

Impact Report 19/20

Mindfulness in Schools Project
Charity number 1168992

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 and support teachers 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 create classroom materials that bring mindfulness to life for children and young people
- We introduce mindfulness to educators
- We train teachers to teach mindfulness in schools
- We support the mindfulness in schools community
- We support research in mindfulness in education



Welcome

from the Chair of the Board of Trustees

I am delighted to welcome you to our 2020 Impact Report and thank you for your interest in our charity.

If you had told me at the end of our last financial year that, at the end of this one, Mindfulness in Schools Project would have hosted all of our courses online and held a conference for over 900 delegates via Zoom, I would have found it hard to believe. COVID-19 has presented challenges to all of us, particularly in the education and charity sectors. However, it has also forced us to innovate in order to continue to provide ever more needed support to our beneficiaries, in ways that have highlighted the strength of our materials, the breadth of our community and the excellence of MiSP's team.

The most obvious change has been to take all of our trainings online. Whilst we miss the face-to-face aspect of our 3 and 4-day trainings, by delivering them 'virtually' and removing the financial and time costs of travel and accommodation, they have become far more accessible and convenient. We have been especially delighted to welcome participants who may, historically, not have been able to attend. Most importantly, the quality of training remains very high, with an average post-course feedback rating of over 9.5 out of 10.

Our 2020 'Teaching Mindfully' conference saw similar benefits. We enjoyed a superb day of insight, expertise and practice, but were keen to find out: what had delegates thought about doing it all online? For those who had previously attended MiSP conferences 67% said they would prefer our future conferences to be online.

Also hugely successful during 'lockdown' were our daily 'Sit Together' practices. These 20- minute drop-in sessions connected experienced mindfulness practitioners and absolute beginners alike. It was inspiring to scroll across the Zoom screens and see the relevance and impact of mindfulness in education! These sessions were well attended by over 1,000 participants in total: individuals working in schools, parents, families with children of all ages, and whole classes of students with their teachers. We received lots of feedback about how important, and how nourishing, these sessions were for the whole community.

And it is the passion and advocacy of this wonderful community of adults working with children and young people that is essential for MiSP's work. They share our vision that every child should possess the skills to help them manage difficulty and flourish; it is through these that we bring the benefits of mindfulness to children and young people in schools across the UK and beyond.

I am extremely proud of the team that runs MiSP and want to thank them, above all, for what they have achieved this year. They have worked incredibly hard. That we have been able to sail into a headwind as uncompromising as a pandemic with such energy, courage and care provides me with great confidence that the foundations for MiSP's growth are stronger than ever.

Richard Burnett (Chair)

A note from our CEO

This year has been both enormously challenging and hugely rewarding. The pandemic has brought such disruption, stress and uncertainty across our society with so many new challenges for our educational communities, who have worked so incredibly hard under intense pressure.

The care, compassion and commitment of my colleagues in the sector has been inspirational.

For our charity, it has been a time for both reflection and action, and I am enormously proud of what we have been able to achieve and learn in these new circumstances.

The acute disruption that the pandemic has caused to schooling has brought into sharp focus the two most prevalent issues in education prior to COVID-19: (1) the growing crisis in children and young people's mental health, and (2) the retention and recruitment of teachers and the impact of current working practice on their own wellbeing. Our charity plays a key role in addressing these issues.

We focus on giving both adults and children in schools the skills to manage and maintain their own wellbeing.

Our work enables people to connect with themselves, with others, and with the world around them, bringing curiosity, compassion and kindness to that experience. This can help foster and nurture the relationships which have been shown to sustain us in these difficult times, and which are the foundation on which teaching and learning in schools can flourish.

We provide a welcoming, supportive and enriching learning and training environment for our community of teachers, support staff, senior leaders, parents, governors, pastoral care and SENDCOs, and other professionals from children and youth welfare services. We build connections with each other, sharing experience, expertise and inspiring one another.

The pandemic has shown just how vital these connections are, and how important it is to bring foundational mindfulness skills to children and those who care for them. We will continue to work hard to support, nurture and grow our community.

I am hugely grateful to our trainers, our admin team, our supporters, our funders and everyone who has worked with us during this challenging time. Please read on, and if you're inspired, we'd love to hear from you.

Chivonne Preston, CEO

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We create classroom materials that bring mindfulness to life for children and young people ...

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.

Since 2016 we have surveyed

12,726

schoolchildren who received our curricula, to assess their impact and credibility

In 2019/20 a further

774

80% found the course enjoyable

79%
would recommend
the course to
a friend

pupils completed our survey following their .b course. We now have feedback from 4,660 .b pupils in total.

78% found the course useful

68%
were likely to use mindfulness again

69% said it helped them to cope with difficulty

64% said it helped concentration

It provides me many possible ways to cope with my negative emotions and encourages me to notice the goodness in life

Learning how to be more grateful has made me happier and I can calm myself in situations outside of school now too.

How important all the little things in life and how even by savouring the moment, that can help you be a little happier each day.

It gave me lots of different ways to help be cope with stressful situations and to help me be a calmer, less aggressive version of myself.

Feedback from 11-18 year olds ...

- 66 If I get anxious, when a worry just comes, I do a .b standing up, I just breathe and feel my feet, I can do it anywhere. This stops the worry being so sharp and jagged.
- **66** It allowed me to learn techniques on how to cope with stress and recognising worries.
- 66 I have a lot of Insomnia and its helped a lot for me to sleep within 20ish minutes instead of an hour or two.
- Go It is good for football matches, if we have a big game and get nerves. I worry about messing up sometimes, not always. I have a good look around me and breathe it all in. If I look up at the sky I see clouds and my worries are like clouds. So I watch them and just wait.
- 66 It helped me cope with my depression and anxiety and calm me down when I was very upset or angry.

We had 18,207 visits to our website www.dotbe.org where .b students can practise mindfulness at home.



In 2019/20 a further

1,887

91% found the course enjoyable

76%
would recommend
the course to
a friend

pupils completed our survey following their Paws b course. We now have feedback from 8,066 Paws b pupils in total.

89% found the course useful

85%
were likely to use mindfulness again

69% said it helped them to cope with 'wobbles'

73% said it helped concentration

It was helpful for me to build my concentration and help me worry less.

It helps me be calm when I'm very stressed. I am starting to feel happier in life.

I liked doing it because when I feel sad or angry I can always do it because I know how to do it. It is also very calming for me.

You could feel like you could let all your emotions out and feel calm and collected, even if something terrible was going on at home or with your friends on the playground.

Feedback from 7-11 year olds ...

