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School of Education

Enabling pupils to flourish: An exploration of whole-school wellbeing promotion in English primary schools

by

Rowan Juliette Rachel Edwards

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<u>Abstract</u>

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An increasing focus has been placed on schools as suitable settings for promoting pupils' wellbeing. High levels of wellbeing are associated with flourishing, where children enjoy life and better overcome challenges. A substantial research base emphasises that adopting a whole-school approach involving all members of the school community is most beneficial, although it is acknowledged that further evidence is required regarding: 1) primary schools, 2) the English education system, 3) complexity and context and 4) capturing children's voices. This PhD thesis, therefore, addresses these gaps by asking the question: **How do schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish?**

Using an exploratory approach through a qualitatively driven mixed methods methodology, the thesis used a three-phase design to address the research problem. Six broad principles formed consistent threads across the findings: 1) enabling children to flourish, 2) integrating wellbeing with key school goals, 3) promoting wellbeing and building capital, 4) building on virtuous cycles, 5) managing complexity and context and 6) evaluating wellbeing promotion through different voices. An additional purpose of the project was to iteratively develop a conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools, which is of potential use to professionals and policy makers.

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Research Thesis: Declaration of Authorship

Print name: Rowan Juliette Rachel Edwards

Title of thesis: Enabling pupils to flourish: An exploration of whole-school wellbeing promotion in English primary schools

I declare that this thesis and the work presented in it are my own and has been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

I confirm that:

1. This work was done wholly or mainly while in candidature for a research degree at this University;
2. Where any part of this thesis has previously been submitted for a degree or any other qualification at this University or any other institution, this has been clearly stated;
3. Where I have consulted the published work of others, this is always clearly attributed;
4. Where I have quoted from the work of others, the source is always given. With the exception of such quotations, this thesis is entirely my own work;
5. I have acknowledged all main sources of help;
6. Where the thesis is based on work done by myself jointly with others, I have made clear exactly what was done by others and what I have contributed myself;
7. None of this work has been published before submission

Signature: .... Date:..........................

Acknowledgements

Definitions and Abbreviations

Complex ....Consisting of multiple, interrelated factors

Cultural capital ....Personal assets in terms of their knowledge, preferences, interests, possessions and education. Cultural capital leads to inequalities, particularly for those with lower socio-economic status whose assets restrict opportunities within society (Bourdieu, 2010)

Disadvantaged pupils ....Pupils with socio-economic disadvantage. This is commonly defined as pupils who have been in receipt of free schools meals in the last six years, those in care and pupils who have been adopted following being in care (DfE, 2022)

Eudaimonia ....Seeking to fulfil personal potential by using unique strengths. The ensuing sense of accomplishment and satisfaction in attaining personal goals promotes a sense of wellbeing

Flourish................................Experience of higher levels of wellbeing. Flourishing is associated with individuals who enjoy more life satisfaction and better able to cope with life's adversities (Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff, 2002)

Health..................................'a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity' (WHO, 1986 p.1).

Health promotion ....'the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health' (WHO 1998, p.1)

Hedonia ....Seeking to maximise levels of pleasure and minimise pain

Pupil voice ....Listening to the perceptions and lived experiences of pupils

Salutogenic...........................A focus on the factors which support wellbeing

School context.....................Economic, social and cultural capitals that [pupils] and parents bring with them…local, regional, national and global processes of economic and social change and migration that produce particular local configurations of behaviour, relationships and expectations around education [and]…the historical and contemporary operation of local education markets and policies (Thrupp and Lupton, 2011)

School culture ....Shared values, beliefs, assumptions and attitudes

Social capital .... the development of social cohesion, belonging and involvement in social networks

Virtuous cycle .... A chain of complex events which result in continual improvements

Well becoming .... Building the foundations of lifelong wellbeing. This term was conceptualised by Ben-Arieh and Frones (2011).

Wellbeing[1] .... 'shorthand for the positive dimensions' of physical, mental and social experiences' (Green *et al.,* 2015)

Wellbeing[2] .... The multidimensional experience of five elements: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment

Wellbeing[3] .... feeling happy, safe, connected to my friends, teachers and school, overcoming challenges, growing in confidence, feeling satisfied and having opportunities to play and have fun

Whole-school .... A whole-school approach involves all parts of the school working together and being committed. It needs partnership working between senior leaders, teachers and all school staff, as well as parents, carers and the wider community (Anna Freud Centre, 2022). It involves a focus on three components: (a) curriculum, teaching, and learning; (b) school ethos and environment; and (c) family and community partnerships (WHO, 1998).

