



MiSP

Impact Report 18/19

Mindfulness in Schools Project

Charity number 1168992

Who we are

We are Mindfulness in Schools Project.

- We are a charity registered in England and Wales.
- We provide world-leading curricula for classroom-based mindfulness and train teachers thoroughly to deliver them.
- Our materials are based on rigorous research in clinical psychology and neuroscience, written by teachers for teachers, and used successfully in a wide range of educational contexts.
- Our aim is to bring mindfulness to children and those who care for them.

What we do

- We train teachers to teach our curricula to children.
- We introduce mindfulness to educators.
- We develop materials and provide information to support mindfulness in schools.
- We support the mindfulness in schools community.



Welcome

from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

I am delighted to welcome you to our 2019 Impact Report and thank you for your interest in our charity.

This has been a busy year for Mindfulness in Schools Project, full of change and progress. We welcomed a new CEO and new Board members, saw a positive start to our 'A Million Minds Matter' fundraising appeal and increased the number of Supported Places we were able to offer to schools. We also invested time in developing new courses and materials, began to communicate more proactively with our community and other stakeholders and, of course, delivered numerous courses to introduce adults to mindfulness and train them to teach mindfulness to children and young people.

We hosted an inspiring and engaging conference in April 2019, attended by over 600 people, at which a host of celebrities, teachers and children spoke about their experience of mindfulness and supported its promotion in schools. We were delighted to announce the appointment of a strong body of Patrons who recognise the valuable impact of mindfulness: world expert, Jon Kabat-Zinn, Caroline Lucas MP, Game of Thrones actor, Jerome Flynn, and Radio One DJ, Cel Spellman. We also launched our Youth Ambassadors scheme, introducing four wonderful young people as advocates for our work: Emily, Enaya, Haroon and Luke.

We continued to develop relationships with schools, funders, partners and supporters and are very grateful for these important collaborations which enable us to extend our reach and create more impact. I also extend my thanks to our committed staff team, our superb group of associate trainers and our fantastic community of trained teachers working on the ground with our beneficiaries. We look forward to continuing to build on our authentic foundations as a mindfulness organisation to grow our impact in the years ahead.

Finally, having co-founded MiSP in 2009 with Chris Cullen and having stepped back from day to day operations in recent years, I was honoured to be appointed Chair of the Board of Trustees in December 2019. I take over the role from Andrew Seth who has provided a steady hand that has helped guide the organisation in its establishment and evolution and to whom I extend our deep gratitude for his many years of dedication and hard work for the charity.

Thank you for your interest in MiSP. I do hope that the following pages of this 2019 Impact Report give you clear insight into the work that we do as we seek to collectively bring mindfulness to more children and more schools.



Richard Burnett (Chair)





We train teachers
to deliver our
curricula to
young people.

From September 2018
to the end of August 2019
we are proud to have trained

740

teachers in the UK to deliver
our curricula to children
(2018: 689).

Since 2009

We have trained

5,346

teachers!

Our trained teachers form a powerful network of people who are actively supporting the mental health and wellbeing of the children in their schools.

At the end of the training we ask everyone some questions as part of our evaluation and quality assurance process. We ask our trained teachers to score their personal confidence in delivering the curricula. Our data from 2018-19 shows that 97% of people felt 'extremely well-equipped' or 'well-equipped' to deliver the curriculum on completion of the training course.

We ask them to rate the course out of 10 and are very proud to have achieved an average rating of 9.4. In addition, 99.5% of people would recommend the course to a friend or colleague.

We also ask our trained teachers to score the skilfulness of the trainers and the structure of the course. Our data from 2018-19 shows that 99% of people rated the MiSP training team as 'extremely skilled' or 'very skilled', and 96% of people rated the course as 'extremely well structured' or 'very well structured'.

3,601

Trained to teach .b

1,745

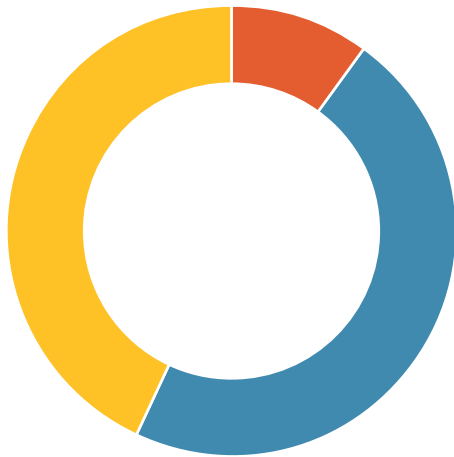
Trained to teach Paws b

*99.5% of participants
would recommend the course
to a friend or colleague*

Accessing our training...

Supported Places

We provided £29,335 of supported places this year, compared to £27,320 last year.



- 10% of all places on our Train to Teach courses were fully or part funded by MiSP's Supported Places scheme.
- 43% of places were self-funded
- 47% of places were funded by employers

Profile of course participants

40% of teachers we trained were from Local Authority or State-maintained schools

Local Authority or State-maintained schools **40%**

Self-employed mindfulness teachers **18%**

Independent schools **17%**

Overseas teachers **14%**

Other **12%**



Locations

- We ran **54%** of our courses in London and **46%** across the UK in Cardiff, Carmarthenshire, Glasgow, Leeds, Liverpool, Newcastle and Plymouth.
- We facilitated **12** partner courses internationally in the following locations: Amsterdam, Dublin, Prague, Sydney and Hong Kong
- This resulted in an additional **216** teachers being trained to teach our curricula worldwide.

What do teachers think about our training?

I think the trainers were very skilful and managed the range of experience in the room with expertise and comfort.

The training was engaging, well-paced and comprehensive.

I thought the training was excellent throughout the 4 days. It was informative, engaging and fun to learn.

Such a wealth of knowledge and expertise. Genuine and authentic teachers.

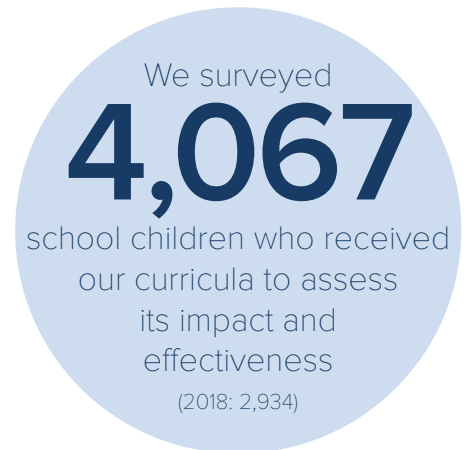
- “The training was amazing, with beautiful resources, experienced and engaging trainers who were inspiring as well as highly knowledgeable.
- “The training team were brilliant. They were very skilled at delivering the course and answering the many and varied questions asked throughout the course.
- “The way that the course was structured kept me interested and motivated to learn throughout.
- “The training was exceptional and has set me up for life teaching children these valuable skills.
- “Both trainers were very inspirational and provided an excellent depth of understanding of the course and ways it should be facilitated.
- “It was cleverly designed, being very fast paced in the lesson demos but with pedagogy sessions to help digest.
- “A perfect balance of theory and practical making the course extremely engaging.
- “Both facilitators delivered excellent sessions and their expertise and skill was evident at all times.
- “So engaging and totally embodied their mindfulness practices and individual styles.