- **66** My favourite was the petal practice and it helped me concentrate and grow happiness with friends
- **66** Being able to concentrate a lot better in various lessons, like literacy, maths and science.
- **66** When i sometimes get angry or upset at my house Paws b will help me calm down.
- 66 The best thing about paws b is the way it helps me to concentrate
- 66 Doing the petal practice because it can help you concentrate and calm down if you are angry or upset.
- **66** it helps me with concentrating and focusing better and calming down
- **66** The petal practice because now when my brother is annoying i just do that!

"It helps me get on better with family and friends."

What is it like to teach our curricula?

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

would recommend to a colleague

with their overall quality of life and coping with professional demands

100% of teachers said teaching our curricula helped them with their relationship with pupils

> .b Teacher feedback:

Anxiety levels around exams have reduced and pupils say that they feel happier in lessons

as they are more relaxed.

Pafulness in School^S

- 66 One student has told me that the course has helped her to notice when she is worrying and to do a dot b to let the worries go away. I've seen a few students doing finger breathing in class. Most of the students have been active in being kinder to others and encouraging students to 'notice the aood.
- **66** Some students found FOFBOC particularly useful to calm themselves down. Many use Beditation to have better sleep.
- 66 My students seem to feel empowered after the course. It's lovely to see!

Paws b Teacher feedback:

The pupils were very engaged and discussed how they felt the mindfulness course benefited them by giving examples of how

they used the principles of taking time out and breathing in times when they felt stressed or worried

- **66** One pupil with selective mutism has been talking more gradually before starting the course but at the end of the course the pupil was verbally communicating her feelings and thoughts.
- **66** I have heard from numerous parents that pupils have been practising the techniques at home to help them sleep, deal with difficulties with siblings and to calm themselves before sporting / musical (extra curricular) events.
- **66** Children told me about some activities undertaken on a school residential e.g riding and zip wire etc where they had used tummy and chest and finger breathing as a way to "calm down our amygdalas".
- **66** Each time I deliver Paws b I am amazed at the children's responses. Learning about the brain at the same time as delivering the practices puts it all in context for the children.

We introduce mindfulness to educators ... We publi

In 2019/20:

- We replied to 2,475 emails enquiring about bringing mindfulness to schools.
- We provided 3,566 sample lessons to teachers via our website.
- We hosted 10 online information webinars which, in total, 207 people attended.
- We delivered 7 Wellbeing Workshops one-day courses to explore mindfulness-based
 strategies to improve and support wellbeing in
 schools for a total of 103 attendees.
- We published 8 Top Tips articles, addressing the most common challenges when bringing mindfulness to schools.
- We published 61 new articles & blog posts, increasing our online audiences:

We published
8 Top Tips articles,
addressing the most
common challenges
when bringing
mindfulness to
schools.

Our special lockdown articles 'Coronavirus and Mindful Handwashing' and 'Lockdown Lowdown – Some Ways to Cope While Living with Teenagers'

were visited

2,195

times during the year

13.5% 15.565 followers at year-end

17.6% 3,370 followers at year-end



89.7% 2,441followers at year-end

begin



This year we ran 28 eight-week.begin courses

We introduced

450

adults to mindfulness via our online 8-week instructor-led programme. Since introducing .begin in 2017,

1,022

adults have participated in our 8-week online introduction to mindfulness course 15

of these .begin courses were delivered as private groups sessions for two multi-academy trusts and one further education college.

Feedback from .begin participants

- 66 I have already recommended this training to many others!
- forward to learning more and deepening my understanding of mindfulness. I feel empowered and realise i has been in autopilot for years, missing out, not being present and not dealing with stressful situations.
- 66 An excellent tutor made us all feel relaxed and the mix of people on the course made it easy to learn from one another and share openly.
- life is better for having gone through these experiences and completing mindfulness. I use it daily and feel better for seeing my actions, conversation, thought pattern differently. I am looking forward to continuing my journey.

Of all the .begin graduates this year

117

have subsequently booked to train to teach our curricula (27%).

Being introduced to mindfulness by a knowledgeable professional who understood the demands of our profession.

Many thanks to the instructor for an incredible experience. I look forward to continuing to incorporate mindfulness practice in my life.

We train teachers to teach mindfulness in schools ...

From September 2019 to the end of August 2020 we delivered 31 UK courses. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, all courses post March 2020 were adapted for online delivery, and we worked hard to ensure that the quality of participant learning and experience is of a very high standard despite being virtual. We are especially grateful to our team of expert trainers for their dedication and skill which has ensured that our training has remained of a very high quality throughout the year.



358
.b teachers

299
Paws b teachers



Trained to teach Paws b

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

This year we also launched our revised breathe curriculum

.breathe was originally created in 2013 as part of 'Healthy Minds' (a resilience-based PSHE curriculum funded by the Education Endowment Foundation). .breathe provides a taster of mindfulness to young people aged 9-14 to support them with transitions: from primary school to secondary school, from childhood into adolescence, from lockdown out of lockdown.

breat he

In 2019/20 we delivered 11 Teach .breathe courses ...

169
teachers trained to deliver .breathe

99%

felt 'extremely well-equipped' or 'well-equipped' to deliver the curriculum on completion of the training course.

Our courses received an average rating of

96%

99%

rated the MiSP training team as 'extremely skilled' or 'very skilled'.

99.5%

would recommend the course to a friend or colleague.

96%

rated the course as 'extremely well structured' or 'very well structured

What do teachers think about our Teach .breathe training?

This was a fantastic course, extremely well organised, paced and presented. Trainers absolutely brilliant. Highly recommended

Thank you very much! It was an enrichment and also a delight to attend this course. The trainers and participants were amazing!

This is the best CPD I have ever received ... no CPD has ever made an impact on the way I live my life. I feel so privileged to have been a part of this training and I can't wait to implant it in the beating heart of my school. Thank you.

The whole course was excellent! Thank you for a well presented, professional and very informative course that I will have the pleasure of presenting soon in my school.

- **66** This is one of the best teaching courses I have been on.
- **66** It has been such a superb experience for me both personally and professionally.
- 66 I actually think it is the best presented course I have attended.
- **66** I thought it was great and the course leaders were fab. Would highly recommend to others, in fact I can't stop talking about it.
- **66** I found the MISP training excellent. I feel the course has clearly been created with young people in mind, it is engaging, fun and feel confident to deliver it.
- This course has been the high light of lock down! I have wanted to attend the course for some time now and I wasn't disappointed. The programme has been been put together in such a thoughtful way and I am looking forward to running Paws.b groups in the future.
- This was the most enjoyable training, 66 A huge thank you and I would add that the worthwhile training I have done. trainers demonstrated perfectly well with the trainers demonstrated perfectly well with their own behaviour, attitude and the atmosphere they created how this should be done in classroom. Teaching through example!
 - Simply to say thank you for such an excellent training programme and all you are doing as an organisation to bring mindfulness into schools. What an inspiration!