Abbreviations

BERA .... British educational research association

DCSF .... Department for children, schools and families

DfE .... Department for education

DHSC .... Department of health and social care

ESRC .... Economic and social research council

ENHPS .... European network of health promoting schools

HPS .... Health promoting schools

MHP .... Mental health promotion

MMR .... Mixed methods research

NHS .... National health service

OECD ....Organisation for economic and co-operative development

ONS ....Office for national statistics

PHE ....Public health England

PPI ....Positive psychology initiatives

SDA.....................................Secondary data analysis

SEAL....................................Social and emotional aspects of learning

SEL......................................Social and emotional learning

SEND...................................Special educational needs and disability

SES......................................Socio-economic status

SHE ....Schools for Health in Europe Network Foundation

SLR......................................Systematic literature review

UN ....United Nations

WHO...................................World health organisation

Chapter 1   Introduction and Literature Review

1.1   Introduction

The purpose of this qualitatively-driven, mixed methods PhD study is to explore how English primary schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish. Whilst existing literature provides substantial evidence that school-based initiatives enhance pupils' wellbeing, most research relates to secondary school settings (11 to 16 years) and has evolved from outside the United Kingdom (UK). The ways in which English primary schools design, implement and sustain whole-school wellbeing promotion is largely unknown, and, therefore, this study seeks to address this knowledge gap.

The purpose of this chapter is three-fold. Firstly, it situates the research topic within its temporal, political and social context. Next, the chapter presents a literature review to contextualise the PhD study through a critical assessment of recent, relevant literature (Boote and Belle, 2005). The review is intentionally brief, as a detailed systematic review of the literature will be undertaken in phase one of the study. Finally, the chapter establishes the purpose of this PhD study by identifying knowledge gaps which comprise the research problem. Following on, it presents an overarching research question and sub-questions which will be used to explore the phenomena of whole-school wellbeing promotion.

1.2   Background

In the last three decades schools have become increasingly important settings to promote pupils' health and wellbeing (World Health Organisation (WHO), 1986; Department of Health (DoH), 2015; Department of Health and Social Care & Department for Education (DHSC & DfE), 2017). WHO's (1986) Ottawa Charter established that children's wellbeing had equal importance to adults. The ongoing importance placed on promoting wellbeing is reflected in the United Nations' (UN, 2015) 2030 agenda for sustainable development, which identifies promoting good health and wellbeing as a key global goal. Whilst the benefit of physical health is firmly established and reflected in schools' curricula, more recently there has been a growing emphasis of schools' role in promoting the social, emotional and psychological aspects of wellbeing. High levels of wellbeing are associated with pupils flourishing, whereby they enjoy life more and cope better with adversity (Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff, 2002; Huta and Ryan, 2010). As a result, countries have translated these global guidelines into national policies, including the Every Student Succeeds Act

in the United States (U.S. Department of Education, 2015) and the provision for student health and wellbeing (Western Australia Department for Education, 2021).

Likewise, in England, recent legislation has made mental health education a mandatory part of the curriculum, requiring all schools to promote skills and knowledge associated with social and emotional wellbeing (DHSC and DfE, 2017). Additionally, from September 2019 Ofsted, the schools' inspectorate, has necessitated schools to demonstrate how they promote pupils' personal development, including wellbeing (Gov.UK, 2018). Simultaneously there is increasing awareness that children are challenged by aspects of their social, cultural, educational and economic circumstances. Increasing income gaps, poorer health amongst children from disadvantaged backgrounds and the under-performance of pupils from certain groups negatively impacts on wellbeing (Cotton *et al.,* 2016; Pearce *et al.,* 2019; Office for National Statistics (ONS), 2020). Furthermore, growing exposure to technology, increased school testing and complex family situations require children to develop adaptive skills and resilience, which research has shown is supported by school-based initiatives (Mooney, Oliver and Smith*,* 2009; O'Keefe and Clarke-Pearson, 2011; The Children's Society, 2016). Moreover, in 2020 and 2021 pupils have been severely impacted by two periods of school closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic, also recognised as detrimental to wellbeing (Crawley *et al.*, 2020). Figure 1-1 highlights contextual factors influencing schools, presenting a timeline of major educational, political and pandemic-influenced changes since 2015.
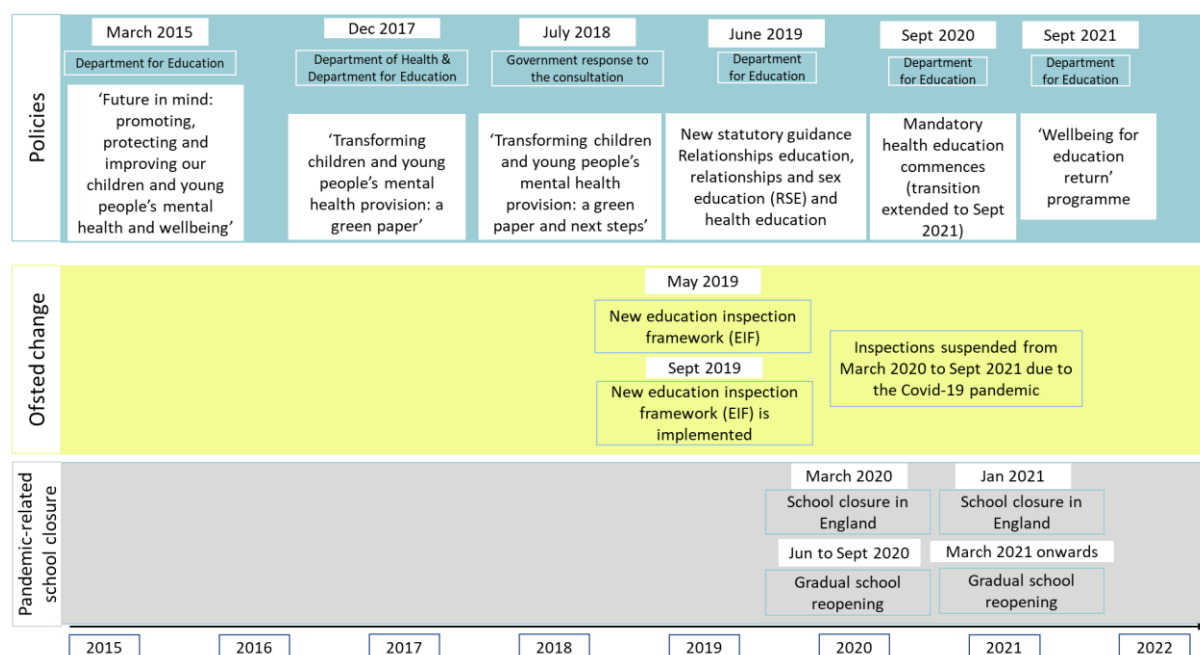
Figure 1-1 A timeline of governmental and Ofsted changes, and pandemic-related school closures in England

