

SMITHY BRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Smithy Bridge Primary School, in Rochdale, is a foundation school for children aged 3-11.

What do they do?

The Rochdale Healthy Schools Programme has been using the Enhanced Healthy Schools Model for some time. The advanced model builds upon the Healthy Schools Standard and requires schools to evidence real behavioural changes in students.

With this in mind, and as emotional health and wellbeing is a key theme of Healthy Schools, Smithy Bridge Primary School used the Stirling Wellbeing Scale, which was adapted for Rochdale pupils, to measuring wellbeing in Year 6 students. Colleagues from the Healthy Schools Programme helped the school by providing them with the Scale and information about how to use it; but the school itself worked with their pupils to enable them to complete the scale, and then school staff analysed the results. More information about the Stirling Wellbeing Scale can be found above.

The Stirling Wellbeing Scale was used to gather baseline data in September 2012. Research that has used this scale on a large number of children, found that the mean score is 44, with 50% of all scores being within the range of 39 and 48. So, after the students had completed the questions on the scale, they decided to pay particular attention to the 7 children with scores under 40 because they had lower levels of wellbeing.

The school put in place a number of activities and initiatives to promote emotional wellbeing. These included:

- Mood lifting/relaxation activities used in class
- Focus on Emotional Health and Well-being in Y6 PSHCE
- New PSHCE scheme of work for Y1 - Y6
- Children using stress and anxiety scales
- Anger management techniques explored with individuals

To help the school understand whether the new activities and initiatives were actually improving wellbeing they used the Stirling Wellbeing Scale again on the same students nearly a year later in July 2013. As they had already gathered baseline data, they were able to compare the scores and see if wellbeing had improved. They found that 85% of children scored over 45 in 2013 compared to 55% in 2012. The average score was 51 in 2013, compared to 45 in 2012. All of the students who scored under 40 all increased their scores; with some more than doubling it, and the average score for this group was 47 in July 2013 compared to 32 in September 2012. This data suggests that the activities and initiatives put in place were improving the wellbeing across the whole Year group. This was despite some of the students finding the transition to high schools, and SATS particularly challenging.

They also found that by implementing these new activities and initiatives to improve wellbeing improved a number of other outcomes:

- The whole class is beginning to use stress indicators and understand the language of emotion.
- Some of the target children are using the strategies they are learning and are controlling their outbursts more regularly
- Some of the target children are beginning to recognise trigger situations and avoid them
- Learning mentors are reporting that some children are talking positively about their strategies

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