

CASE STUDY KINGSGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL Awarded Healthy Schools London Gold March 2022

Introduction

In September 2020, on return from lockdown and summer holidays, staff observed children feeling stressed and anxious about returning to school and about the Covid-19 pandemic. To further understand children's thoughts and feelings, we decided to conduct the Stirling Health and Wellbeing survey with Key Stage 2. When we analysed the results, we were concerned to find that 22% of pupils (62 of 284) responded that they 'never' or 'not much of the time' felt calm or relaxed.

In order to support our children, we decided to develop a plan of activities and interventions focusing on mental health and wellbeing. The plan aimed to help children feel calm and relaxed and in addition, provide support for a small group of pupils who were identified by their teachers as having low confidence, low self-esteem and resilience and a fixed mindset. As a result of developing our plan, in **November 2020** we were awarded the **Healthy Schools London Silver Award**. The outcomes we were hoping to achieve were:

Universal

- To decrease the percentage of children who say they feel calm "never" or "not much of the time" from 22% (62 out of 284 children) to 12% (35 out of 284 children)

Targeted

- To decrease the percentage of teachers who disagree or strongly disagree that the child chosen in their class '*Talks positively about themselves and their achievements*' from 67% (4 out of 6 teachers) to 17% (1 out of 6 teachers)
- To decrease the percentage of teachers who disagree or strongly disagree that the child chosen in their class '*Keep trying and do not give up, even when they find it hard*' from 67% (4 out of 6 teachers) to 33% (2 out of 6 teachers)

Activities

Despite the many challenges faced during the ongoing pandemic, we were able to successfully deliver the following activities and interventions:

- Teachers used the 'Take-Ten' programme or their own meditation session after lunchtime every day with their classes <http://www.letstaketen.com/#home>
- Project Smile, the targeted intervention for 6 KS1 pupils was successfully delivered. KS1 staff were involved in supporting these children through positive interactions and enforcements of a Growth mindset. Children attended a nurture group which focussed on confidence and resilience boosting activities.
- Weekly class assemblies that focused on Mental Health and Wellbeing were delivered both in school and at home (during the second lockdown). During this time the teachers continued to provide children with mental health and wellbeing resources and activities, as well as access to daily meditation/Take Ten videos. When children returned to school, the teachers and children

commented positively on the assemblies. Teachers are continuing to do a range of weekly assemblies to promote mental health and wellbeing with their classes this academic year.

- The Mini Health Champions Programme worked well and new Mini Health Champions have been elected this academic year and have been trained by the Camden Health and Wellbeing Team.
- In line with our schools behaviour blueprint, all staff are encouraged to positively meet and greet children in the school (by name if possible) with a smile and positive praise.
- Story time reading of texts about resilience and self-esteem were an integral part of our plan. The school has bought a range of texts and teachers read these stories regularly to children to continue to develop their resilience and self-esteem. We also display these books around the school to promote these themes. Please find below links to some of the books we used that had a calming theme.
 - [The Huge Bag of Worries](#)
 - [The Invisible String](#)
 - [Find Your Calm](#)
 - [Listening to my Body](#)
- Staff received support and advice from the Camden Health and Wellbeing team including training on building resilient pupils. In addition, key staff attended further PSHE and mental health training throughout the year.
- Although mental health week took place when children were home schooling, we promoted the day by providing online resources for pupils to access at home.

Healthy Schools London Gold Award - Results and impact

As a result of implementing our plan and achieving our targets we were awarded the **Healthy Schools London Gold Award in March 2022**. Our results and the impact of our work included:

Universal outcome – target exceeded:

The percentage of children who say they feel calm ‘never’ or ‘not much of the time’ decreased from 22% (62 out of 284 children) to **8%** (26 out of 307 pupils). We were also pleased that **100%** children in Y6 answered that they feel calm ‘all’, or ‘some of the time’.

The daily 5 minute meditation/ Take 10 sessions have been a huge success for our school as both the children and teachers have said that they find it to be an enjoyable part of the day and effective and helpful tool for relaxation, finding calm and dealing with daily stress, worries, anxiety, etc.