With approximately 8.9 million pupils in 32,770 English schools, whole-school wellbeing promotion has the potential to improve children's lives significantly (Gov.UK, 2021). Moreover, high levels of wellbeing have wide-reaching effects with research suggesting that healthy adults have higher life satisfaction and contribute more to society (WHO, 2013; National Health Service (NHS), 2016). In England, whilst the government recommends schools use a strengths-based approach to promoting pupils' wellbeing, each institution is given responsibility for how this will be achieved in their own setting (DHSC & DfE, 2017). As a result, teachers report that whilst they recognise its benefits, they feel underprepared to deliver whole-school wellbeing promotion as training is not a compulsory part of Initial Teacher Training or continuing professional development (DfE, 2015; Anna Freud National Centre, 2017). Therefore, with an increasing global and national focus on pupils' wellbeing, a growing awareness of the societal challenges children face and a reported lack of teachers' confidence, the importance of understanding how schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish is evident.

Having established the importance of the topic, the purpose of this literature review is to contextualise my study through a critical assessment of recent, relevant research (Boote and Belle, 2005). The review is intentionally brief, as a more detailed systematic review of the literature related to whole-school wellbeing promotion will be undertaken in phase one of the study; as one of a series of methods seeking to answer the research questions (Bryman, 2016). This review initially identifies two relevant fields of research: the topics of health promotion and children's wellbeing. Firstly, it argues schools are important settings for promoting pupils' health (WHO, 1986). Next, it critically engages with current debates on defining and conceptualising children's wellbeing. At this point the review weaves together these two distinct research topics by considering a third body of literature: whole-school, wellbeing promotion. The review focusses on key evidence from the last fifteen years, being of most relevance for this PhD study. It draws literature from an international evidence-base of high-income countries, deemed as most closely reflecting the characteristics and practices of the English education system. A synthesis and critical assessment of this literature is used to explore similarities and differences in the way schools design and deliver wellbeing initiatives. Moreover, engaging with the current discourse, the review considers some limitations and knowledge gaps identified by leading academics. In the light of this discussion, the final section of the chapter identifies an opportunity for further research, which has become the focus of this PhD study.

1.3   Health promotion and school settings

This section begins by defining the terms 'health', 'wellbeing' and 'health promotion' as a prelude to examining health promotion in school settings. As WHO is an influential driver of global health standards, the organisation's definitions are being used in this first instance. However, this study recognises contemporary debates over the suitability of these definitions and will, therefore, revisit the challenges in conceptualising the term 'wellbeing' in section 1.4 (Dodge *et al.*,2012; La Placa, McNaught and Knight, 2013).

In the influential Ottawa Charter for Health, WHO defines health as:

> a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity (WHO, 1986 p.1).

This recognises a central requirement for people to experience wellbeing or being well. Whilst WHO do not define 'wellbeing', it might be appropriate to adopt Green *et al.*'s (2015, p.7) inference that it is *'shorthand for the positive dimensions'* of physical, mental and social experiences**.** WHO (1998, p.1) propose that governments and other social structures can influence levels of health, and define health promotion *a*s *'*the process of enabling people to increase control over, and to improve, their health*'.* These influential and enduring definitions have driven health promotion across settings (Nutbeam, 2019). Literature also highlights that health promoting strategies typically adopt salutogenic principles (Antonovsky, 1996; Wells *et al.,* 2003). Antonovsky's (1996, p.14) concept of salutogenesis suggests that people lie on a continuum of 'ease' and 'dis-ease'. A salutogenic approach seeks to understand the factors which allow an individual to move towards 'ease', promoting higher levels of wellbeing (Green *et al.,* 2015; Mittelmark and Bauer, 2022). This focus on the benefits of health promotion has resulted in a considerable body of evidence.