“Beautifully delivered with humour, expertise and credibility”

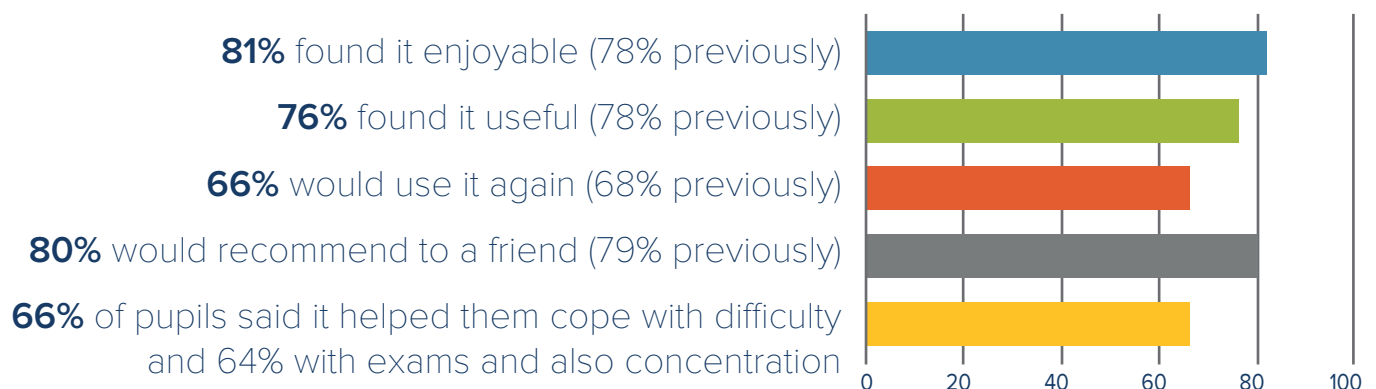
What is the impact of our curricula on children and young people?

Our .b and Paws b curricula are designed with the following aims:

- For all students to know about mindfulness
- For most to enjoy it
- For many to use it now and again
- For some to practise daily
- For as many as possible to remember it.

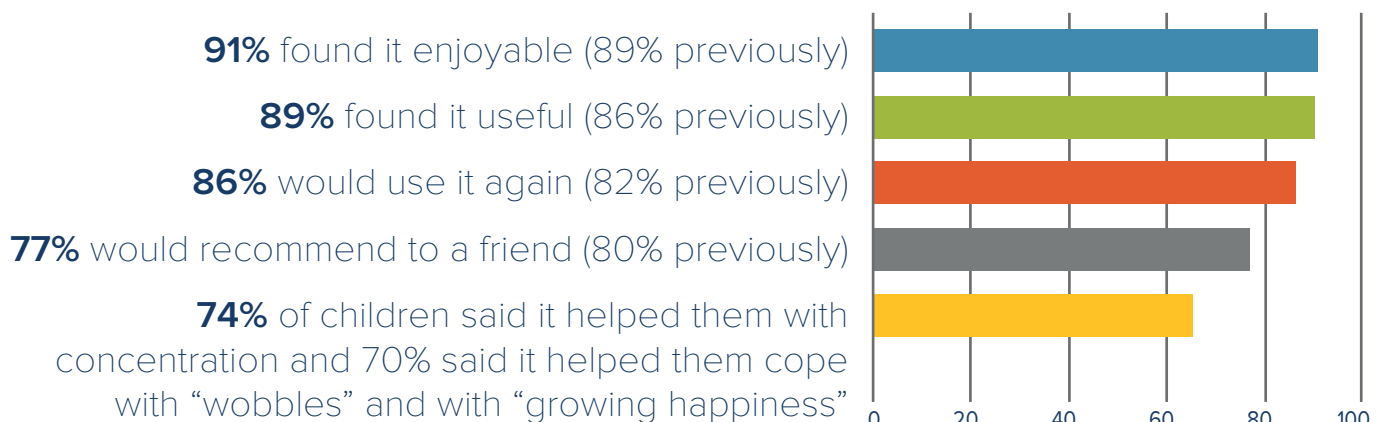


In 2018/19, 62 class impact surveys were completed using the Hub member service and 1,432 pupils completed a survey at the end of their .b course. This is an increase of 7% from the previous year:



80% of children who completed .b would recommend it to a friend

In 2018/19, 106 class impact surveys were completed using the Hub member service and 2,635 children completed a survey at the end of their Paws b course. This is an increase of 40% on the previous year:



91% of children who completed Paws b found it enjoyable



Feedback from 11-18 year olds ...

- “ Helping me with stress and anxiety which I get a lot, it helped me to notice the good stuff when I am depressed.
- “ I loved learning the new practices to help with worry and stress. I found it helped me a lot.
- “ It helped me with my problems at home and it helped my family.
- “ I used to have panic attacks loads and I worried about school before bed, however when I started .b the panic attacks stopped because I was being more mindful and I could sleep! Beditation is a master!
- “ It helped me to feel more connected to my friends, family, feelings and surroundings.

It has helped me sleep better and be less stressed about exams.

Taught me different ways to view situations I'm in and learn how to cope with them like responding and not reacting.

The best thing about .b being how it can help me cope with my biggest difficulties: stress, worrying and thinking negatively.

“It helped me a lot with my anxiety and talking to other people.”



Feedback from 7-11 year olds ...

It helps me with family and when I am stressed I know what to do.

Learning how to stop me panicking, worrying, upset or angry and it helped when I was having my anxiety and my panic attacks.

You can concentrate easier when you are doing your work.

- “It helped me sleep better and to concentrate in school and out of school.
- “I didn’t wobble that often and when I did I could ground myself and treat myself with kindness.
- “Learning about the parts of the brain and knowing what they are called.
- “I am normally quite angry and this has helped me to calm down
- “It helps me when I'm stressed, especially the petal practice.
- “When i was scared of going on a ride i did the breathing practice and it helped me to be more confident.
- “It helps me to calm down when I'm about to perform in front of people.
- “It made me feel calmer and I worried less with stress and tests and i am grateful i did it.

“It really helped me because I worry quite a lot and it helped me to not worry”

What is it like to teach our curricula?

In Class Impact surveys teachers told us what it is like to teach our curricula:

100%

of teachers would recommend it to a colleague

98%

said it helped them with their relationship with students

100% of teachers said teaching our curricula helped them cope with professional demands and improved their overall quality of life.

