

Stormbreak[®] Insight Report

Walsall Schools - October 2022



Stormbreak Surge: embedding
mentally healthy movement
every day for every child



stormbreak[®]

What is stormbreak?

Stormbreak is a registered charity in England and Wales that supports children's mental health through movement provision. Stormbreak school training programmes are whole-school, preventative approaches that support primary aged children to develop a toolkit of skills and knowledge around their own wellbeing that will support them now and in the future.



The Surge programme

Surge is stormbreak's school staff advocate training programme to make movement simple, inclusive and accessible and equip staff with the delivery confidence to incorporate mentally healthy movement strategies into the daily life of the whole school. It removes barriers to participation and enhances perceptions of the worth of movement in schools for teachers, staff and children, through the delivery of purposeful and intentional movement that is focused on mental health and establishment of an effective whole school empowering environment.

The stormbreak surge programme leads a school community through the principles and practicalities of embedding stormbreak to ensure long lasting, impactful and sustainable change.

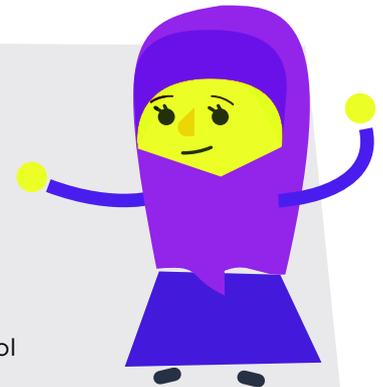
Stormbreak Surge Primary Schools

This cohort of schools was made up of 8 primary schools based in Walsall. The participating schools were:

- Meadow View JMI School
- Oakwood School
- Park Hall Infant Academy
- Park Hall Junior Academy
- Pinfold Street Primary School
- Rushall Primary School
- Ryders Hayes Community Primary School
- Salisbury Primary School

All schools in this cohort were invited to engage with an evaluation of stormbreak. The research and evaluation team are based at Bournemouth University. The evaluation is ongoing and the findings presented here are emerging, confident observation of progress so far.

The cohorts who have participated in the evaluation to date include the school staff who engaged with the stormbreak Surge programme training and those staff who have delivered stormbreaks in their classes and across the school. Children's outcomes have been captured through teacher observations, experiences during stormbreak and across the school day. The staff within the cohort played a significant role in supporting the evaluation. The children who have participated in stormbreak have been a credit to their schools. Similarly, the school staff have shown a thorough commitment to their schools through the delivery and promotion of mentally healthy movement in the day to day school environment.



"When we complete stormbreaks, we notice how different children are throughout the day. The children ask to do stormbreaks frequently. They are engaged and focused on learning afterwards. They seem really happy in the school days whenever they do stormbreaks."

"One class teacher I spoke to said she could see the changes in wellbeing with children who have done stormbreaks. She referred to stormbreak as having a "magical effect" on children."

Stormbreak reach

So far, up until September 2022, the schools in the Walsall delivered

309

stormbreak activities.

The stormbreak concepts that schools chose to deliver, to meet the needs of pupils were:



43
Hope & optimism



75
Resilience



51
Self-worth



73
Relationships



67
Self-care

90%

of children said they enjoyed feelings of happiness when they took part in the stormbreak activities.

86%

of children said that they wanted to do more stormbreaks.



The surge programme

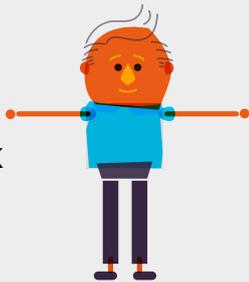
Dates of Surge programme delivery

March - May 2022

Number of Surge participants from the schools

(e.g., advocate number, leader number etc.)

26
Stormbreak
advocates



18
School
leaders



All surge programme training participants completed an outcomes evaluation at the end of each session they attended. The research team analysed this data and identified some key findings and themes from the feedback received:

68%

of school staff who participated in the Surge programme training strongly agreed that the sessions were understandable.

71%

of school staff who participated in the Surge programme strongly agreed that the resources that accompanied the training sessions were useful.

77%

of school staff who participated in the Surge programme strongly agreed that they felt confident about embedding stormbreak into their schools, based on their learning from the training and access to the available resources.



Themes

School staff said that the Surge programme enhanced understanding and knowledge about mentally healthy movement and that this promoted planning, effective embedding, group discussions and an opportunity to give and gain feedback and to reflect and adapt stormbreak implementation.

“The resources look great and the discussions in the sessions are useful.”

“Watching the videos as a group and talking them through together is a really useful approach to prepare.”

“The training is useful because it offers clear, concise and relevant messages that are easy to follow.”

“As a teacher, it’s really useful to practise stormbreaks and then to reflect on how they make you feel as well.”