Over the last thirty years health education and health promotion literature has been published in specialist journals including *Health Education*, *Health Education Journal* and *Health Promotion International*, and across discipline-specific publications (Green *et al.*, 2015; Nutbeam, 2019). Where health promotion is deemed effective, researchers suggest the benefits occur from taking what Dooris *et al.* (2019) terms a 'holistic vision' of a person within their environment. Health promotion assumes a person's health is not entirely attributable to their attitudes and behaviours (Dooris *et al.,* 2019). Instead, leading academics recognise a range of contextual influences including social, economic and political factors (Engel, 1977; Dahlgreen and Whitehead 1991;

Nutbeam, 2019). To address environmental effects, WHO (1986, p.4) proposed adoption of a settings approach, rationalising that:

> health is created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life; where they learn, work, play and love.

This considers the 'daily activities in which environmental, organizational, and personal factors interact' (WHO, 1998, p.19). A strength of the settings approach has been its widespread adoption. Proponents have identified its ability to both address personal wellbeing as well as create supportive cultures across settings, including schools (Nutbeam, 1998a; Tones and Tilford, 2001; Dooris, 2004). In response, the health promoting schools framework has been widely adopted as a strategy to promote pupil wellbeing within schools and is given fuller consideration in Chapter 2 (Turunen *et al.,* 2017).

The settings approach has been influential across international organisations including The Schools for Health in Europe (SHE) network and European Network of Health Promoting Schools (ENHPS) as well as national bodies including the PSHE (personal, social and health education) Association in the UK (Langford *et al.,* 2014; Turunen *et al.,* 2017). However, whilst it appears that schools are important settings, their scope is limited having little control over wider contextual factors such as socio-economic disadvantage, housing and employment (Scriven and Hodgins, 2012). To reconcile this limitation, schools can be perceived not as stand-alone institutions but as one component amongst interconnecting systems of health promoting settings (Scriven and Hodgins, 2012). This overview enables the value of the school setting to be recognised as an important cog in the whole system. Encouragingly, a leading academic, Nutbeam (2019), identifies the role schools can play in developing pupils' wellbeing skills, promoting health literacy and providing a supportive culture. Evidence suggests that schools have most influence on the psychological, social and emotional aspects of children's wellbeing (Durlak *et al.,* 2011). In all, this section has identified that schools are important settings for health promotion. Yet, whilst Kickbusch (1996) argues that a settings approach enables focus to be switched from an individual to understanding the potential of an organisation to promote health, Dooris *et al.* (2019) cautions that this is only achievable through a participative, whole-system approach. Therefore, the next section explores how schools can successfully adopt this approach.

1.3.1   Schools as settings for health promotion

An inclusive approach where all pupils can engage with health promotion needs to be undertaken (Durlak *et al.,* 2011). Evidence shows that 'whole-school' and 'universal' approaches are considered most appropriate (Durlak *et al.,* 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011). A universal approach is narrower in scope and may be restricted to a classroom-based curriculum or a particular age group (Durlak *et al*., 2011). A whole-school approach is more comprehensive and promotes the wellbeing of the school community, through a taught curriculum in combination with a 'health enhancing social and physical environment' (Denman *et al*., 2002 p. 26). This reflects Dooris *et al.'s* (2007) argument that the setting itself influences pupils' outcomes. Significant evidence demonstrates that where such activities are undertaken, pupils experience higher levels of wellbeing alongside improved academic performance (Durlak *et al.,* 2011).

Despite the recognised success of whole-school health promotion, it appears this study should be cautious about schools' failure to fully engage in this approach. Goldberg (2019) suggests that initiatives may fall short, focussing on delivering curriculum content to pupils and failing to consider other school aspects. Other empirical research appears to reflect this argument, with two large-scale reviews of whole-school wellbeing promotion demonstrating that interventions are often classroom-based and do not seek to make changes to the school's ethos or organisation (Durlak *et al*., 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011). Perhaps, as Rutter *et al*. (2017) suggest, this arises from school leadership seeing health promotion as a cause-and-effect process, whereby they seek to fix a problem. Instead, it appears that whole-school wellbeing promotion is more sustainable where it is seen as a process of continual change, affecting all structures and processes (Waters, 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011).

Whilst a whole-school approach has been evidenced as most effective for promoting pupils' wellbeing, leading scholars suggest that the scope of 'whole-school' is changing with advances in technology (Moorhead *et al*., 2013; Lupton, 2014). Lupton's (2014) critical commentary identified that digital technologies were more widely used in other settings with adult populations, than in schools. Moorhead *et al.* (2013) and Loss, Lindacher and Curbach (2014) argue that there is more potential for virtual settings to be adopted in a settings approach. It would, therefore, seem that exploring both the extent to which schools truly adopt whole-school approaches as well as use of technology could be usefully investigated in this project.