I have found teaching the .b curriculum a very fulfilling and enriching experience both personally and professionally and would highly recommend it to others.

Paws b Teacher feedback:

“The course has been really enjoyable to teach and has provided a supportive, trusting environment for the children to talk about and explore their experiences.



“Seeing the impact of children in difficult family situations has reaffirmed by belief that this is very important and vital work to be done with children and young people.

.b Teacher feedback:

“I thoroughly enjoyed it; it has also allowed me to form new relationships with pupils that I had previously not taught and further develop pre-existing relationships with other pupils.

“I felt like I was having a direct impact on students. It was amazing.

“I'm pleased with the way most of my students, who have learning difficulties, have embraced the course and taken on the ideas. They have been participating in discussions and asking lots of questions.



I have had lots of parents approach me and say how pleased they are that the course has been taught and how much the children have enjoyed it.





This year we ran 28 eight-week .begin courses

This year we introduced

400

adults to mindfulness via our online 8-week programme.

Since introducing .begin in 2017,

572

adults have completed the course, of whom **144** have gone on to train to teach our curricula (26%).

The sense of everyone learning together, the natural progression it took and the pace of it was just right, really helps to integrate different mindfulness practices into everyday life.

I felt a real sense of community and inclusion on the course.

Feedback from .begin participants

- “ I loved everything about the course. Our instructor was friendly, approachable and an excellent model of mindfulness. It was amazing how you really felt engaged via zoom - I particularly liked sharing experiences with peers in break out rooms.
- “ I felt the course built up skills sequentially and made accessible and easy to understand. The interaction with others on a weekly basis helped to sustain and encourage practise.
- “ Being able to meet and discuss with others, in the comfort of your own home with an excellent instructor.
- “ The course was well structured and organised with a balance amount of discussions, practises and readings.

We develop materials
and provide
information to
support more
mindfulness
in schools.



- We developed **four new .breathe lessons** to provide a taster of mindfulness to children and those who care for them.
- We hosted **five face-to-face information events** around the UK before moving online to provide tasters and information webinars which, in total, **288 people** attended.
- We also held a live information event through Facebook as a trial and this was available to view after the event as well. To date, **616 people** have watched this.
- We provided **1,348 sample lessons** to teachers via our website.
- We started to publish **regular blogs**, news and commentary to grow our online audiences



We grew our Twitter audience by 31.8%, increasing it to

3,164

followers by year end (2018: 2,401).



We grew our Facebook audience by 15.3%, increasing it to

14,784

followers by year end (2018: 12,813).

#SchoolsSitTogether



**WEDNESDAY
9TH FEB 2019**

#SchoolsSitTogether

On Wednesday 6th February 2019 we hosted a **#SchoolsSitTogether** event to support Children's Mental Health Week. We were delighted with the response and this was a fantastic way for our community to join in together. We provided participation certificates for schools and children and will make #SchoolsSitTogether a regular feature. Overall we heard from **over 120 schools** across the country – and the world – who joined in with the sit. By our (rough) calculations this means that **more than 6,000 teachers and students** sat together!

RHS Chatsworth

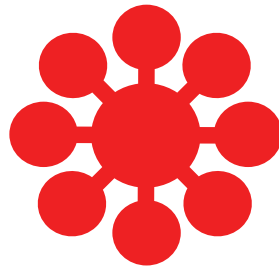
In June we provided information and mindfulness activities at **RHS Chatsworth**, in collaboration with HeldQuin Design Partnership and their **Mandala Mindfulness Garden**. This beautiful garden was designed to work within the limited space of a primary school, and we were there to show how the garden could be used by schools, and to share the benefits of introducing young people to mindfulness and gardening more generally.





We support the
mindfulness
in schools
community.

We supported
1,676
members via our online
Teacher Hub
(2018: 1,384)



Trained Teacher HUB

MINDFULNESS IN SCHOOLS PROJECT

We answered
56
enquiries relating to
research into mindfulness
and young people
worldwide.

We introduced
a regular Hub sitting group,
initially open to people who
had completed .begin but then
opened out to all Hub members,
and hosted 19 sitting group sessions
with a total of

175
people joining a sit.

*228 Hub members responded to our
trained teacher survey and told us:*

- They enjoy teaching our curricula, and are confident in doing it
- They appreciate the quality of our materials (but would like us to keep updating it to make it relevant and flexible to each school's context)
- They struggle to find curriculum time to teach mindfulness
- They don't always have buy in from the school leadership team or other colleagues
- They sometimes experience disruptive behaviour
- Funding remains a core issue
- They can feel isolated as the only mindfulness teacher in a school
- They value being able to point students to online meditations via dotbe.org (but recognise students do not all choose to do home practice)

82%
of teachers felt their
pupils got a "great"
or "good" deal of
benefit from the course
they were part of.

There were some wonderful, memorable moments from teaching mindfulness in schools:

*One of our students asked me
several times "what was that?
what is it called?" He was
referring to the meditation...
He said "that was amazing
that", it was "boss".*

- “ Seeing how the more challenging students engage throughout the course. From being cheeky, sarcastic, and sometimes rude to fully engaged, excited, enthusiastic members of the class.
- “ The NHS vaccinations team recently commented on how much calmer our pupils were when getting two vaccinations at the same time. They were all doing a .b and they asked what that was!

He whispered to me: "Sir... this stuff really works"

Our Conference, 29th April 2019

'It was a beautiful day, in a perfect setting, bringing hundreds of people together who are all committed to such important work.'



We hosted **631 delegates** at our 'A Million Minds Matter' conference held in London in April 2019. The event showcased some of the work going on in schools around the country and we heard from teachers and young people about the impact of mindfulness in their schools and in their own experience. We had an impressive line-up of speakers who captivated the audience with their insightful and informative talks:

- In an extremely entertaining slot, acclaimed performer **Ruby Wax** spoke about her own mindfulness journey and why good mental health is so important.
- **Caroline Lucas MP** put the case for mindfulness in schools to enable a greater appreciation of our environment so that young people are not only motivated to work harder to protect it, but equipped with the strength to confront the true scale of the climate crisis.
- Actor **Jerome Flynn** gave a highly personal account of mindfulness in his own life and why he supports mindfulness being taught in all schools.
- Our Youth Panel was hosted by Radio One DJ **Cel Spellman**, who expertly crafted a conversation with a group of young people whose lives mindfulness has changed.
- **Vidyamala Burch**, founder of Breathworks, presented a highly informative overview of mindfulness field in the context of current mental and physical health issue statistics.
- Founder of Raise the Youth **Jason Steele** described the impact of mindfulness on him and his organisation.
- **Dan Edwardes**, parkour expert, explained how having an awareness of the body, noticing and managing fear, is vital for all humans who are designed for movement.
- Industry expert **Parham Vasaiely** presented a strong case for mindfulness as a crucial tool for workers of the future, giving them the right mental tools to flourish, and teaching them agility of mind, in an ever more complex working environment.
- Musician **Martha Wright** led a wonderful musical practice and explained the work she does in schools using music and mindfulness in the classroom.
- And **Emily Brierley**, victim of the 2017 Manchester Arena terrorist attack, told the rapt audience about the wonderful work she has been doing to support other victims of terror and to promote mindfulness to other young people.

