

St Francis Catholic Primary School

Assessment date: Thursday 6th May 2021

Assessor: Sheryll Carter

Outcome: Based on the findings of the virtual assessment, I am pleased to confirm your self-validation to maintain Healthy Schools Status. Your commitment to the investment in Social, Emotional and Mental Health (SEMH) means that you have also achieved Mindmate Friendly Status.

Information about the assessment process

- The school self-evaluated current Healthy Schools practice within the 4 core areas, Personal, Social & Health Education (PSHE), Healthy Eating, Physical Activity and Social Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH), using the School Health Check prior to assessment. The school judged themselves in each area using descriptors aligned with Ofsted.
- The assessor interviewed groups of pupils, staff and senior leaders.
- Relevant paperwork was presented as stated in the agreed list of documentation.

The school has the following strengths:

General:

- It is evident that the school invests much in health and wellbeing and that the Healthy Schools programme has a very high profile. All aspects of the programme are well led and managed and subject leads show passion and dedication to their role.
- The head teacher and Healthy Schools team have a strong and committed belief in the health and wellbeing of the school community and this inspires all staff.
- Staff continuing professional development (CPD) is of high importance. Opportunities are carefully planned, both for subject leaders and the whole school staff, and improvements are made to policy and practice where necessary.
- Strong action planning and subject monitoring ensure that progress and next steps are easily identified.
- The school has worked proactively on the new statutory requirements and has created a curriculum and policy in line with recommendations.
- Staff commented on the head teacher's open door policy, they feel trusted to try new ideas and initiatives and greatly appreciate the support they receive.
- There are many opportunities for pupils to engage in playing a key role across the school, including the School Council, School Food Ambassadors and School MindMate Ambassadors.
- Pupils spoken to on the day were happy, confident and polite and demonstrated an excellent knowledge of health and wellbeing.
- The school has an informative and detailed website which encompasses all relevant information and policies and is highly reflective of the school itself.

Healthy Eating:

- The dedicated and inspiring team work hard to ensure that Healthy Eating has a high profile in school.
- Many changes have been made to the curriculum, assessment and monitoring procedures and impressive progress has been made since the last Healthy Schools assessment.
- CPD is disseminated to ensure that all staff receive cooking training. This has increased staff knowledge and confidence to ensure the pupils receive high quality teaching and learning.
- The Design Technology curriculum has been created to reflect the needs of pupils, is linked to topic work where appropriate and cooking is carried out every term.
- Thorough assessment procedures are in place and designated staff meeting time ensures that staff are familiar with these. As a result, assessment is used very effectively and informs future planning.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of where food comes through the development of the growing area and greenhouse.
- The Whole School Food policy is excellent and a true reflection of the school.
- The school has a water only policy and promotes and encourages all pupils to consume water throughout the day.
- The School Food Ambassadors (SFA) work hard and take their roles seriously. They have created and implemented the packed lunch policy and, with encouragement, healthier options are being seen in packed lunches.
- The school has developed many links with organisations such as Morrisons and Tesco to enhance the Healthy Eating curriculum.
- Healthy eating messages are shared with parents through a variety of different channels, such as Twitter and the school website, many of which are led by the SFA.
- Parents are able to choose a mix of school dinners and packed lunches within a week. This flexibility helps encourage pupils to try a school meal and has been particularly helpful whilst the menus have been more limited due to the pandemic.
- A successful Breakfast and After School Club is run by the school. Menus are planned across the whole school day to ensure that the School Food Standards are met and healthy eating messages are consistent.
- Despite the many restrictions as a results of the pandemic, every effort is made to ensure that pupils have with the best possible experience during lunchtime. Staff work hard to ensure that pupils continue to use the school hall to eat their lunch.