"This was such an inspirational course. It was so well led by the trainers; it was an honour to be a part of it."

Accessing our training...

Supported Places

We provided

184

fully or part-funded by MiSP's Supported Places scheme: 18% of all places on our training courses.

Locations

- During the year we delivered 48% of UK courses in-person in London, Liverpool, Manchester, Solihull, Doncaster and Brighton, and 52% online.
- We facilitated 11 partner courses internationally in the following locations: Amsterdam, Denmark, Dublin, Sydney and Hong Kong.

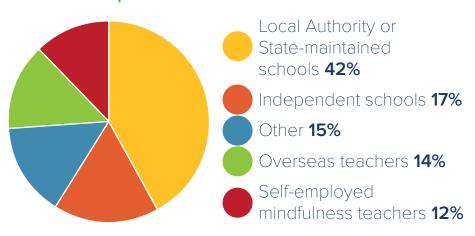
We provided £30,911 of supported places this year, compared to £29,335 last year.

Early Career Teachers' Support Fund

During the year we launched our Early Career Teachers' Support Fund, offering financial support to teachers at the early stages of their careers to learn mindfulness for themselves and train to teach it to children. We welcome applications from all UK schools and awards are made to individuals applying to train with us within four years of achieving Qualified Teacher Status.

Profile of course participants

42% of teachers were from Local Authority or State-maintained schools



Mindfulness in Alternative Provision Settings

During the year we launched MAPS, a project to bring mindfulness to children and young people in Alternative Provision (AP) settings in England. Funded by The Bright Future Trust, this two year project will ensure that MiSP's high-quality, evidence-based mindfulness programme, .b, is available to vulnerable children and young people who are at the highest risk of social exclusion.



MAPS will provide up to 60 AP staff with training so that they can learn to practise mindfulness themselves, then train to teach mindfulness to young people with ongoing access to expert advice and materials, a peer group network and ongoing support.

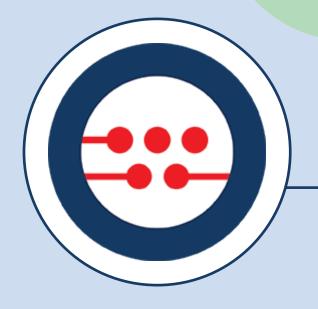
The project will run from 2020 to 2022 and hopes to reach 1,800 children.

We support the mindfulness in schools community...

We supported 934 members via our

online Hub





- We hosted **22** sessions for our Hub Sitting Group and welcomed a total of **218** members to these.
- We welcomed 37 trained .b and Paws b teachers to a CPD & Reconnect day which we held in London in January 2020. This was an opportunity to network, discuss the practicalities of teaching MiSP curricula, hear about developments in the sector and receive training to teach the four lessons of .breathe.
- We provided 4 extra online training sessions for teachers to learn how to Zoom into classrooms of children still in schools once lockdown was in place. A total of 73 people attended these sessions.
 - We ran **3** #SchoolsSitTogether events, and were delighted that so many teachers and pupils in our community could join together in mindfulness practice.





Sit Together

For thirteen weeks during the UK coronavirus pandemic lockdown, when households were isolated and schools were closed to the majority of children, we delivered a series of free daily online mindfulness practice sessions providing support, connection and community to teachers, parents, children and the general public.

91 sits provided **1,057**participants

4,633
sessions in total

"Very moving to be with so many people practicing together and with a feeling that this is a beginning..."

"I look forward to the sessions and love the sense of calm and connection the sessions cultivate. Thank you so much for hosting these sessions."

"Thank you so much for putting on the daily mindfulness sessions at the moment. I have really valued the routine of knowing they are on at the same time every day... I'm finding that little window in the day every morning very helpful for grounding me."



Our Patrons, Cel Spellman & Jerome Flynn provided videos of support for our series of sits.



Translations of our curricula

We continue to support educators around the world bringing mindfulness to children and young people in schools in countries other than the UK. We are very grateful to our international teachers who provide translation services on a voluntary basis, allowing us to make translated curricula available to our whole Hub community.

Versions of our curricula are now available in 12 languages:



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Supporting Mindfulness in Schools in Wales

From September 2022, schools in Wales will be delivering the new **Curriculum for Wales**.

Our curricula .b and Paws b are already available in Welsh translations, and this year we have published resources to map .b and Paws b to the new Curriculum for Wales, showing how mindfulness can support their implementation of the new curriculum.

We are working with our fantastic network of MiSP trainers and teachers in Wales, with local Councils and authorities, and with other local groups to support teachers and schools as they begin their own mindfulness journeys.

Our Conference: 'Teaching Mindfully' 21st June 2020

"The Conference was totally inspiring and I now long to embed mindfulness in our school"

We hosted over **800 live attendees** at our first online
conference, selling an
astounding **936 tickets** in total —
with those who could not attend
live accessing the videos in their
own time. Teachers, school staff,



researchers, and colleagues from children's services and other charities joined us for a series of insightful and informative talks, presentations and case studies from our broad range of expert speakers.

We punctuated the day with some short mindfulness practices, and also had the chance to chat with others and listen to messages from some of the children and young people we have taught.



Recurring themes from our Teaching Mindfully conference included:

You make a difference.

Be a role model.

Be authentic.

It's a marathon not a sprint.

There will be ripple effects.

Build connections and trust.

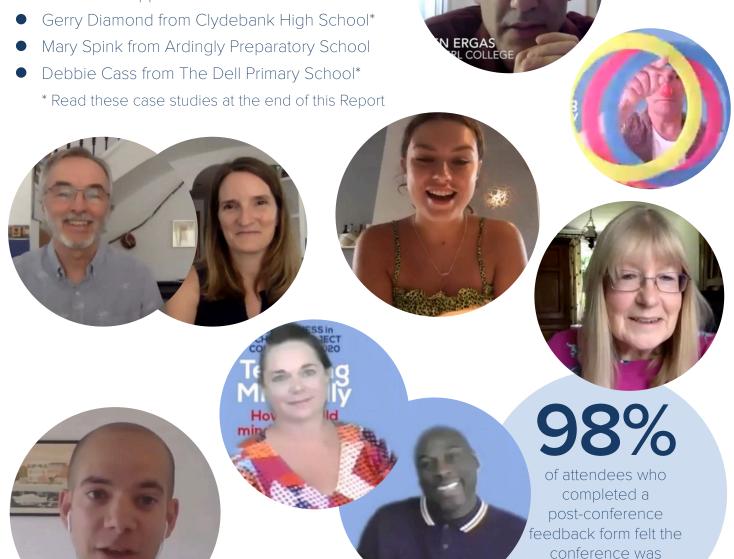
It's relationships that make a difference.