96%

of attendees who completed a post-conference feedback form felt the conference was 'very positive' (75%) or 'somewhat positive' (21%).

We are running a five year appeal to raise funds to reach one million minds by 2023 ...

A MILLION MINDS MATTER

As a result of fundraising activities donations this year increased by

3,554%

from £1,353 to £49,441.

This helped us to increase the number of Supported Places we can offer, to ensure that cost is not a barrier to access, to develop our **.breathe** curriculum for 9-14 year olds, and to provide ongoing expert support and materials to our network of teachers, senior leaders, parents and governors via our **Hub**, growing our community and enabling them to continue to deliver our curricula to new cohorts of school children each year.

We estimate that our community of over 5,000 teachers has taught Paws b or .b to more than ...

540,000
children so far.



Our trained teacher Lisa-Marie Santelli ran The London Marathon for MiSP raising **£1,129** and running an impressive time of 3:17!



The MiSP finance team between them walked over a million steps in May 2019, raising **£934** for our Appeal!

Our supporter Michael Wright raised **£267** cycling 70 miles from Westminster to Oxfordshire in The Islip Big Bike Ride!



Our supporter Gino Brand raised a total of **£1,050** by running a 10km race and cycling a 100 mile race!



Our CEO Chivonne Preston raised **£1,809** by running 15 miles around her local reservoir in the middle of the heatwave!



Our trained teacher Amelia Cloud raised **£2,223** by walking the 67 coastal circuit around the Isle of Wight!



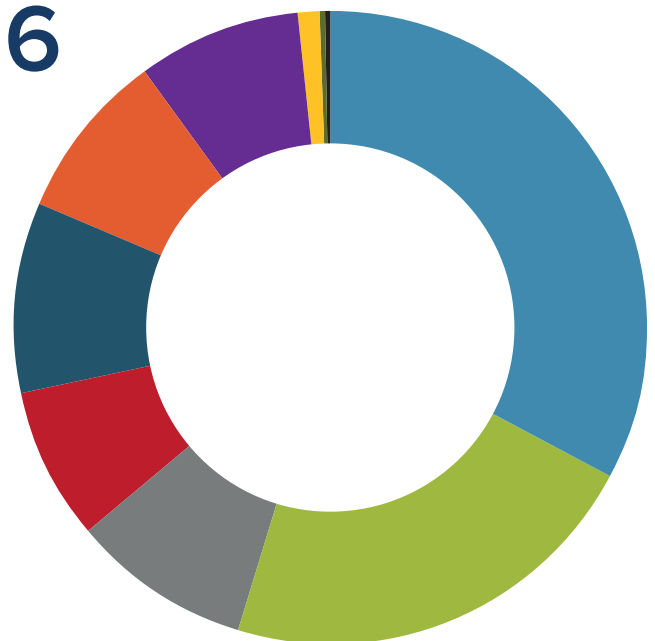
Our resources:

People

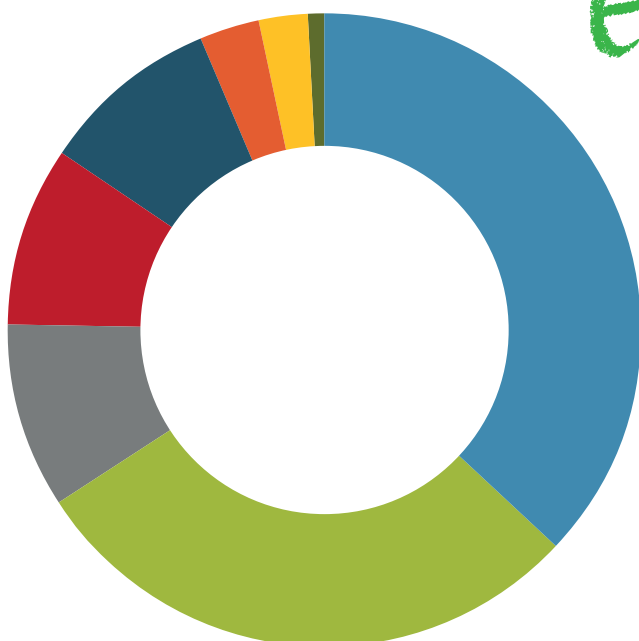
At 31 August 2018 Mindfulness in Schools Project comprised 8 staff: 2 full-time and 6 part-time, equivalent in total to 6.1 full-time staff.

Income £592,726

Teach .b	£195,338
Teach Paws b	£129,265
.begin	£54,139
School Mindfulness Lead	£47,190
Teacher Network	£57,719
Conference	£50,174
Donations	£49,441
Other	£6,391
Consultancy	£2,796
Investments	£273



Expenditure £584,661



Teach .b	£216,087
Teach Paws b	£170,188
.begin	£54,335
School Mindfulness Lead	£53,440
Teacher Network	£54,404
Conference	£16,898
Other	£15,075
Consultancy	£4,234





Planting the seeds of wellbeing

Parent Assembly at Holmforth Juniors

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

School:	Various
Location:	Pennines Region
School Type:	Various
MiSP Curriculum:	Paws b
Age Group/s:	Primary
Author:	Seth Foster
Role:	School Games Organiser, School Sports Coordinator & Independent Paws b Teacher
Issue/s Addressed:	Student wellbeing

When I began working with the Pennine Sports Partnership over 10 years ago my main role was in organising school sport competitions and developing and running leadership programmes in Primary and Secondary schools. With the cuts in government funding to School Sports Partnerships eight years ago,

our organisation has evolved to meet the health and wellbeing needs of the children in the 67 schools we support. From upskilling teachers in their delivery of PE, to advocating physically active learning and championing the physical and mental health benefits of being active, my role saw me return to teaching PE in schools where my passion began 17 years ago.

I was introduced to meditation a number of years ago by a counsellor I was seeing for personal mental health problems which have challenged me since my early teens. My own 'mental health toolbelt' since these days has included; exercise, my career, volunteering as a Rugby League coach for 13 years, medication, CBT, my cats, counselling and more recently my supportive wife and amazing 19 month old daughter Emmie. Mindful meditation has become a great guide in my life and has helped me through some dark days as well as reducing their occurrence.