100% The Surge training participants said they were more confident to plan, deliver and embed the stormbreak approach across the school.

The participants completed Surge programme training and school impact measures and the following results were found:

100% of participants said:

- they were confident to use the stormbreak dashboard to monitor deliveries and evidence the outcomes for pupils
- they were confident to deliver stormbreaks
- they were confident to embed stormbreak into their school day
- they were confident to lead the process of showing colleagues how to use stormbreak
- that stormbreak supports the connection between children and the staff who lead stormbreak sessions
- that when children do stormbreaks, they engage in team work most of this time, amongst each other, as peers
- that stormbreak embeds movement for mental health into the life of their school



83%

of participants said they felt confident that their whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing was enhanced through stormbreak.

83%

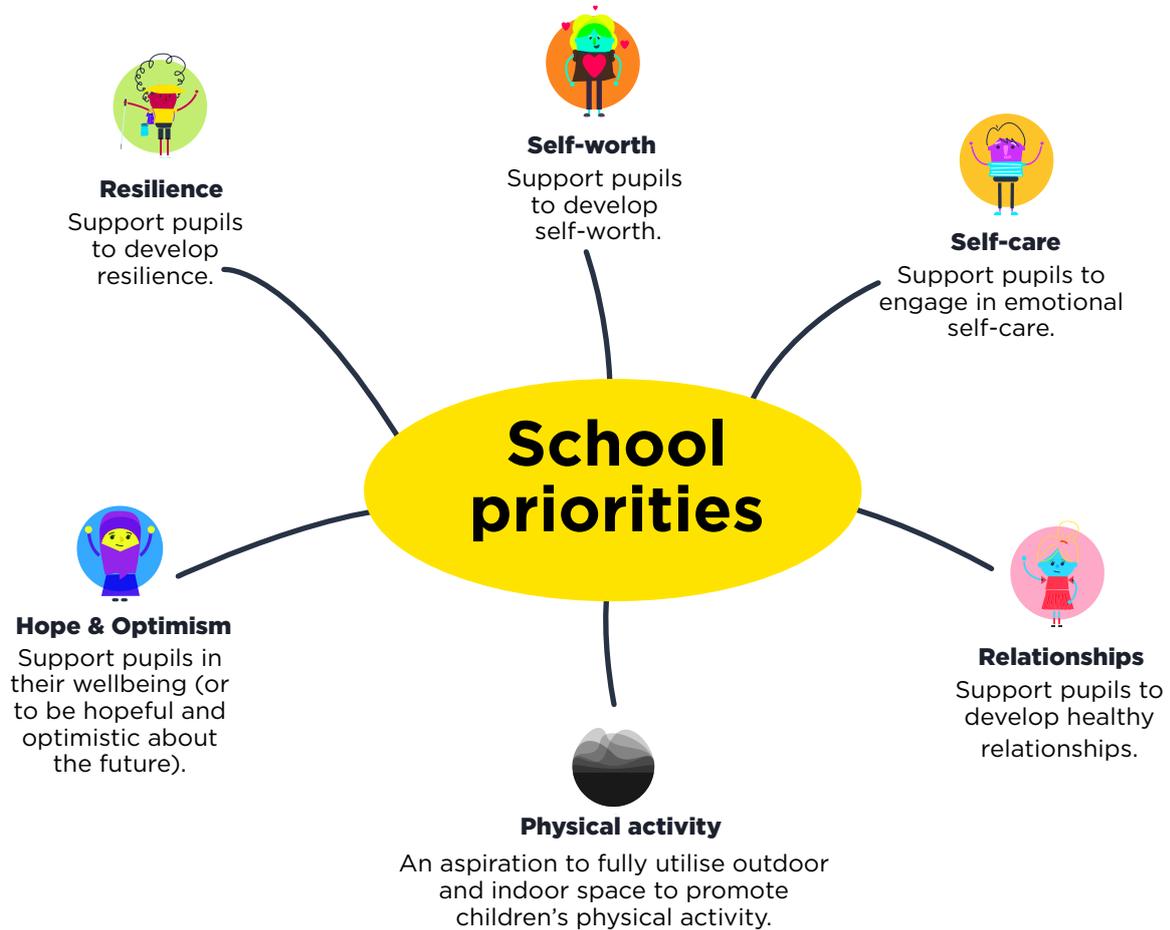
of participants said that when children do stormbreaks, their engagement helps them to create a positive learning environment (readiness for learning).

67%

of participants said that having conversations about feelings and wellbeing was easier since doing stormbreaks.