1.3.2   The importance of recognising complexity

This chapter recognises children as embedded within their environment, and that health promotion is most successful where it takes account of context (Nutbeam, 2019). The United Nations (UN, 2015) in its 'Agenda for 2030 for sustainable development' recognises how the growing complexities in children's lives influences their wellbeing. Additionally, whole-school health promotion is, itself, a complex intervention (Rosas and Knight, 2019). Furthermore, scholars argue that schools exhibit characteristics of complex systems (Keshavarz *et al.,* 2010). Such evidence emphasises the importance of recognising complexity in health promotion. Evidence shows that where complexity is understood, health promotion benefits from being tailored to the local environment and population (Nastasi and Schensul, 2005). In school settings, a series of recent systematic reviews and meta-analyses have demonstrated where wellbeing promotion acknowledges context and complexity this results in more relevant and sustained outcomes (Waters, 2011; Weare and Nind 2011; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018). Nastasi and Schensul (2005) and Hill *et al*. (2005) strengthen this argument by suggesting that a 'one size fits all' approach may not only be short lived but may fail to reach all groups within a population.

For this PhD study to avoid the limitations of not recognising complexity and context, it now briefly assesses ways in which academics say this can be accomplished. Keshawaraz *et al*. (2010, p.1470) contends that research needs to study the 'diversity in and between schools'. Additionally, Nutbeam, McGill and Premkumar (2018, p. 708) propose that whole-school initiatives need to be understood 'in a wide range of populations and contexts to improve our understanding of what works under what conditions'. This is echoed by Rosas (2017, p.303) who call for schools and researchers to embrace 'non-linearity' and 'local variability' in whole-school wellbeing promotion. Rosas (2017) proposes that continual assessment enables complexity to be captured and understood.

This section has identified that schools are important settings for health promotion, arguing that a salutogenic, whole-school approach has best outcomes. It has recognised complexities arise both in promoting wellbeing and from the environmental setting. The section also recognises children as embedded within their context. It, therefore, suggests that this PhD study needs to recognise how complexity and context influence whole-school wellbeing promotion.

1.4   Defining children's wellbeing

A wealth of empirical and theoretical literature has been developed in relation to wellbeing, reflecting the enduring interest from the ancient Greek philosophers onwards (Stoll, 2014).

Chapter 1

Specialist journals include the *International Journal of Wellbeing*, *Applied psychology: health and wellbeing* and *International Journal of Qualitative Studies on Health and Wellbeing*. Researchers from multiple disciplines publish across discipline-specific publications including education, social sciences, psychology and health promotion. This, perhaps, explains why several scholars have highlighted the challenges of defining and conceptualising wellbeing; as yet, no agreed definition exists (Dodge *et al.*, 2012; La Placa, McNaught and Knight, 2013). Whilst a full discussion of this issue is beyond the scope of this thesis, it recognises: 1) wellbeing often fails to be defined, with an implication that people are familiar with the term, and 2) this plethora of definitions has potential for misunderstanding where people have different conceptualisations(Dodge *et al* ., 2012; La Placa, McNaught and Knight, 2013).

It, thus, appears essential for a clear definition of wellbeing to be adopted in this study (Dodge *et al.*, 2012). As schools are identified as most influential in improving psychological, social and emotional wellbeing (page 9), a suitable definition must be chosen. Consideration of wellbeing in these terms has predominantly developed within the field of psychology, and this is where a definition will be drawn (Ryff and Singer, 2000; Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff, 2002). Multiple psychological definitions of wellbeing exist, reflecting ongoing debates about the subjective nature and multiple domains of wellbeing (Pollard and Lee 2003; Dodge *et al.,* 2012). Therefore, a brief critical discussion of potential definitions will follow, before providing a rationale for the definition which will be adopted for this PhD study.

From the first concepts of wellbeing amongst ancient philosophers, two broad branches of theory have continued to be influential: eudaimonic and hedonic wellbeing. Aristotle (384–322 BCE) developed the concept of eudaimonia, where 'the good life' was defined as one in which people choose to flourish by striving for a sense of holistic wellbeing. Individuals strive to achieve their potential by making use of unique strengths and wellbeing occurs over the long-term through accomplishing personal goals (Stoll, 2014). In contrast, Aristippus of Cyrene, a pupil of Socrates, proposed that wellbeing was hedonic, arising from people seeking to maximise levels of pleasure and minimise pain. Wellbeing is experienced in the moment; the past and present having little relevance.

These ancient ideas underpin more recent wellbeing investigation, with new theories seeking to explain how individuals may flourish (Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff, 2002; Seligman, 2011). Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff (2002) define flourishing as experiencing higher levels of wellbeing and is associated with individuals who enjoy more life satisfaction and are better able to cope with life's adversities (Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff, 2002; Huta and Ryan, 2010). New theories of wellbeing have been developed as theorists move away from focussing only on psychological deficits, to

understand how some individuals appear to naturally flourish. It is interesting to note that this reflects a similar temporal development in health promotion, where theorists moved away from a medical model of health deficit to a focus on promoting wellbeing (WHO, 1986).