Through my career in sport development I have had the good fortune to coach and teach children from nursery age all the way up to under 16s Yorkshire Rugby League performance squads. Though it has been incredibly

fulfilling to see players succeeding and making a career from their talent it has always been the social and emotional development of the young people using the power of sport and physical activity that has been my passion. Since developing my own meditation practice and attending the eight week MBSR course I saw these values grow into my teaching practice more and more through what has become my mantra; 'meet the children where they are, not where you want them to be' - I am even starting to apply this to myself through practicing self-compassion.

Since developing my own meditation practice I saw these values grow into my teaching practice more and more.

I came across the **Mindfulness in Schools Project** in 2018 through a link I made with a local schools health visitor. She told me all about the upcoming MISP conference in London where Jon Kabat-Zinn would be speaking, and given I had spent the last two years researching his every word I couldn't miss it, I booked my train ticket that day and within the next week I was booked on the three day course to train to teach **Paws b**. Coincidentally, and before I had been on the course, one of our schools was looking for someone to come in and support with a mental wellbeing focus, after meeting with the head teacher my first **Paws b** school was booked for after the summer holidays.

For over 15 years our partnership has developed a close relationship with the schools we work with and this has been integral to delivering the lessons with the integrity and leaving a sustainable impact. As an external deliverer with my own practice and values I felt that I could connect well with the children over the six weeks though the greater impact on the children and staff would be felt in embedding the learning and practices between the lessons and after I had left, making sure the teachers were fully engaged. I booked a whole staff meeting with the school to introduce mindfulness in education and arranged a whole school assembly linking the children's knowledge of physical wellbeing to the importance of looking after their mental health,

introducing mindfulness themes.

Prior to delivering my first **Paws b** lesson we held our annual subject leaders day where each of the PE coordinators from all our schools attend. Workshops on the day included active maths, embedding physically active learning as well as a session on mindfulness in education which I lead - the positive responses blew me away, and the number of schools wanting to be involved meant I was soon booked up for the year and like that I would be teaching **Paws b** rather than PE on my one teaching day every week.

The positive responses blew me away, and the number of schools wanting to be involved meant I was soon booked up for the year.

During the first week of the summer holidays in 2018 I attended the three day course and being inspired by the tutors and the other teachers there I was ready to get started ... after a restful summer that is!

My first class were Year 5s who I knew from teaching rugby to the previous summer term, it was new for them to see me in their classroom teaching lessons about the brain, talking about their emotions and leading breathing exercises and from that first lesson I felt the messages really connected with the children. One in particular was the discovery that it is in the nature of the mind to wander, something I remember being personally chastised for at school but that we could now discuss and share our experiences openly about without judgement whilst exploring how in our learning and emotional lives we could train the mind to change the brain so that it could be more present.

The children in the lessons have really enjoyed learning about the brain and I've found that being able to link their experiences to the different parts and recognising that we can train the brain in the way we can the muscles of the body gives the children a feeling of autonomy over the choices they have. When I first began leading mindfulness practices I had a sense of trepidation, hoping that the children would be fully

engaged and that they wouldn't giggle! I knew the children but not being their class teacher, this was a concern. I have learnt over time that creating the right environment in the room from lighting, seating position, shoes off (if they choose) and how I guide them into the practices and embody presence myself is important in helping the children become comfortable.

I enjoyed teaching Paws b and felt that the lessons were very different to any other subjects the children had experienced.

During the early days of teaching **Paws b** I enjoyed it and felt that the lessons were very different to any other subjects the children had experienced, though I didn't feel that they were 'mine' yet. It was in my second school where something really connected with me that started to evolve my approach to teaching **Paws b**. During the activity in lesson 1 where the children share what they would like to be better at, a year 6 pupil put his hand up and, without any bravado, shared with the class that "I'd like to be better at being able to behave in class", at that moment I realised how powerful the opportunity to be open without judgement (and in front of his teacher and classmates) would be. Rather than making sure I squeezed every slide of the presentation into the one hour lessons I would learn to be more present with the children's experiences, encouraging teachers to do the same and share their own.

I began to recognise that if I had been taught Paws b when I was younger then I would have had the tools to manage my struggles.

Seeing the children grow in confidence with sharing their worries, thoughts and 'lightbulb' moments as they discover how their mind tells stories through their subjective experiences has been a joy to watch. I began to recognise that if I had been taught **Paws b** when I was

younger then maybe I would have had the tools to manage my personal struggles and develop curiosity over reactivity, what I could do now is be that supportive influence for the children I teach.

During the lessons I have often recognised my younger (and sometimes current!) self in the fidgety, class joker who doesn't know when its time to be quiet and would rather be playing out than learning, but I know that all of the challenges they experience are learnable skills, just as much as long division and writing are. The lessons have provided a safe learning environment for children to be themselves, enjoy stillness through the practices and develop curiosity as they discover the nature of their puppy minds. I feel that being a male role model has also really added value to my connection with the children.

The teachers I work with often reflect that the transition from arriving at school to learning and from break times back to the classroom can be challenging as issues from the playground linger on. On a number of occasions I've seen this myself with children being upset and distressed as they sit at their table. Through my own mindfulness practice I've learn to just be there to connect with them and allow them to do whatever they need to in that moment to look after themselves, whether that be their breathing practices or simply reading a book, they join in with the lesson when they feel ready. Rather than trying to solve the problem they're able to calm their amygdala down and reconnect. I confess to shedding a tear when a couple of pupils I supported in this way wrote made a card to thank me for caring and teaching them these skills.

As an external teacher of **Paws b** I wish I could be there with the children during the rest of the week to embed the mindfulness ethos of being and to continue the practices daily. The challenge in my role has been to develop the teachers value and understanding of practice and the learning from the lessons so that it becomes a lifelong skill. With teachers being so busy, the temptation is for them to mark books while I teach, however their presence during the lessons is just as important as mine. The class worksheets have really helped in this regard and I make sure that each child has a mindfulness **Paws b** folder that they can keep them in, make their own and refer back to during the week. Even if they then gather dust under their beds for the next

five years they can always return to them as a reminder about the lessons and the ways in which they helped them.

In each of the 10 schools I have taught in so far I have also run a whole school and parent assembly at the end of the six weeks recapping the lessons and informing families about what their children have been learning, younger siblings have also attended. The response from parents has been very positive, so much so that I have planned to run parent workshops in the future.

Although the prospect of having KS2 children give their feedback on their experience of the lessons was initially daunting, the schools have really valued the pupil impact surveys and it has been useful for me to see the impact the lessons have had in their comments.

“When I feel upset, Paws b always makes me feel calm and happy.” KS2 Student

“I now know that when I get stressed I can just breathe and realise that everything is ok.”