Our expert speakers were:

- Katherine Weare Mindfulness the 'Trojan mole' of education
- Liz Lord The MYRIAD research project and what have we have learned about teaching mindfully
- Peter Turner Clowning mindfully: teaching mindfulness and circus skills together
- Liz Williams Responding to the requirements of the new Welsh Curriculum
- Adrian Bethune Could mindfulness be the key to changing the education system?
- Kevin Hawkins & Amy Burke Mindful teacher, mindful classroom
- Oren Ergas Teaching how to think is not quite what we think: mindfulness of education, episode 2
- Mel Thomas Teaching mindfully as a peripatetic teacher

Our schools speakers were:

- Matthew Jones from Llwyncrwn Primary School
- Clare Winter and Trevor Adams from Dacorum Education Support Centre*



'extremely positive' or 'positive'.

We support research into mindfulness in education ...

We welcome new research into mindfulness in education, and into our curricula in particular. We provide researchers with our support and share our expertise and experience to promote high quality research, inviting research projects to meet the highest standards of research integrity and ethical academic enquiry.

MYRIAD Project

This year, we continued to provide ongoing support to 174 teachers involved in Oxford University's MYRIAD Project. This research, funded by the Wellcome Trust, is the largest ever randomised control trial assessing the impact of mindfulness training on teachers and adolescents. We are expecting some of the initial findings from the project to be published in 2021.

174
teachers involved

The JC PandA project in Hong Kong

A four year research project, running from 2019-2022 funded by The Hong Kong Jockey Club Charities Trust, is underway in Hong Kong to assess the benefits of mindfulness on the mental health of students and teaching in 36 local school settings.

The Jockey Club 'Peace and Awareness' Mindfulness Culture in Schools Initiative is run by the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Hong Kong, using our Paws b and .b curricula in primary schools, secondary schools and social education schools which serve students with emotional and behavioural difficulties.







The SELF-care project in Denmark

The Danish Center for Mindfulness, based in Aarhus University, is conducting Stress-free Everyday Life for Children, a research project to establish a mindfulness education for school teachers in order to enhance wellbeing and reduce stress in children aged 11-18 years old, using the .b curriculum. The initial project is running from 2018-2020 and includes more than 250 teachers, after which the programme will be extended to more schools.







The Healthy Learning Mind Project – Finland

This year, initial results were published from The Healthy Learning Mind research project, which is a randomized controlled trial exploring the effectiveness of mindfulness on well-being, resilience, learning, self-compassion and happiness among 12-15 year old adolescents in the school context. The aim of this research and development project is to promote well-being, resilience, learning, self-compassion and happiness among students and school personnel in Finnish comprehensive schools.

Altogether, 3,519 Finnish school children and adolescents, aged 12–15 years, from 56 schools were randomised into (1) a 9 week MBI group, receiving MiSP's .b curricula (2) a control group with a relaxation program (3) a control group with teaching as usual. Initial results show that the 9-week MBI in school-setting provides slight benefits over a relaxation program and teaching as usual. The primary outcomes were resilience, socio-emotional functioning, and depressive symptoms at baseline, at completion of the programs at 9 weeks, and at follow-up at 26 weeks.

The research team draw attention to the limitations in control group size: the inactive control group was smaller than the intervention and active control groups, reducing statistical power, and recommend that future research should investigate whether embedding regular mindfulness-based practice in curriculums could intensify the effects.

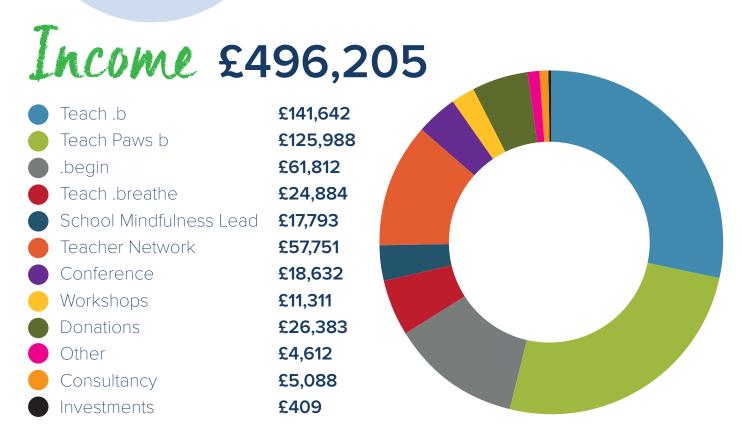
Further findings and analyses of the data from this project will be published in future periods.



Our resources:

People

At 31 August 2020 Mindfulness in Schools Project comprised 9 staff: 2 full-time and 7 part-time, equivalent in total to 6.5 full-time staff.





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

AMILLION MINDS MATTER

As a result of fundraising activities we raised a fantastic

£26,383

from donations

This helped us to increase the number of **supported places** we can offer, ensuring that cost is not a barrier to access, and to continue to provide 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 schoolchildren each year.

Teacher survey showed that on average a trained teacher teaches our curricula to 126 children each. Therefore we estimate that our community of over 6,000 teachers has taught Paws b or .b to over

750,000

children so far. We are on track to reach a million minds by 2023!

Our fundraisers undertook a variety of challenges, both before and during lockdown, which included running, dragon boat racing, endurance challenges, dipping faces in baked beans and 'braving the shave'!

A team of five from the Royal Bank of Scotland each ran 10k locally around London and the South East, raising a wonderful £550 between them!



Bruce
Williamson ran
in Kent, raising
a magnificent
£500.

Software firm R3 donated £380 from their online Pictionary teaming event during lockdown.



Melanie Nahum run a speedy 10k on an undulating route in Kent in just 57:07! She raised an amazing £1,477 for our appeal!