In addition, the follow up Sterling Survey results also showed a high percentage of children feeling relaxed. **92% (282 out of 307)** of children answered all, quite a lot or some of the time which we believe is another positive impact of the 5 minute meditation/ Take 10 sessions.

Comments from teachers and pupils

“Meditation really helps the children self regulate. I have noticed they are generally better able to calm themselves down and it is a really effective tool which keeps improving the more it’s embedded. It also benefits teachers as its good for our mental health and wellbeing too! Yr 3 teacher

“Take ten helps me calm down after lunch and makes be learn better because I can think more clearly” Yr 3 child

*Question: “What can someone do to help them calm down?”
Answer: Meditate, count down from ten, and tell an adult you trust as they could help you” Yr 4 child*

*“Take Ten has a had a really positive impact. They are much more calm and focused. It is really effective after lunch as it helps the children refocus. It also really helps the children in their learning as they can use it they feel sad or frustrated if they don’t understand something yet”
Yr 4 teacher*

Targeted outcome (a) – target met

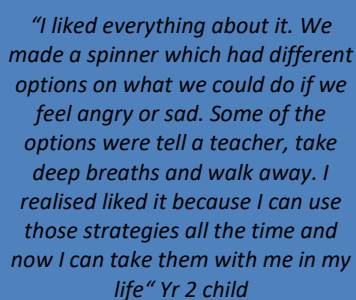
The percentage of teachers who disagree or strongly disagree that the child chosen in their class *'Talks positively about themselves and their achievements* decreased from 67% (4 out of 6 teachers) to **17%** (1 out of 6 teachers)

Targeted outcome (b) – target exceeded

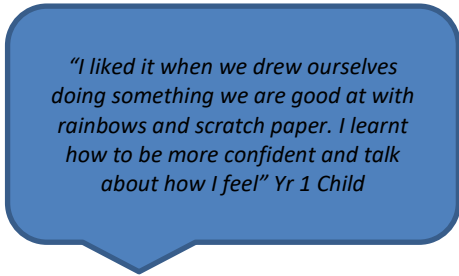
The percentage of teachers who disagree or strongly disagree that the child chosen in their class *'Keep trying and do not give up, even when they find it hard'* from 67% (4 out of 6 teachers) to **17%** (1 out of 6 teachers)

The children reported that they really enjoyed the activities on confidence, resilience and self-esteem that they completed during the Project Smile sessions. The positive impact was noted by teachers, who said that the children were more confident to speak up in class and more resilient when it came to taking part in new tasks. Some parents also provided feedback to teachers about the positive changes in confidence and self-esteem that they had noticed in their children.

Comments from children



"I liked everything about it. We made a spinner which had different options on what we could do if we feel angry or sad. Some of the options were tell a teacher, take deep breaths and walk away. I realised liked it because I can use those strategies all the time and now I can take them with me in my life" Yr 2 child



"I liked it when we drew ourselves doing something we are good at with rainbows and scratch paper. I learnt how to be more confident and talk about how I feel" Yr 1 Child

What we will do in the future to sustain our work and benefit our pupils

- We will continue with daily meditation
- We will continue to have Mini Health Champions elected each year (1 child for each class) to promote health and wellbeing in the school.
- We will continue to provide teachers with mental health and wellbeing class assembly slides, books and other resources to ensure they continue promoting mental health and wellbeing with their classes.
- We will continue to meet and greet the children in line with our whole school behaviour blueprint
- There were many positive learning experiences and activities from our work with our targeted children that will continue to benefit other children in the future. We now have a whole school focus this year on 'Confidence and Assertiveness'. This is all about giving our children strategies to not only build their confidence and assertiveness, but also their self-esteem, resilience, growth mindset, etc.

If you would like to find out more about the work we did as part of our Gold Award please contact:

Melissa Grubb (m.grubb@kingsgate-pri.camden.sch.uk) or
Tatiana Mulhern (t.mulhern@kingsgate-pri.camden.sch.uk)