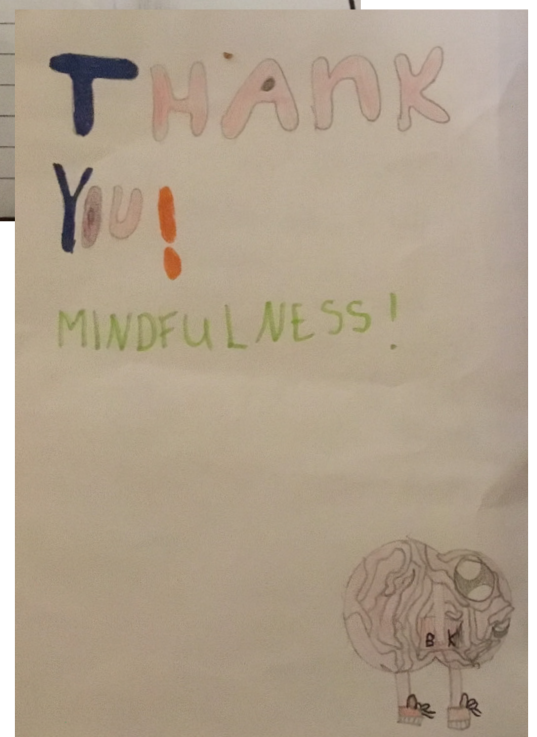
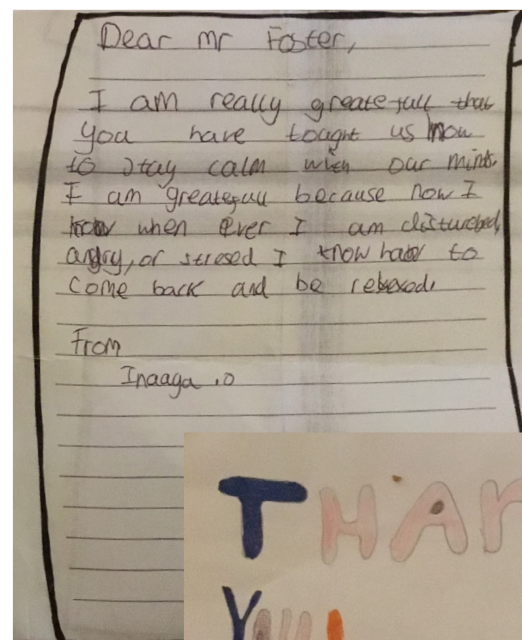
KS2 Student

Over the last 18 months I have taught **Paws b** to 30 classes and over 700 children whilst delivering teacher workshops to over 300 primary school staff, with bookings taken right up to Autumn 2020. One of my colleagues is now also trained to teach **Paws b** and has begun working with schools this year. Whilst being passionate about connecting with as many schools and children as possible, staying true to my values and leaving a lasting impact will always remain my priority. I've grown to see these lessons as not just a nice to do for schools but an essential tool in developing the social and emotional learning foundations of their young people.

I have begun integrating mindfulness practices in PE lessons to introduce the themes to children. Going from the high energy state of running around then into the stillness of counting the breaths or focusing on the sound of the chime, is a really good practical way of

practicing stilling a mind and body that can become stirred up. I plan to develop these practical sessions further as the mind and body connection in a physically active environment fit well together and the children can really engage with the activities.

Being inspired by the experiences I have had and all that the children have taught me, I also continue to learn through reading books and listening to talks around the subjects of mindfulness, education, parenting and neuroscience. Being a mindful presence for myself, those around me, the children I teach and most importantly my daughter will continue to guide me.



Letter and card from a Year 4 pupil.

Embedding mindfulness at Raise the Youth Foundation

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

School:	Raise the Youth Foundation
Location:	Manchester
School Type:	Social Enterprise
MiSP Curriculum:	.b & School Mindfulness Lead
Age Group/s:	11-25
Author:	Jason Steele
Role:	CEO
Issue/s Addressed:	Anxiety, confidence.

Raise the Youth Foundation is a not-for-profit social enterprise dedicated to bringing people, partnerships, communities and industry together, to raise the youth and invest in young people's future. Since it was founded in 2011, Raise has had a clear vision for its future – to invest in vulnerable young people (aged 11-25) by ensuring that every child has the opportunity to learn, develop and, ultimately, realise their true potential in life. Mindfulness has become an organisation-wide approach providing a crucial foundation for Raise as a whole.

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The young people that Raise supports have many individualised needs, ranging from mental health, trauma, adverse childhood experiences, multiple exclusions, many placement moves, school phobias and

anxiety, separation, loss and being unable to have their needs met in other forms of education. As a Trauma Informed organisation, we fully understand that our young people's frustrations, feelings, thoughts and difficulties at managing their school day, can lead to expressing their feelings from a heightened state of fear, pain, rage, grief and need high levels of care and support.

Our young people are often reacting to such feelings, thoughts, body sensations and urges by reacting to fight, flight, freeze. Other young people have high levels of anxiety around exams, who need to be supported to settle down to learn and have the skills to manage their anxiety, building the confidence and knowledge to understand how to face their fears and know that they 'can do it.'

At Raise we believe in opening our arms and our hearts to the children and we endeavour to inspire our young people each and every day. We want to show them a different way of being and teach them new skills, delivering education in a way that works for them and putting them at the centre of everything we do. We believe in them and try to help them to believe in themselves.

Our team of highly talented multi-disciplinary professionals create innovative plans to address each young person's unique needs.

Mindfulness is a way of life at Raise. It is not something just for the children. It is integrated into the way we operate and embedded as a whole school approach, supporting our children, young people and staff. Doing the work we do can be tough for staff and mindfulness provides the tools to self-regulate, to be able to do their best for the children. It gives us all space to reflect. We've trained everyone, from teachers, directors, TAs, social workers to our cleaners, finance and administration teams. Our work can be challenging and mindfulness

enables us to extend non-judgement and kindness to all the people we deal with on behalf of the children. This helps us to achieve better outcomes whilst looking after ourselves. I also feel that our mindful approach has an impact on the other agencies we deal with, and the wider community recognises the values we have.

Mindfulness is a way of life at Raise. It is not something just for the children. It is embedded as a whole school approach.

Our young people at first learn mindfulness informally by seeing how we behave. We are role models for them, as it takes a whole community to raise a young person. We then offer opt-in mindfulness practices. We do body scans in the same room that the young people sit their exams in, so they learn to manage that anxiety in that space. We also teach them how to do a 'FOFBOC' and a '.b'. We have '.b' stickers everywhere!

Often weekends can be very difficult for our young people so every Monday is a Wellbeing Monday. Last year we offered the whole .b curriculum as a voluntary programme and of 9 young people who started it, six completed it and we found them teaching it to the other children! So, this coming year, we will offer the .b curriculum as part of Personal and Social Development lessons and expect these formal lessons to pick up momentum alongside the informal practices we do.