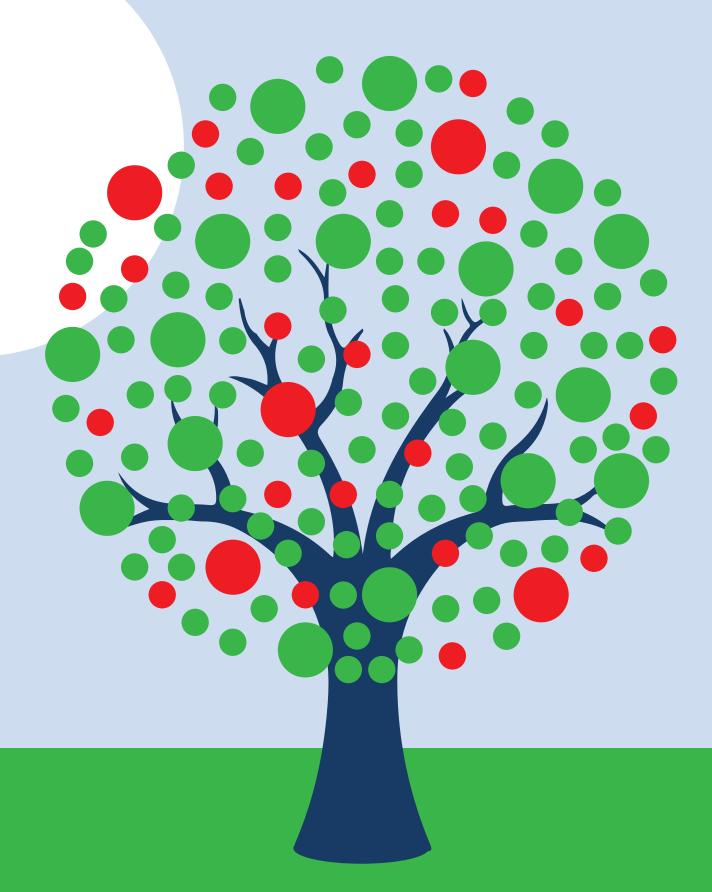


Caroline Wilson raised an amazing **£2,316** by allowing her husband to shave her head!

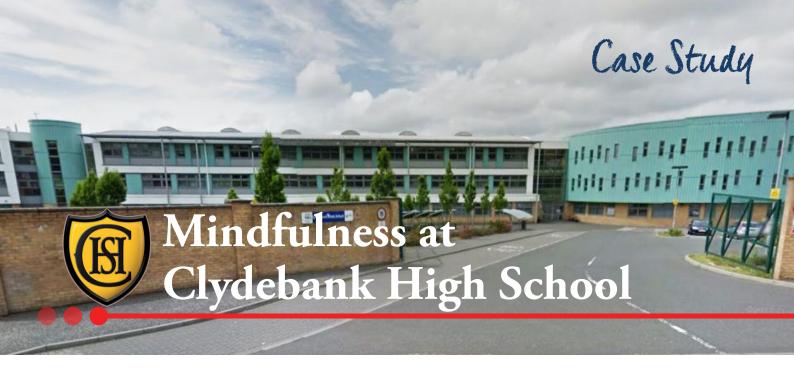




Martin Stammers and his son Ashton got sponsors for two challenges - baked-bean dunking and head shaving, raising a brilliant £210!



Case Studies ...



CASE STUDY SUMMARY

School:	Clydebank High School
Location:	West Dunbartonshire
School Type:	Secondary
MiSP Curriculum:	.b
Age Group/s:	11-18
Author:	Susan Hubbard
Role:	Educational Psychologist
Author:	Gerry Diamond
Role:	CHS Hub / Nurture / Group work /Pupil Support

About Clydebank High School

CHS is a large secondary school of around 1,280 pupils in West Dunbartonshire, Scotland. This is a Council which is geographically small, but which features high levels of deprivation, with 26% of children growing up in poverty. Historically, high numbers of pupils have struggled with the transition from primary school, and behavioural issues have regularly arisen throughout the school.

The nurture approach

In 2017, Clydebank High School (CHS) introduced a whole school nurture approach to benefit all young people in the school, many of whom have complex emotional and behavioural needs. It was hoped that by adopting nurturing principles throughout the school there would be:

- A consistent school ethos and a shared framework around which to understand social and emotional needs and distressed behaviour.
- Improvements in the attendance, attainment and social and emotional competencies of young people.
- Improved family engagement: families will feel more listened to, supported and included in decisions made about supporting their child.
- Improvements in inclusion of young people in mainstream school throughout their secondary education.

This has been supported by the West Dunbartonshire Psychological Service as part of the Scottish Attainment Challenge, which aims to raise the attainment of children and young people living in deprived areas and close the equity gap. The ambition is for CHS to be a nurturing school environment where young people feel safe and supported, able to succeed in school and gain the skills for life.



Training staff: the systematic embedding of mindfulness

Staff training has been core to developing a whole-school nurture approach at CHS, and mindfulness has been introduced as a key part of that for all staff including janitors and clerical staff as well as teaching staff.

We knew that before mindfulness could be taught to young people, staff would have to be mindfulness practitioners themselves.

Our Education Psychologist, Sue Hubbard, started to build knowledge and capacity in the teaching staff. This involved delivering an 'Introduction to Mindfulness' two-hour course for staff, designed to generate interest and raise awareness amongst staff, before providing them with an eight week Mindfulness Based Living Course sourced externally. Staff have been grateful for the high quality training and we have gathered both quantitative and qualitative evidence that demonstrates strong engagement from staff, improvement in their own wellbeing and support for the approach.

In 2017, Sue trained to teach the .b course and delivered it several times to groups of young people in the school. In 2018, myself and one other teacher were trained to teach .b, whilst Sue attended the School Mindfulness Lead (SML) course that year so that CHS could continue to provide an eight week introduction to mindfulness course to other teaching staff in-house at no additional expense.

In 2019, seven more teachers trained to teach **.b** and in 2020, more staff continue to be trained to deliver **.b** whilst I am attending the **SML** course to be able to run adult training in-house too.

Throughout this time, we have delivered the **.b** curriculum to 50 vulnerable pupils, 40 pupils know to suffer from exam stress, and to over 240 S1 pupils (aged 11-12). We have **.b** posters up around the school corridors to remind pupils to practice mindfulness, and pupils tell us that they can identify which teachers have had mindfulness training by the way they respond!



Impact on staff

The nurture approach including the mindfulness training has changed the school ethos, but the journey has not always been easy and there is still more work to do. Staff have a better understanding of pupils' needs and are better able to manage pupils behaviour within their classroom. There is less confrontation, relationships between staff and pupils have improved and staff are more able to see behaviour from the child's perspective and better able to de-escalate challenging situations. Whilst there has been positive cultural change and staff have valued the training they have received, some staff have been reluctant to get on board with the approach, and not all staff implement the approach consistently. So the work goes on!

Impact on children and young people

The impact on our pupils has been noticeable. As a result of the nurture approach pupils now spend more time in class and are better able to engage in learning. There has been a reduction in exclusions and in the instances requiring SMT intervention in behavioural issues.

Pupils report that:

- Some teachers are understanding, approachable and kind
- Some teachers listen and support them.
- Safe spaces are available.
- Most classes are calm and quiet.
- They feel they have a key adult to talk to/ share problems with.
- Classrooms feel safe.
- When they feel supported by teachers, they feel good about themselves.
- Teachers use simple language that YP can understand.
- Learning is at the right level for them if they have a good relationship with the teacher.

Continuing the journey

Whilst we are very proud of what we have achieved so far, embedding the nurture principles throughout the school so that they permeate every classroom, every area of the school and every interaction that children have with staff and each other is an ongoing task. We will continue to train staff to develop and embed our approach, and evaluate how we are doing by gathering feedback from both staff and pupils.

