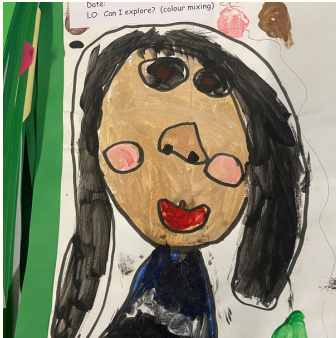


FOCUS ON

Well-being



Well-being can be described as how you feel about yourself and your life. As adults we have control of our well-being and happiness and many have the skills and resources needed to access support.

However, the children in our schools are still learning these skills and need to be supported in understanding their feelings, emotions and how to make sense of them and the world around them.

TTLT schools have well-designed curriculum plans that support this, as well as and dedicated staff who listen to and nurture children. Assisting well-being is about how staff make themselves approachable to every child they encounter and how they listen to everything they have to say, how they understand the language of reactions - the pauses between each word, the tears that may flow from a child's eyes or the frustration they experience in trying to make sense of the sensations they are encountering.

Having a strong PSHE curriculum in our schools ensures that explicit teaching provides each child with a safe place to process and reflect on their thoughts and emotions. Therapeutic support is also key in providing some children with specialist support allowing them more time to work on this.

As a Trust we strive to make a positive difference to every child by ensuring we listen, understand and respond in a manner that is respectful. We focus on being approachable; demonstrating and implementing active listening; reserving our judgements; exercising empathy; reflecting on our approach when working with children and understanding how one method may work with one child but not another. Children's well-being is at the heart of everything we do and believe across the Trust.



In this Focus On we wanted to learn more about Mandy and her work.

Mandy grew up in Newham, went to school in Newham and has taught in two Newham schools. She has been working at Curwen for over eleven years and during that time has evolved into the role as the Safeguarding Lead from being the Early Years Phase Leader. Early years has always been her passion, with the belief that good quality early education is the key to developing a well-rounded child. For several years, Mandy worked as an Early Years Moderator for the borough ensuring high quality education was available to all the children in Newham and not only in her own school.

Understanding the importance of good mental health began when she was a Listening Volunteer for the Samaritans, committing to three hours of charity work per week. This work helped her to realise how people can be impacted by life and work and pushed her to undertake training to become a Supervisor. She offers Supervision to the Safeguarding Leads in the Trust and now the SENCo's in the Trust, providing them with emotional support due to the very demanding jobs they do.

In 2019, Mandy went on to complete the Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Training and soon after trained to be a Trainer herself. The course raises awareness of mental health and how to challenge stigma, how to build confidence in others who may be experiencing mental ill health and how to look after your own mental health by supporting wellbeing. To date, Mandy has successfully delivered the MHFA training to over fifty people in the Trust and will continue training others.

A constant drive to improve her skills and knowledge pushed Mandy to train as an Integrative Counsellor and in May 2023, she successfully qualified and now has her private practice called SELF. She believes that we all face challenges at some point in our life and it is her absolute pleasure to help people navigate themselves when challenges present.

Children need to be supported to be healthy and happy in our schools, and by having healthy and emotionally intelligent staff who are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to help children, we can ensure the future is bright for the next generation.

Fantastic course outlining the importance of mental health. I think this should be compulsory for all staff in education

Participant from training in November 2023