Some leading academics argue that neither a singularly hedonic or eudaimonic approach can fully explain why some individuals flourish (Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff, 2002; Seligman, 2011). Instead, they propose a definition of wellbeing which combines both approaches. One widely cited and applied theory fulfilling this criterion is Seligman's (2011) PERMA theory of wellbeing, which proposes that wellbeing combines a range of short and longer-term subjective experiences. Seligman (2011) proposes a multidimensional definition of flourishing as the subjective experience of five elements: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement. A fuller, critical discussion of this model is found in Chapter 2. This definition appears appropriate for the subjective, multi-faceted experience of children's psychological, social and emotional wellbeing and is, therefore, adopted as the definition for this study exploring how whole-school wellbeing promotion enables pupils to flourish.

1.4.1   Children's wellbeing and capturing their perspectives

Whilst the concept of wellbeing has existed for over two millennia, children's wellbeing has only been considered since the end of the nineteenth century (Ryff and Singer, 2000). The last three decades have seen increased focus on this topic, resulting in a growing body of empirical and theoretical literature (Pollard and Lee, 2003). This increasing attention may have arisen for two reasons. Firstly, the concept of childhood as an important life stage is becoming widely recognised (Morrow, 2011). Therefore wellbeing, like other childhood factors has been given more consideration (Ryff and Singer, 2000). Secondly, wellbeing promotion is increasingly recognised as a key function of contemporary schooling, resulting in more policy and research (Lewis, 2019). In the UK, there is now a statutory requirement for teaching about mental health and emotional wellbeing in schools (Gov.UK, 2020a). Furthermore, an annual review by the ONS publishes children's wellbeing indicators and the DfE publishes the State of the Nation review on children and young people's wellbeing (ONS, 2020). Simultaneously, systematic reviews have given new insights into current research on children's wellbeing (Pollard and Lee, 2003; Amerijckx and Humblet, 2013). Whilst a growing evidence base has established the importance of researching children's wellbeing, existing literature has been criticised (Minkkinnen, 2013). Like Dodge *et al.*'s (2012) and La Placa, McNaught and Knight's (2013) criticism of conceptualisations of adult wellbeing, Pollard and Lee (2003 p.69) criticise research on children's wellbeing to be 'a confusing

and contradictory research base.' The OECD's (2009) report highlights multiple definitions of children's wellbeing, which Minkkinen (2013) suggests is due to the many disciplines across which research childhood wellbeing. Furthermore, critics suggest that many childhood studies rely on adult-oriented concepts of wellbeing (Fauth and Thompson, 2009; Raghavan and Alexandrova, 2015). Amerijckz and Humblet's (2013) review of child wellbeing literature found few published theoretical papers in a study of 209 papers, implying that whilst there is growing empirical evidence, less focus is being directed towards conceptualisation.

Where childhood wellbeing is conceptualised, academics agree that a single indicator is insufficient; rather a multidimensional approach is needed (Ryan and Deci, 2001; Pollard and Lee 2003; Seligman, 2011). This adds to the argument for adopting Seligman's (2011) definition for this PhD study, which uses a multidimensional measure of wellbeing. There is also strong evidence that children's wellbeing cannot be separated from their context, echoing the arguments of academics within health promotion (Camfield *et al.,* 2010). However, Amerijckz and Humblet (2013) caution that studies focussed most closely on a child's microsystem, without consideration of influencing factors at other levels (Bronfenbrenner, 2005).

Current discourse also challenges whose voices should be heard in designing children's wellbeing measures. Several academics call for children's perspectives to be used in research (Biggeri *et al.*, 2006; Fauth and Thompson, 2009; Goswami, Fox and Pollack*,* 2016). Biggeri *et al.* (2006) and Fauth and Thompson (2009) argue for a participatory approach where children are involved in both defining wellbeing and the research process. Therefore, more recent studies on children's wellbeing often incorporate self-reporting methods to capture children's perspectives (Goswami, Fox and Pollack, 2016). However, whilst they offer a chance for children to be co-respondents, research design has been criticised for relying on standardised assessment measures developed by adults (Ben-Arieh McDonell and Attar-Schwartz, 2009; Goswami, Fox and Pollack, 2016). It appears that research would benefit from a more 'child-centric' approach where participatory methods are more extensively used (Ben-Arieh, McDonell and Attar-Schwartz, 2009; Goswami, Fox and Pollack *,* 2016). Where adopted, evidence highlights the benefits of adopting a participatory approach. In the UK, the Children's Society consulted 17,000 young people on their own wellbeing and the contextual factors which both promoted and hindered it (Rees, Goswami and Bradshaw, 2010). It was identified that family, friends, leisure and education had most impact on wellbeing, capturing the subjective realities of young people which may have differed from the results of an adult-generated measurement. In a case study of an English primary school, Hall (2010) consulted a group of pupils about environmental factors within their school which impacted their wellbeing. This allowed the school leadership to make structural and procedural

changes based on children's identification of having a clean place to eat lunch and the provision of more litter bins, concerns which may have been overlooked from an adult perspective.