We will also share our learning with other schools.

In February 2020 we hosted the first ever **West Dunbartonshire Learning Festival**, where teachers and staff from across the area attended workshops, stalls and talks focused on 'Nurturing Positive Relationships' and 'Building Resilient Communities'.

CHS has also been selected as a finalist for the **Scottish Education Award 2020** in the category of 'Making a Difference (secondary)'. These awards recognise and celebrate the exceptional achievements with Scottish Education.

Gerry Diamond was a speaker at MiSP's 2020 conference 'Teaching Mindfully'.





CASE STUDY SUMMARY

School:	The Dell Primary School
Location:	Chepstow, Monmouthshire
School Type:	Primary
MiSP Curriculum:	Paws b
Age Group/s:	7-11
Author:	Debbie Cass
Role:	Wellbeing / Pastoral Leader

About The Dell

The Dell Primary School (The Dell) is a two form entry mixed primary school situated in the town of Chepstow in Monmouthshire. It serves just over 420 pupils from residential areas in the town and nearby rural communities, with around a quarter of its pupils on roll as preferred placements from outside the school's catchment area. English is the predominant language spoken and the school teaches Welsh as a second language.

Championing mindfulness

My background is mental health, or mental illness to be precise. As a child with four siblings, I grew up with the stigma, lack of compassion and understanding, fear and taboo of mental illness. You spoke to no one about it, there was nobody to talk to. Seven years ago I started going to evening college to study counselling and psychotherapy, and the more I studied the more I became interested in psychosomatic, the connection between the body and the mind.

In 2016 I attended a **.b Foundations** training course delivered as part of an eight week programme to support emotional wellbeing in schools and developed my own daily mindfulness practise. Afterwards, attendees were encouraged to share what they had found most useful during the training with their colleagues back in school, which I did wholeheartedly! I recognised the potential for mindfulness to support our school, and I was committed to introducing it to our community.

I worked with our Deputy Head to plan how to introduce mindfulness as a whole school approach at The Dell. It has taken persistence and courage to constantly push this agenda but I have seen first-hand how mindfulness can help an anxious/stressed child or

Case Study

adult self-regulate, by purposely focusing attention on the present moment, and I have found it has been found to be a key element in stress reduction and an overall sense of happiness. I have incorporated basic counselling skills and promoted the importance of self-care hand-in-hand with mindfulness techniques, and I am proud to say that we are now a mindful school and soon to be a mindful community.

Introducing mindfulness to our pupils

I initially trained to teach The Present curriculum but then in 2018 trained to teach **Paws b**. I now teach the **Paws b** curriculum over 12 weeks to Key Stage 2 three afternoons a week, and am currently on the sixth cycle of this. I have run whole school assembles and have introduced 'mindful moments' in every classroom after lunch and the feedback has been extremely positive. As Mark Adams, our Deputy Head says:

"the daily mindful Moments routine gives children that calm space in their heads which has a knock-on positive effect for teachers as children are ready to start learning in the afternoon".

He has embedded mindfulness in the Schemes of Work for Key Stage 2.

The children in school all know how to use breathing techniques to self-regulate. Some have shown them to siblings who suffer from mental health issues and a few have been doing finger breathing with their grandparents!

I have also set up Mindfulness and Wellbeing pupil team (Year 2 to Year 6) that I meet with weekly. They





model mindfulness techniques in class, will help gather feedback on mindfulness practice in classrooms and co-designed our 5 point model of Health and Wellbeing where Mindfulness was one of these.

Children are practicing mindfulness techniques in the playground, without being prompted, and cascading these skills to family members. Mindfulness is 'felt' at The Dell, it is authentic and very 'present': not just a 'ticking the box' exercise.

Introducing mindfulness to our adults

I am passionate about a genuinely whole school approach to mindfulness, so I have trained all staff teams including teachers, afterschool club leaders, lunchtime ladies, office staff, cleaners and caretakers in basic mindfulness techniques to use with themselves and the children. The lunchtime ladies carry a laminated 'breathing star' in their tabards to help support children in the lunch break. I have presented to our Board of Governors, and also helped the Deputy Head lead INSET days. Guiding a body scan with forty colleagues including my Headteacher was nerve racking! In 2019 I completed the week long residential training to become a School Mindfulness Lead and now teach .b Foundations myself to all staff and also offer it to parents.

I have used the school website to ensure our mindful

Case Study

approach is accessible and visible, making tutorials with year 5 and year 6 doing petal and finger breathing available to parents and carers, and also I put regular updates on our twitter feed outlining our mindful activities and resources. This has been especially important whilst children and families have not been at school due to coronavirus.

Supporting mindfulness in the wider community

I was very proud that our school was used as a case study for the First Minister, Mark Drakeford, to demonstrate how mindfulness can support the new Welsh Curriculum, and I am on the 'Areas of Learning and Experience: Health and Wellbeing' team in Wales. I have also spoken about mindfulness at the Education Achievement Service (EAS) conference, which aims to raise education standards in South East Wales, and supported research into mindfulness, being observed teaching Paws b by a senior lecturer from Cardiff University for 3 days last year.

More locally, I have also given a workshop on mindfulness to the Brownies (they have got a mindfulness badge!) and I have plans to train the anti-bullying and befriending group of staff and pupils from the local secondary school, 'The Invisible Army', in mindfulness.

Last year, together with my Deputy Head I led on obtaining the Carnegie School of Excellence in Mental Health award for our school, and just as we went into



lockdown I was due to teach .b Foundations to teachers and governors from our five cluster schools. This will happen when it can!

After my evening classes, I started at the University of South Wales (aged 44!). In June 2019, I was awarded The Dean's Prize for Notable and Outstanding Achievement for my Post Graduate Integrative Counselling Course work which was amazing as they only award it to one pupil across the University each academic year, and I am now undertaking a Master's degree in Integrative Counselling and Psychotherapy. As part of this I have a placement as a NHS and Barnardo counsellor and I use mindfulness techniques with my clients as I know it will enable self-care. I have been interviewed by Dr Pooky Knightsmith, (Chair of the children and Young People's Mental health Coalition) for setting up emotional wellbeing check-ins for all staff in my school, and the video featured on her acclaimed You Tube channel. Additionally, I have received several Young Carer Awards for the work that I do with Young Carers, and we are the first school in Wales to achieve all three awards. I believe in the benefits of mindfulness and that is why I do what I do and will continue to do so.

The whole school approach

Mindfulness had been drip fed gently throughout the whole school these last few years, and we have embedded the values of mindfulness with all pupils and staff. Other schools now visit us to observe our practise, and I make sure all new staff are immediately trained in mindfulness techniques and understand why we use them. My Headteacher, Steve King has been overwhelming supportive of everything I do in terms of mindfulness and counselling, this support has been consistent throughout my nine years at The Dell.