I train everyone myself. This means we don't have to pay for external courses, we can shape the training sessions around the Raise day, we don't have to travel anywhere and I can schedule it at the best time for staff and their wellbeing. Train the trainer is an affordable, sustainable model. I went on the **School Mindfulness Lead** course to learn how to teach .b **Foundations** and can honestly say it was the most brilliant training. Since 2011, I have worked non-stop to get Raise where it needs to be, and I went on the **SML** course and it took me two days to stop twitching and realise what it was all about. My trainers, MiSP's Jem and Dom, just oozed mindfulness and it was truly a retreat for me. It energized me and I could find myself again. I would recommend it to



Jason Steele speaking at the 2019 MiSP Conference

anyone who wants to embed mindfulness in their school. Wellbeing is paramount for both adults and children working together. If we're not all well, we can't succeed.

I went on the School Mindfulness Lead course - it was the most brilliant training.

I first discovered mindfulness through a book which I actually bought for someone else: Vidyamala Burch's "Living Well with Pain and Illness – Using Mindfulness to Free Yourself From Suffering". This book had a profound impact on me. I had been working really, really hard to make Raise the Youth work and to establish the Raise Education and Wellbeing School. I'd had my own range of challenges in life and learning and was experiencing ongoing pressures as I tried to balance everything. Reading this book, and finding mindfulness, changed my relationship with difficulty. I began to practice mindfulness myself and learnt more and more about it.

Mindfulness helps individuals grow and develop and get ready to fulfil their true potential. It helps people engage with their work, their studies, their relationships and, really, their lives. It plays a central role in giving us the capacity to manage our circumstances, whether we are adults or young people. I am pretty confident that mindfulness is well-embedded at Raise and even if I wasn't around mindfulness at Raise is here to stay. But I'm not going anywhere!



Reflections from an Independent teacher of Paws b

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

School:	Various
Location:	Liverpool
School Type:	Various
MiSP Curriculum:	Paws b
Age Group/s:	Primary
Author:	Nicky Beattie
Role:	Independent Teacher
Issue/s Addressed:	SEN, inclusion, support

I'm not sure just when **Paws b** first came into my conscious awareness, but a bell really rang for me after a particularly challenging visit to a highly inclusive inner city primary school. The Deputy Head Teacher said "What we could do with here is something like **Paws b**."

I've been working with children and young people all my life and my teaching history was predominantly with those children at risk of, or currently excluded from, the mainstream of education. Since 2000 I have been working independently to support schools and children's settings with developing strategic approaches to inclusive practice, with a particular focus on those children who are on the SEN register. My work can include anything from whole staff training on Communication and Restorative Practices to

one-to-one work with individual children and, since early 2019, the **Paws b** curriculum.

To be honest, as a sole trader, I was curious about developing an additional income stream which was congruent with my values and beliefs, and which would complement the work I was already doing, and fit well in settings where I was already established as well as in those where I wasn't already known.

"What's Paws b?" was my reply to the DHT that afternoon, and my journey began.

"What's **Paws b**?" was my reply to the DHT that afternoon, and my journey began. I Googled MiSP, had a tootle around the website, became really excited by what I saw and decided to make the investment of time and money to embark upon my training.

I enrolled for the eight-week online version of **.begin**, already considering myself to be a mindful person. Well, I practiced yoga twice a week and had my fair share of click-and-play mindful-type stuff so I wasn't sure why I needed to do the eight weeks, but it was part of the learning journey so I couldn't argue.

I wasn't prepared for the fascinating and joyful experience which was about to unfold. "How can this possibly work via Zoom?" I remember thinking as I logged on for that first session. And yet, with careful, kind and skilful teaching from MiSP's Faiy Rushton I

progressed through the activities and tutorials and my own exploration of sitting practice began. I started to understand just why I would need to wait two to three months (which was potentially the really frustrating part) in order to develop my practice before embarking upon further training.

I wasn't prepared for the fascinating and joyful experience.

I attended my Teach Paws b training in Liverpool and was guided through the sessions by MiSP's amazing teachers Kate Norfolk and Emma Naisbett. The group was wonderful and diverse and a real opportunity to celebrate and share. Some of us were freelance and others teachers in a school or group of schools. We are all still in contact now through a group chat and share our successes and support each other with practicalities and encouragement ... and useful inside information such as where to source Weebles or Snowglobes. A great source of continuing support for my own practice as it develops, is the opportunity to take part in the monthly online sits which are led by MiSP's Ben Chalwin. I always look forward to getting together with others as a group, (working freelance can be a bit lonely at times). Having the chance to be skillfully guided and to share observations and experiences as well as a chuckle or two is hugely nourishing.

Once the training was complete I set about generating interest (which wasn't that difficult as pretty much everyone I come across within education values the mental health and wellbeing of children and staff alike). It's the funding part though. That's the biggest challenge. Don't get me started ...

I decided to offer the whole course for free to Y6 in a school where I was already well established with my other work, and which I knew to be part of a larger network. There were benefits here for everyone and it gave me an invaluable opportunity to 'cut my teeth' whilst providing the programme where it was much needed. It turned out to be a win-win. I also practiced each lesson at home using my ever-patient husband Steve who alternated, with ease, between being an entire Y6 class and a Y4 group.

It had been a little over 12 months since that original conversation with the DHT. Training to **Teach Paws b** and the subsequent planning and logistics make for a bit of a 'slow burn' if you work for yourself. I found that by remaining mindful and applying all I'd learnt to the setting up, designing of leaflets, creating contacts, preparing resources, doing some stuff for free in the hope that there will be 'buy in', has all paid off in ways that are immeasurably more than purely financial (although my bills still need to be paid!)

I couldn't know at the outset that the right schools would come to me in just the right way at the just right time, and that I would be delivering to more schools and more children than I anticipated. It's usually by word of mouth and sometimes through publicity that schools find me or I find them.

What I could never have possibly anticipated are some of the insights and observations of the children.

What I could never have possibly anticipated are some of the insights and observations of the children. I recently worked with a class in which one child has physical ticks which can affect their capacity to focus in class and also impacts upon the quality of their friendships. After a lesson one day they said "Nicky. When we were doing our **Paws b** today I wasn't ticking ... I tried it yesterday lunchtime and it helped me to stop ticking ... when I do a **Paws b**, it feels like I'm at home and I don't tick at home."

Another child last year around Mother's Day told me, "I'm going to give my mum a mindful hug and let my insula really notice ... so my hippocampus can remember what she feels like for ever."

... oh yes, and there's the ability to remain calm and focused during SATs too - mustn't forget that.

