote for things, make suggestions and help people, like children in need, comic relief, the Harvest festival when we sing and donate to people who have less; you feel really good and happy that you've helped someone else. Eco squad help with recycling. We had a mental health day, did colouring and parents came and we did yoga, it was nice and calming and good for mental health. Forest school is fun and very good for our mental health".

Attention must be drawn to the value and priority given, along with significant financial investment, to staff wellbeing and professional learning, and this is valued greatly by the highly skilled and dedicated staff who feel that the strategies in place support their emotional wellbeing, enabling them to provide the most effective support to the children. The staff baseline questionnaire findings were positive in all areas, and continued to improve further. The school has many longstanding staff, and those that move on, do so for career progression through the effective CPD provided. The staff questionnaire results were used to inform future training, which has included whole school attachment disorder and active learning, all TA's trained in positive play, Hope listening ear and Boxhall monitoring training, Forest school, emotional literacy support assistant and two trained mental health first aiders, which has been cascaded to all staff, alongside safeguarding training.

The Head Teacher has committed to reducing staff stress and workload through implementing a reduced marking policy and information report format, completing paperwork during pupil progress meetings, abolishing weekly planning sent to the HT, PPA can be done at home, flexible working and phased returns, TA's have meetings and training, a planned in advance school calendar, wellbeing sessions and days, access to Thinkwell service and support at Mind Burton, excellent CDP opportunities, wellbeing agenda at all meetings and an open door policy. Staff are rewarded with a wellbeing day, have flu jabs and health checks paid for and a newly improved warm and comfortable staff room where there is a wellbeing board, support contacts and positive quotes. Two staff mental health first aiders are available to speak to and support staff. Staff commented how supportive and approachable all staff are and how everyone says good morning and looks out for each other, and importantly there is a genuine focus on happiness.

Staff commented, "We have two trained mental health first aiders to talk to. We know what emotional signs to look out for, including changes in behaviour and we are now asking for children to be checked on, training has improved our confidence. It's a lovely place to be, we've kept the ethos and improved it. Children love Jigsaw and mindfulness; it's a safe space to talk and share and has opened up conversations with friends. All classes have a daily check in. In lockdown everyone was included, we had consistent communication and were asked how we were feeling. We share wellbeing good practice, information and are signposted to further support. I'm proud that we've removed the stigma of mental health; nobody is afraid to say when he or she are not OK, we're more open now. I'm proud of how the children bound in to school because we've worked so hard on wellbeing. We develop the whole child. I absolutely love working here. I feel valued, there's no hierarchy and we are all friends, very confident to approach anybody. Children love Forest school, it's increased their self esteem and empathy, they look after and help each other, and have developed team work, social and communication skills, the less academic shine, it's lots of fun. I'm proud that the children are at the heart of the school; we make sure they are happy. I'm proud of the way staff work together". Staff feel valued, connected, supported, enjoy their jobs and are proud to work at the school.

The proactive approach and numerous opportunities for parental engagement, effective communication between staff and parents and excellent working relationships with the JTMAT and outside agencies, should be commended and ensures that all children, including vulnerable children and their families are supported swiftly and effectively. This includes SLT who meet and greet parents on the school yard, numerous opportunities for parents to get together, including sessions on mental health and wellbeing (Covid has paused some of these), an outstanding school website including the wellbeing section, Twitter, newsletters, parent mail, pupil progress meetings, school based interventions, signposting and referrals made to outside agencies, and most importantly the whole school staff working alongside parents in a non judgemental way and listening to parent suggestions. The school website demonstrates the community feel of this school and every member of staff are clearly identified through a picture drawn by the children, including a description of their role and hobbies, providing an interpersonal touch. Parent praise and gratitude for staff in school was exceptional.