Our mindfulness activities align with all of our other initiatives that support our community's health and wellbeing, such as the daily mile, our farm intervention for vulnerable children, our lunchtime nurture club, our body image workshop for year 4,5 and 6 and more... We try to ensure that we have a consistent approach which is reinforced by all staff in all classroom and across the whole school.

This has been a four year journey, but mindfulness is truly embedded and cascaded throughout The Dell, and I will continue to passionately 'fly the flag' for mindfulness and positive mental health.

Mindfulness at a Pupil Referral Unit

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

School:	Dacorum Education Support Centre
Location:	Hertfordshire
School Type:	Pupil Referral Unit
MiSP Curriculum:	Paws b and .b
Age Group/s:	5-16
Author:	Clare Winter
Role:	KS3 Leader / SENDCo

Dacorum Education Support Centre (DESC) is a pupil referral unit working with young people, their families, schools and other professionals. DESC works with around 50 vulnerable young people across KS1 – 4 in centre, and around 130 in the local primary and secondary schools. All students are at risk of, or have been, permanently excluded from at least one school. Often from disadvantaged and disenfranchised backgrounds, they may have difficulty concentrating, anger management issues, low resilience or a lack of emotional awareness and have usually faced huge challenges in life already. These young people need special support and a clear framework around them.

I am Clare Winter, KS3 Leader and SENDCo. I had previous experience of meditation throughout my

childhood but came to mindfulness through my interest in attachment theory and the work of Dr. Dan Siegel. I was initially employed at DESC to develop a 12-week nurture-based programme for hub groups of KS3 students who would then reintegrate back to mainstream school. In my research on adolescent brain development I discovered what Dr. Siegel called mindsight. I used his guided mindfulness meditations which then led me on to discover more about the development of mindfulness by Jon Kabat-Zin. Having previously lived in Korea and attended temple stays in a number of Buddhist monasteries my interest grew. I could see the benefit my students would gain from attention training and how this would help with some of their barriers to learning. It was also very apparent that a lot of my students lived in chaos and may have experienced adverse childhood trauma which created difficulty and a discomfort when sitting in strong silence.

Starting our journey...

I began to introduce mindfulness at DESC in January 2015. I started small by using short guided meditations with my nurture group. I also introduced mindful activities such as silent, focussed colouring, listening to ambient music and creating fuse bead art. We slowly built up from two minute silences to being able to lie still for a 15-minute body scan. This seemed to be some kind of magic! There were secondary affects too; I realised that students were beginning to identify emotions more easily and their self-regulation at stressful times improved.

Developing our mindfulness culture...

I took a proposal to the Head to introduce mindfulness as part of whole staff and student development and wellbeing. We held an on-site MBCT course in autumn 2015 which was attended by 16 staff. One of the staff attending that course was Trevor Adams, an Outreach Caseworker, who I now work closely with to embed mindfulness across DESC. Over the past five years we have gently increased the provision offered by DESC:

Our onsite activities...

- KS1 receive short stillness sessions where they can practise paying attention through mindful colouring exercises and other activities. Paws b is delivered to our KS2 cohort. The S.T.I.L.L Awards take place throughout these sessions (Sitting/Standing well, Take a breath, Inhale/Exhale, Let go/Let be, Looking after yourself and others). Students who follow instructions well get a raffle ticket added to the box and a chance to win a prize at the end of each half term. They are very motivated by this
- Students in KS3 nurture hubs undergo the .b programme
- All KS3 students begin the day with 10 minutes of stillness in the form of guided meditations or silent, focussed activities
- Mindful Poetry sessions on topics the students all agree on, e.g. my favourite place/space. This gets their creative juices flowing and they can focus on rhyming couplets or free verse poetry, on their own or in collaboration. We encourage them to pause and take a breath when they struggle to find words
- During outdoor learning with vertical learning groups of KS1-3 we have a stillness session. We use mindful movement to bring awareness to the sensations in the body or we spend time noticing the natural world around us
- We encourage staff and students to use the Action for Happiness calendar. It is displayed in our staffroom and student kitchen. We bring attention to it daily for students during shared mealtimes
- I send a weekly email to centre staff with quotes, poems, practices or mindfulness info
- We regularly spend some time in our staff meeting time pausing for a brief practice and all staff have



Clare Winter

received the **.b Foundations** taster session. These are always very well received with many staff who were initially sceptical telling us they benefit immensely from them

Our outreach in schools...

- Through our outreach service we are able to offer **Paws b** and **.b** to classes, small groups or individuals in our stakeholder schools. Schools usually refer for support with class groups that are unsettled or those having difficulty working harmoniously
- Paws b can be offered as a package with parenting workshops in order to embed the language of mindfulness and encourage shared discussion and experiences
- Those students who have completed .b that would value further support are offered $.b^2$
- We will also be offering **.breathe**, particularly for the numerous students we support through the difficult transition from primary to secondary

Additional offers...

- In April 2019 I attended the **School Mindfulness Lead** training retreat. I am now able to offer **.b Foundations** to staff in our stakeholder schools as part of our role in the Teaching School Alliance. I have completed two rounds of delivery so far and the feedback has been outstanding. This has allowed us to train our own staff and meet their appraisal targets, and also to offer training to other school staff for their own wellbeing or to those who aspire to train to teach **Paws b** or **.b**. This has the dual benefits of creating a sustainable model for delivery and provides an income stream to further train our own staff and prepare for succession planning
- We offer bespoke workshops for local schools and stakeholders which meet the needs of their brief. This helps ensure we become the local specialist and go-to provider for mindfulness

Our advice...

We are still developing our mindfulness activities at DESC, but can already recommend some top tips for other schools looking to embed mindfulness:

- **1.** You need an enthusiastic champion who needs to get support from your Head and SLT.
- **2.** Develop your own mindfulness practice initially young people can sense if you don't practice what you preach.
- **3.** Expect this to take time. We are five years into our journey at DESC and initially, many of the staff were resistant. Now some staff have signed up to the .b Foundations course and have even made it an appraisal target. Offer regular practices in staff meetings and mention mindfulness in conversation!
- **4.** Learn the teaching material off by heart or as much as possible, so delivery doesn't appear too scripted or wooden.
- **5.** Keep training. I went on the **School Mindfulness Lead** course so that I can deliver the 8-week **.b Foundations** course to adults so ensuring that we don't have to bring an external trainer in (at core cost). I deliver this now to our own staff and those from our link schools.

This is what we advise to our stakeholder schools:

The 11-Step Approach...