Social, emotional and mental health (SEMH):

- SEMH in this school is outstanding. Leadership of this subject is very strong and well managed. The subject lead is well motivated and enthusiastic about her subject. Her passion for PSHE and SEMH is clearly evident.
- Strong and supportive relationships built on respect, care and trust are at the core of St Francis Catholic Primary, creating a caring ethos and a calm, safe environment.
- The sense of community, which all groups mentioned, was strongly felt. Staff are open, supportive and responsive to each other's needs and those of the pupils and their families.
- A detailed and effective SEMH policy is in place which highlights how the school will provide a mentally healthy environment for staff, pupils and parents/carers, ensuring that the needs of the whole school community are considered.
- The MindMate lessons are well established within the PSHE and SEMH curriculum, which is responsive to the needs of the pupils.
- Developing emotional literacy has a very high profile. PSHE and MindMate lessons, circle time and more all provide opportunities for pupils to talk about their feelings and staff have worked hard to create an environment where pupils feel safe to do so. As a result, pupils

spoken to on the day, demonstrated an outstanding knowledge of mental health and wellbeing.

- As a result of effective CPD, staff are confident to teach and lead discussions on a range of sensitive issues. They know that the SEMH/PSHE lead will support them if needed.
- Staff are aware of the pupils' needs and opinions through the use of pupil perception data and pupil reflection time. This information is used to inform practice and planning. For example, pupils were clear that they wanted to talk during their PSHE lessons rather than write. Lessons have been adapted to reflect this and staff and pupils commented on the positive impact this has had.
- There are clear pathways and procedures in relation to supporting emotional health and wellbeing in school. Targeted support is provided through the play therapist, the family support worker, nurture groups and more.
- There is a consistent whole school approach to behaviour using a positive behaviour management system based on a very clear behaviour policy. All pupils I spoke to were very happy, polite, enthusiastic and emotionally literate.
- The School Council is well established and pupils think highly of the members and the impact their work has on the school. Pupil voice, on a variety of subjects and issues, is usually regularly sought and this will continue once bubbles are able to mix again.
- Pupils reported feeling safe and confident to speak to any member of staff. Worry boxes are available and the School MindMate Ambassadors, once classes are able to mix again, will continue their work supporting their peers.
- Staff wellbeing is a very high priority. Views of staff are regularly sought, drop-in wellbeing sessions are available, Mindfulness baskets are in the staff room as well as many other opportunities for staff to discuss their views and feelings. This results in a very strong and nurturing team ethos where staff feel valued and included.

Areas for development

Healthy Eating:

- To create a child-friendly policy with the SFA (as per the action plan, once restrictions have lifted)

SEMH:

- To make the small amendments to the behaviour and anti-bullying policy as advised on the day

Quotes from the assessment visit

Pupils:

"In this school everyone gets a chance to speak."

"I like the MindMate characters as some people hide their feelings and it reminds me of that."

"We know it's important to look after ourselves and talk about our feelings."

"The staff ask how we feel and teach us that emotions and feelings are ok."

"Staff make sure we're happy."

"It's important to eat a balance of food to protect you from things like iron deficiency and tooth decay."

"We grow different types of food and learn about when things are in season."

Staff:

"The head is amazing! She is so understanding and asks what we need. She listens to staff as much as the children."

"People are happy to be open about their feelings. It's important for the children to know that adults talk about feelings and this helps children learn how to manage them."

"We all work as a team: parents, staff and the children; there is a really strong ethos."

"The head allows us to make decisions and gives us her backing; she's so supportive."

"Everyone is in it for the children and wants the very best for them."

"It's like a family here, everyone supports each other and there's always someone to go to."

"It was important to us that children continued to go into the hall for lunch. It was a lot of work but it is the best thing for the children."

"We must be doing something right and so many ex-pupils come back to see us."

"We wanted to make sure that all staff had cooking training so that everyone has the skills they need."

Thank you for taking the time to be a part of the assessment process and for making me feel so welcome on the day. I look forward to continuing working with you and supporting your future Healthy Schools work.

Kind regards

Sheryll Carter
Healthy Schools Advisor
Health and Wellbeing Service