

Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS)

Reassessment Report

School name:	Low Hill Nursery
School address and postcode:	Low Hill, Wolverhampton, WV10 9JN
School telephone:	01902 558124
School website:	https://www.lowhillnursery.co.uk/
Head teacher:	Natalie Showell
Award coordinator:	Natalie Showell
Award verifier:	Liz Bates
Date of reassessment:	25/10/23

Commentary on the mini-portfolio of evidence:

The portfolio was missing some evidence but much of that I was able to observe as I went around the school. I spoke at length to Natalie, the Headteacher, and was satisfied that any missing hard evidence was verified by her.

Natalie and Sam spoke passionately about how the school had developed:

- The transformational nature of becoming a Trauma Informed school
- The requests by the LA and other schools to share good practice
- Changes to staff meetings to focus on reflective practice, CPD moments and achievements
- Awareness of 'toxic positivity'
- Monitoring of staff absence to provide support
- Creation of the Sunflower room to meet more complex needs – numbers are increasing due to word of mouth and LA referrals
- Intimate care approaches as less procedural and more caring/interactive/bonding
- Improved meeting of parents needs – more training sessions provided
- The opportunities to invite conference speakers eg from ARC, to the school

Commentary on the tour of the school:

The commitment to, and passion for, wellbeing was evident throughout my visit. I was lucky enough to observe the children in all sorts of activities inside and outside, both guided by staff and individual exploration.

The rooms are set up to cater for many levels of need with the Sunflower room designed for the most vulnerable of children.

There is a constant reminder to the children of how their feelings are valued with images and expressions for them to identify sand name – which is done regularly.

The staff showed high levels of emotional understanding and the children presented as happy, calm, engaged and energetic.

The staff spaces have been extended and now include a comfortable kitchen space.

Commentary on discussions with stakeholders:

Staff

Staff felt wellbeing was embedded in the culture of the school and identified needs were responded to.

There was a general feeling that SLT availability and line management appraisals had a wellbeing focus. The school now has an EAP agreement and there are also counselling services available. Mindfulness and other similar sessions are available to staff.

There are a number of members of staff who are ex-parents and were helped by the school to achieve the training and qualifications necessary to join the school as staff.

Pupils

The age of the children meant that pupil interviews were not appropriate.

However I visited plenty of spaces and rooms around the school and observed happy, engaged children identifying their feelings, having their feelings valued, relating well to adults, being shown sensitivity, acknowledgement and acceptance by staff. The children are able to make choices but are also caringly guided but the staff.

Parents

“I don’t want my children to leave” was said to me a number of times whilst speaking to parents. Remarkable levels of support have been offered by the school to parents – housing needs, accessing extra support, stepping in where another school failed to help. There was a feeling that “What do you need? How can we help?” is the approach taken by the school towards the parents. The parents I spoke to valued the workshops which were provided and also commented on how their lives had improved thanks to the school.

Governor

The chair of governors spoke warmly of her relationship with the school. Her role as critical friend is highly valued.

She acknowledged to increase in levels of need over the last few years and described the evident focus on wellbeing to take account of this.

She is a regular presence in the school and consequently is able to monitor the strategic development of wellbeing and the impact it has.

Strengths identified during reassessment:

The school has continued to embed wellbeing as fundamental to the life of the school. The school is acutely aware of the level of need and has a universal offer around the importance of feelings.

There is also a targeted and specialist offer for those vulnerable children with a higher level of need.

Training sessions for parents include:

Makaton
Sleep
Sensory needs
Toilet training
Eating

Also see 'Commentary on portfolio'

Impact:

The impact on the school is evident in many areas – not least that the academic curriculum takes second place to the importance of children feeling safe, secure, seen and soothed.

The language of mental health and wellbeing is respected and understood – it continues to be an intrinsic part of school life.

The school has become an Attachment and Trauma Informed School to enable staff to be even better responders to their more vulnerable pupils, and has won an award last year from ARC for their work as an attachment aware school.

Both the local authority and wider authorities refer children to the school as a result of its approach.

Areas for development:

- Wellbeing support and signposting for parents on the website
- Reflect on the value of CPD. Ask the questions - 'What will you do differently as a result of this training?', 'How will this training impact on your role in school?'
- Long term CPD plan

Verifier recommendation:

I am delighted to recommend that the Award continues and is accredited for 3 more years.

Liz Bates

Head teacher comments:

I am extremely proud that Low Hill Nursery School has been awarded the Wellbeing Award for Schools for another three years.

The approach that we have developed sees wellbeing at the heart of our decisions, this extends to all including the wider school community. We are proud of the recognition that we have received for our attachment aware and trauma informed approach.

We will continue to build on our existing practice to ensure that as a school we are always developing and evolving.

May we use your comment for website/marketing purposes? **Yes**