Action 1: Do your research then put together a proposal for mindfulness to the Headteacher and SLT. Writing a formal proposal and highlighting the wellbeing benefits to staff and students will help. Try to link the proposal to the Ofsted Framework, SDP and curriculum offer. Including costings and potential savings is helpful

Action 2: Ask management to add it to the School Development Plan. Sell them the idea of why you believe mindfulness would have a positive impact on our young people. That way you will have the backing of SLT, who essentially are responsible for rolling it out to the rest of the staff from a top down level

Action 3: Run taster sessions to all staff during CPD meetings to plant the seed

Action 4: Send a generic email out to staff; inviting them to join an 8-week course. Ensure staff are aware of the commitment involved

Action 5: After the course, identify key members of staff who will push the mindfulness programme forward and undertake further training. Consider incorporating this in to their appraisal targets

Action 6: Develop formal and informal practice across the staff and student group – embed the language of mindfulness through discussion and displays

Action 7: Send the key staff identified on **Paws b** training and **.b** training

Action 8: Drip feed mindfulness by feeding back the **Paws b** or **.b** training to staff during CPD

Action 9: Think about further ways to embed mindfulness in your school as part of staff wellbeing and workplace team building. Consider training on the **School Mindfulness Lead** course

Action 10: Send out **MiSP** promotional flyers and letters to Link Tutors, SENDCo's etc. as part of networking and boundary spanning

Action 11: Set up meetings with the aforementioned – a personal approach to selling mindfulness courses to stakeholders

Is Paws b making a difference in my school?

CASE STUDY SUMMARY

School:	Llwyncrwn Primary School
Location:	Pontypridd, South Wales
School Type:	Primary
MiSP Curriculum:	Paws b, SML
Age Group/s:	7-11
Author:	Matthew Jones
Role:	Acting Assistant Head
Issue/s Addressed:	Impact, continuing practice.

I trained to teach **Paws b** in 2016, and have taught the course to my class each year since then. Last summer, I completed the MiSP **School Mindfulness Lead** course, qualifying for a supported place due to the high proportion of children eligible for free school meals at my school. I currently teach a mixed age class of Year 3 and 4 children.

I'm often asked about the impact of teaching **Paws b** at my school, but I'm never quite sure how best to respond. I'll usually say something about how I've noticed improved relationships, and how the course gives me and the class a shared vocabulary that we can use when things go wrong. For example, in conversations with children following an incident, I'll refer to concepts taught in **Paws b** such as that of the

'storytelling mind', the 'fight and flight' response, or how we are using the prefrontal cortex of the brain when we are concentrating, doing our best or making good choices.

In conversations with children following an incident, I'll refer to concepts taught in Paws b.

One boy told me, after yet another crisis, "My amygdala was too quick for me!" At least now he has some understanding of what's happening to him when the panic begins. Beyond the duration of the course, though, I've never monitored whether the children continue to use the practices on their own. I request an impact survey from MiSP when the courses end, and I am always encouraged by the outcomes. Occasionally, children tell me that they have used one of the practices at home, and some have even taught their parents and siblings how to do them. But in terms of long-term impact, I've never really known how much use the children make of the practices and concepts that are taught when the course is over.

I believe that teaching mindfulness needs to be 'invitational'. During **Paws b** lessons, I encourage the class to join in with the practices as best they can. And it's fine if they choose not to, as long as they allow others to practise. At the end of the course, my approach has been to offer a drop-in **Mindfulness Club** one

Case Study

lunchtime a week. Children are welcome to come along and practice together and to talk about how they use mindfulness outside the Paws b lessons. The club has a number of regular members, and we enjoy practising and talking together, but beyond this I am yet to find a way to integrate mindfulness into the teaching day that respects the wishes of all - those who are enthusiastic about the practices as well as those who are less engaged.



With this in mind, I didn't know how to respond to a request from Emma Goddard, Operations and Support Officer at MiSP, who was gathering information about how supported places are helping schools. "Do you feel that Paws b is making a difference in your school?" she asked. As usual, I didn't have a very good answer, so I resolved to find out. As I was still half way through teaching **Paws b** to my current class, I decided to survey children that I had taught **Paws b** to in previous years.

I had recently seen the post, 'Mindfulness in Schools - Seeing The Impact', on the MiSP website, and remembered reading about the charity's fundamental 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.

I took these aims and created a brief online questionnaire, asking the children from my previous

classes to respond. I also used some questions similar to those used in the MiSP impact survey. The response was heartening. 95% said that they had enjoyed doing the **Paws b** course when they were in my class. They remembered most of the practices, and I was delighted to discover that two thirds of them still use them at least sometimes. Five children revealed that they practise daily. I had no idea.

The survey further revealed that the children used the practices to help them in many different ways. For example, they use them to help with friends and family, to cope with difficult feelings, to help with performance in sport, drama and music, and to support themselves when 'having a wobble'. Favourite practices included 'finger breathing' and the 'petal practice', although all the practices taught as part of **Paws b** were being used by at least some of the children.

Most revealing of all, perhaps, was the fact that only half the children surveyed knew about the **Mindfulness Club** - and 27 of them said they would like to come! So, there was a lesson to be learned for me about getting the news 'out there' about the opportunities for mindfulness in school. I've since relaunched the club at the **Schools Sit Together** activity for Children's Mental Health week 2020, using my regular club members as **Mindfulness Ambassadors**, and I intend to champion the club more publicly from now on.

Paws b had given the children a toolbox of strategies that many had chosen to return to.

I was reassured to learn that the **Paws b** course had given the children a toolbox of strategies that many had chosen to return to. Carrying out the survey renewed my confidence that teaching mindfulness is of benefit to children, and left me feeling inspired to 'grow' mindfulness further at my school. And I'm now challenging myself to find new ways to bring mindfulness into my day to day teaching, both inside and outside the classroom.

I am thankful that I took the time to find out, because next time someone asks me if **Paws b** is making a difference in my school, I'll have a much better answer.

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

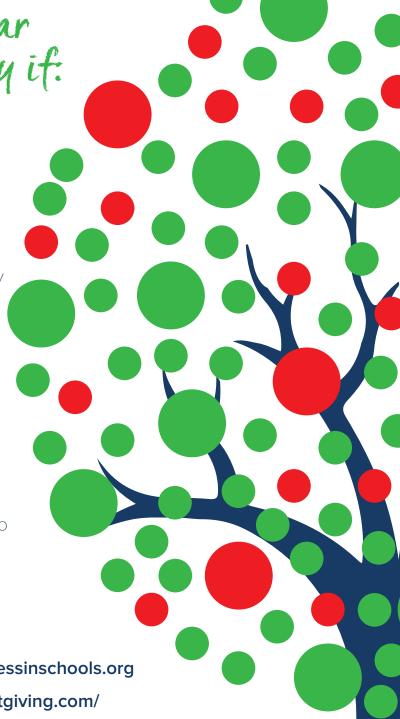
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