Parents commented, "It's a family, a really nice environment, the school motto eradicates negative thoughts. Children are absolutely safe and happy in school. My child was anxious and the Hope sessions were really helpful and been great for me, he's using the worry tin and his friend has supported him. You're never on your own, staff are non judgemental, listen to you and find solutions. Felt connected and supported in lockdown with all the activities and communication and children were happy and enjoyed the challenges. I enjoyed the mental health and wellbeing parent event and connected with other parents. Parents were invited in and made aware of the wellbeing award. Anyone can be involved in the PTA, it's a great network and well supported, we funded Jigsaw and it's having a positive effect on everyone and we're having conversations at home. Twitter is brilliant at capturing moments. Children are excited to do Forest school, it makes them interested in other things at home and they spend less time on electronics. The Head Teacher is on the playground, teachers are accessible and the office staff get back to you straight away.

Collaborative working in mental health and wellbeing has been a strong focus and further strengthened during the award process, with the Head Teacher organising a successful community wide collaboration and wellbeing event, attended by children and families and sharing good practice at numerous networks.

The school has drawn together the threads that connect all the different work done and aspirations, and is able to demonstrate positive change in children. The school understands the importance of looking after the whole schools mental health and wellbeing, and how happy children impacts positivity on their educational attainment, for example the schools 2018 and 2019 results in maths placed them in the top 1% nationally.

**Impact:**

Investment in staff wellbeing has resulted in a reduction in staff workload, stress and an increase in staff managing their own wellbeing, which has further strengthened staff's sense of belonging, pride, motivation and job satisfaction.

Whole school training in mental health and wellbeing has increased whole school community awareness, resulting in open conversations and everyone recognising when they are not mentally well, able to ask for support or to support themselves and others confidently and to improve their wellbeing by using a range of techniques, contributing to improved resilience.

Effective stakeholder voice and consultation mechanisms, clear communication and the wellbeing vision, strategy and aims has lead to a shared responsibility and ownership that promotes and empowers everyone to take responsibility of their own and others wellbeing and mental health.

Staff training in mental health has resulted in increased awareness and understanding of mental health. Staff are confident to talk about their own mental health and are confident that they have the skills and tools to support their own and their pupils' emotional wellbeing and mental health. Staff feel that school listens to their views and needs. Staff are confident in recognising the factors that affect their children and families mental health and know how to refer for support to ensure that children and their families receive support quickly, preventing escalation of mental health issues.

An embedded happy, caring, positive school culture and ethos, investment in highly trained, passionate and nurturing staff, along with the change team, new Jigsaw curriculum, daily mental health check ins, worry tins, Forest school, a creative and varied curriculum and extra curricular activities and targeted interventions has resulted in all pupils, including those with additional wellbeing and mental health needs, being provided with a safe space and for interventions to be delivered, enabling their needs to be met. This has promoted confidence in children's ability to talk openly about their feelings, to manage their own mental health, and to support each other, demonstrating developments in their social and emotional skills, self-esteem, confidence, independence and resilience, enabling young people to thrive and excel in their learning.

#### **Areas for development:**

As already highlighted by the school, continue to work collaboratively across the MAT and local authority, on parental support, deliver the well-established mental health and wellbeing events, introduce additional PPA for teaching staff, staff wellbeing days (post lockdown), planned staff inset days and further CPD and monitor the stakeholder questionnaire findings.

Consider running family Forest school sessions and promote the 5 ways to wellbeing via the school Twitter account.

Continue to develop the Mental Health First Aider and children's wellbeing champion roles and promote these on the website and within school.

Showcase the outstanding emotional wellbeing and mental health work with your local authority, MAT and mental health forums that the school attends.

Having become more aware of the multiple examples of outstanding practice, continue to share the experiences and approaches with other schools.

#### **Verifier recommendation:**

The Mosley Academy has achieved the Wellbeing Award for Schools. This award covers the following 3 years. I look forward to the work the school will undertake over this time.

#### **Head teacher comments:**

We have thoroughly enjoyed being part of the well-being for schools process, it has enabled and encouraged us to bring about significant change. The children, staff and parents have really benefited from the improvements and changes we have made. We are delighted with the report, it describes our lovely school so well and it is humbling to read such positive comments. The next steps and targets will enable us to make further improvements and we are really looking forward to keeping mental health and well-being high on our agenda moving forward.

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