Stormbreak experiences: school culture

At the beginning of their engagement with stormbreak, schools took part in the stormbreak mentally healthy audit and identified their highest priorities in working towards achieving a mentally healthy school culture. The highest priorities were:

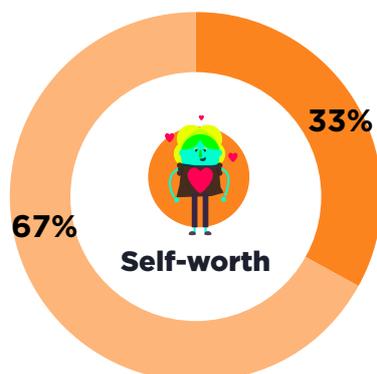


Stormbreak experiences

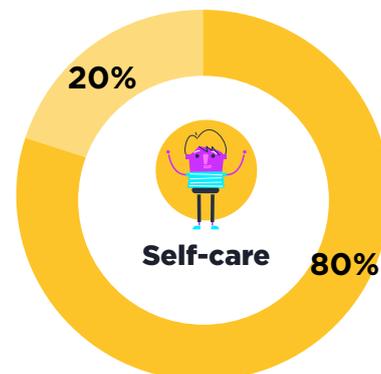
When schools were also how far they were working towards achieving these prioritised aspirations, we found the following outcomes. This showed how schools were already committed to a mentally healthy culture, and where stormbreak can be utilised as a vehicle to continue to support schools to achieve their aspirations. We anticipate that schools can build these aspirations into their priorities for school improvement plans and how they can contribute to evidencing their achievements through the school's self-evaluation processes.



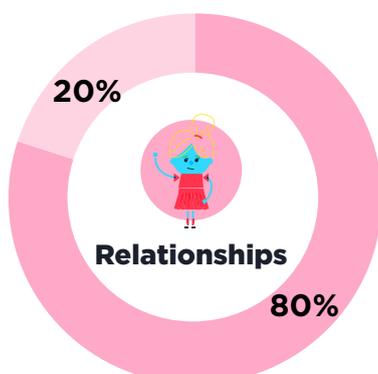
Supporting pupils to develop resilience – 60% of schools were developing their practice and 40% of schools identified this priority as being well embedded into practice.



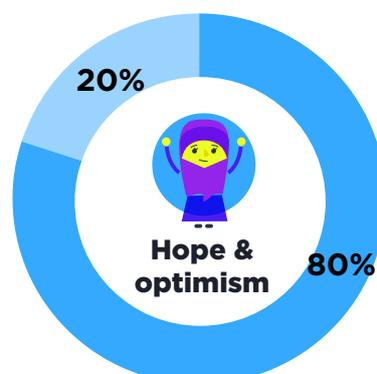
Supporting pupils to develop self-worth – 33% of schools were developing their practice and 67% of schools identified this priority as being well embedded into practice.



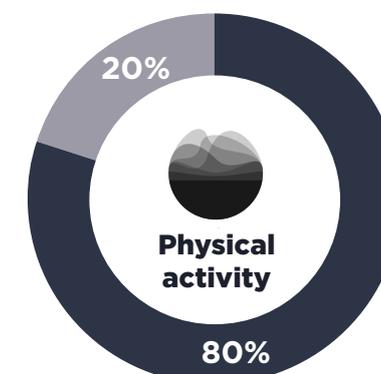
Supporting pupils to engage in their own self-care – 80% of schools were developing their practice and 20% of schools identified this priority as being well embedded into practice.



Supporting pupils to develop healthy relationships – 80% of schools were developing their practice and 20% of schools identified this priority as being well embedded into practice.



Supporting pupils in their wellbeing (or to be hopeful and optimistic about the future) – 80% of schools were developing their practice and 20% of schools identified this aspiration as an area that required further planning before implementation.



Fully utilising outdoor and indoor space to promote children's physical activity – 80% of schools were developing their practice and 20% of schools identified this priority as being well embedded into practice.

Summary



The schools who engaged in the stormbreak programme and were able to attend the sessions expressed significant readiness to embrace both stormbreak and a commitment to achieving a mentally healthy culture in their schools. The Surge participants became more receptive over time and this experience was shared in the context of school advocates and school leaders, which was encouraging.

Given the emerging positive findings, the schools who have engaged thus far have demonstrated significant commitment to their children and to the whole school culture.

Teachers told us about their observations so far:

“Children are able to identify different emotions which helps them to understand their feelings.”

“Children are building relationships with each other through stormbreaks.”

“I have been using stormbreaks as a ‘brain break’ between lessons. It really helps children to return to learning and their readiness for learning can be seen.”

Where schools continue to embed stormbreak across the school day whilst also participating in the completion of the surveys, it will be possible to assess the outcomes and impact for pupils over time. On an individual basis this provides schools with an invaluable opportunity to share the findings with key school stakeholders and to include the findings in the school and governing body self-evaluation processes.

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