1.4.2 'Wellbeing' versus 'well becoming'

Contemporary academics are also focussed on how to balance improving levels of children's wellbeing during childhood with developing the skills associated with flourishing adults. Ben-Arieh and Frones (2011, p.463) argue that the concepts of childhood and children relate to the states of 'being', and 'becoming' refers to 'the unfolding of the life course along trajectories shaped by social structures and the agency of the actor'. They have conceptualised this as the balance between 'wellbeing' versus 'well becoming' (Ben-Arieh and Frones, 2011). This concept appears to reflect the principles of positive psychology, whereby flourishing is explained as the positive experiences of both hedonic (in the present moment) and eudaimonic (future-oriented) states (Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff, 2002; Seligman, 2011). Soutter, O'Steen and Gilmore (2012, p.112) identify a key school goal is to develop pupils' 'capacities…for experiencing a flourishing life', implying benefits of whole-school wellbeing promotion may build foundations for lifelong wellbeing, or 'well becoming'.

Therefore, it appears that to enable pupils to flourish, schools have a challenge to balance wellbeing practice to benefit pupils both in the short and long term, enabling children to have a good childhood and a firm basis for future wellbeing (Rees, Goswami and Bradshaw, 2010). A participatory study established that children and young people were able to distinguish between activities which promoted 'wellbeing' versus 'well becoming' (Rees, Goswami and Bradshaw, 2010; Gálvez–Muñoz et al., 2013). Gálvez–Muñoz et al's (2013) study of 333 children identified that children understood a difference in the skills that would enable them to flourish currently, whilst perceiving autonomy and decision-making as essential skills for adulthood. In all, this section demonstrates the importance of participatory approaches for childhood research alongside balancing 'wellbeing' versus 'well becoming' in enabling children to flourish. This PhD study will seek to explore how schools take this into account in designing, implementing and reviewing whole-school wellbeing promotion.

1.4.3   The influence of context on children's wellbeing

The importance of context has been recognised throughout this review. Leading academics argue that environment not only influences children's wellbeing, but that researchers must recognise a child's contextual embeddedness from which they cannot be separated (Pollard and Lee, 2003; Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Ben-Arieh and Frones, 2011; Lippman, Moore and McIntosh, 2011). The importance of context has also been identified by the UN, who recognise the rights of a child to include the impact of their physical and social environment on wellbeing (UN, 2009). As a result, both empiricists and theorists commonly adopt Bronfenbrenner's (2005) ecological systems theory as a framework through which to understand the interrelationship between a child and their environment (Lippman, 2007; Bradshaw, Hoelscher and Richardson, 2007). Bronfenbrenner (2005) identifies that systems within the micro level include family, friends and school and are considered to have most influence on young children (Bronfenbrenner, 2005). A fuller consideration of this theory will be given in Chapter 2. Furthermore, Lipmann (2007) recognises that the relationships which children identify as most important, have the greatest influence on their wellbeing. Researchers also argue additional influences on children's wellbeing exist through a complex interdependence of other systems across all levels, such as education policy and parents' employment status (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Lippman, 2007). These interrelationships between the child and contextual factors are dynamic and their impact changes over time (Keshavarz *et al.,* 2010). With such complexity, scholars have attempted to identify key factors within children's environments which commonly impact their wellbeing. In a systematic review, Adi *et al*. (2007) identified a range of protective and risk factors for children's wellbeing (see Appendix A). Rees, Goswami and Bradshaw *,* (2006, p.136) outlined a range of facilitators and barriers to wellbeing amongst children living in the European Union, identifying that:

> children interact with their environment and thus play an active role in creating their well-being by balancing the different factors, developing and making use of resources and responding to stress*.*

Recognition of pupils' contexts appears vital for enabling them to flourish. For schools to maximise the potential of wellbeing practice, they need to adopt appropriate practices for their context, giving further weight to the earlier discussion about the importance of understanding complexity and context in section 1.3.2 (Stevens and Jarden, 2019). In relation to this PhD thesis, it appears necessary to understand how context influences whole-school wellbeing promotion and how schools respond to their unique settings.

In summary, this section has identified the requirement to use a child-appropriate definition of wellbeing. It has selected Seligman's (2011) PERMA model's multidimensional definition to inform

this PhD study. It has argued that involving children in research has the potential to give voice to their own perspectives on and lived experiences of wellbeing. It also recognised the tension between promoting children's 'wellbeing' and 'well becoming', acknowledging the challenge for schools in balancing these two requirements within their wellbeing practice. The importance of context was again identified as a key theme, recognising the impact of a child's environment on their wellbeing.

1.5   Exploring whole-school promotion of wellbeing

The chapter now explores the body of evidence where the topics of health promotion and children's wellbeing intersect, namely, whole-school wellbeing promotion. It presents current evidence, focussing on practices seeking to improve pupils' wellbeing. It identifies similarities and differences between these approaches, and critically discusses ensuing benefits. Finally, the discussion identifies some current concerns identified by leading researchers, which have led to gaps in existing literature.