Contact Us

We would love to hear from you, especially if:

- You are a **school leader** keen to support resilience in your staff and your young people by introducing mindfulness to your school...
- You are a **teacher** who wants to begin your own mindfulness journey or find out how to teach it in your classroom...
- You are a **SEND specialist** seeking materials to teach mindfulness to your children...
- You are a **parent** who would like to know more about how to bring mindfulness to your child...
- You work in the **education sector** and can help us bring mindfulness to more schools...
- You are a **supporter** and would like to make a donation ...

Questions? Email: enquiries@mindfulnessinschools.org

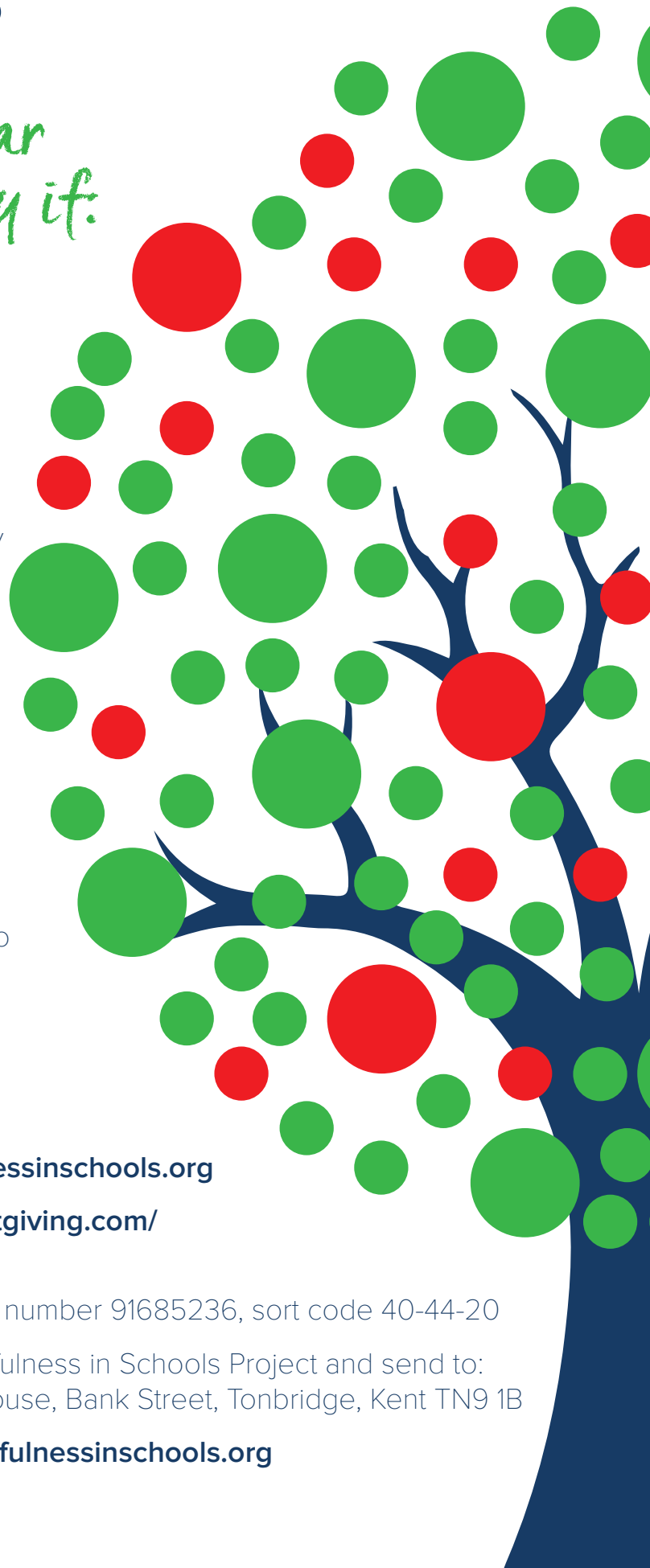
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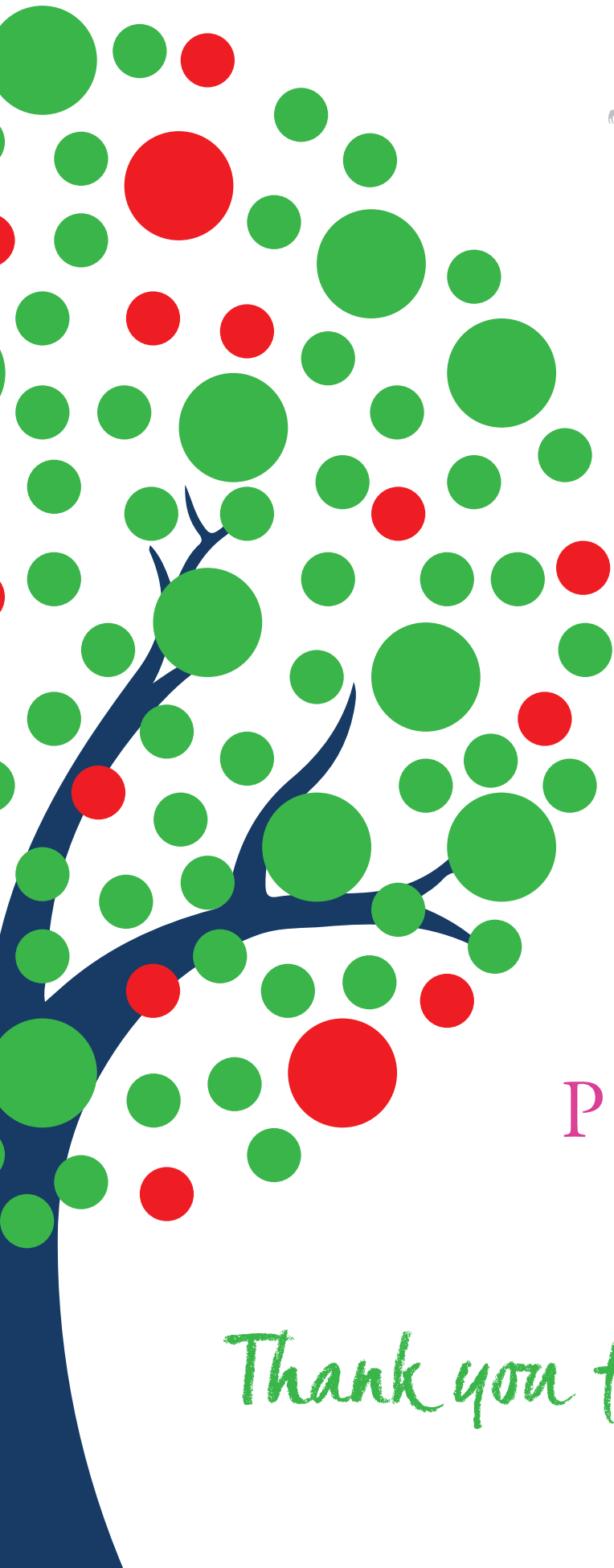
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