Over the last two decades literature about whole-school wellbeing promotion has rapidly evolved (Adi *et al*., 2007; Durlak *et al*., 2011; Weare and Nind 2011; O'Reilly *et al*., 2018). Due to its interdisciplinary nature, research exists across disciplines including education, psychology, social sciences, health sciences and public health. To date, most publications relate to practices in high income countries, with literature predominantly published in the US and Australia, and to a lesser extent Europe (Durlak et al., 2011; Waters, 2011; O'Reilly et al., 2018). A series of widely-cited reviews have consolidated what is considered to be high-quality literature and provided further meta-inferences about whole-school wellbeing promotion, although authors have suggested that research quality is, in fact, variable (Adi *et al.,* 2007; Durlak *et al.,* 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011; Waters, 2011; Murphy et al., 2017; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018; O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018).

Whilst schools undertake a common aim to enable pupils to flourish, evidence suggests three common approaches are adopted by schools in this endeavour. These include mental health promotion (Weare and Nind, 2011; Murphy *et al*., 2017; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018; O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018) positive education (Waters, 2011; Norrish *et al*., 2013; White, 2016) and social and emotional learning (Durlak *et al.,* 2011; Banerjee, Weare and Farr, 2014). Mental health promotion (MHP) has been widely adopted within the school setting and is defined by WHO (2004, p.1) as 'actions to create living conditions and environments that support mental health and allow people to adopt and maintain healthy lifestyles'. Studies relating to its adoption

in the school setting demonstrate practice promotes a wide range of skills including emotion management, promoting positive relationships and developing self-awareness and confidence. Positive education, whilst developed in the US, has been predominantly implemented in the Australian schools (Waters, 2011). Positive education, informed by Seligman's (2011) PERMA model, is defined as 'education for both traditional skills and for happiness' (Seligman *et al.,* 2009 p. 293). It emphasises whole-school change involving all school members, reflecting WHO's health promoting schools framework discussed in Chapter 2. Social and emotional learning programmes (SEL), originally developed in the US, have been widely adopted and refer to initiatives which seek to 'integrate thinking, emotion, and behaviour to deal effectively with everyday personal and social challenges' (Greenberg *et al.,* 2017, p.13). SEL initiatives may be narrower in focus than the other two approaches, and are not necessarily considered whole-school methods, although they aim to promote pupils' wellbeing (Weare and Nind, 2011). On face value, these practices appear to undertake different methods in promoting wellbeing, offering professionals a potentially confusing and overwhelming evidence-base (Anna Freud National Centre, 2017). However, Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014, p.739) make a useful argument that it is not a particular 'programme' or 'curriculum' which is important but rather the intention 'to commit to the underlying principles'. Therefore, this section now considers the common, shared principles of these approaches to promoting wellbeing.

Firstly, all approaches appear to include a curriculum which develops skills and knowledge associated with experiencing wellbeing (Weare and Nind, 2011; Murphy *et al*., 2017; O'Reilly *et al.*, 2018; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018). Reflecting the discussion on health promotion in section 1.3, evidence identifies practice is more effective where a salutogenic approach is adopted. Therefore, all approaches enable children to develop positive skills related to identifying emotions and self-regulation, self-awareness, reflection, resilience, responsible decision-making and building healthy social relationships (Durlak *et al*., 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011; Waters, 2011). Research shows few schools attempt to use whole-school approaches to minimise deficits such as 'poor' behaviour, instead appearing to use targeted initiatives with smaller groups of pupils for this purpose (Durlak *et al*., 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011). Reviews also identify that whole-school approaches demonstrate the greatest and most sustainable impact on children's wellbeing (Durlak *et al.,* 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011; Waters, 2011). Banerjee, Weare and Farr's (2014) study of the SEAL initiative in the UK found that whole-school initiatives demonstrated improved pupil attainment, more positive relationships and greater pupil wellbeing. Waters (2011, p.85), in her review of positive education, argued that to be truly effective, wellbeing promotion needs to be 'woven into the DNA of the wider school culture'. This is echoed by Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014, p.732) who report that to maximise potential,

wellbeing promotion requires 'the integration of SEAL into the fabric of school'. However, Durlak *et al.*'s (2011) review of 213 initiatives found that programmes were often short-term and delivered to specific age groups, implying a shortfall on the whole-school approach. Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson's (2018) small but recent review of eleven studies also identified that not all pupils received the same benefits from the wellbeing initiatives. Where pupils had existing high levels of wellbeing and social and emotional competencies, they made smaller improvements. However, it might be concluded that rather than being detrimental this enabled a more inclusive school environment.

Whole-school wellbeing promotion also appears to benefit pupils' learning. Large-scale reviews highlight that wellbeing practice has the potential to improve children's academic attainment (Durlak *et al.* 2011; O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018). Durlak *et al.*'s (2011) meta-analysis identified an 11% improvement in academic performance. Additionally, Murphy *et al.* (2017, p.16) identified that widely adopted MHP programmes improved academic outcomes across 'a range of cultures, languages and educational models'. Although, in contrast, a recently published meta-analysis of 45 studies of SEL programmes showed no significant effect on academic attainment, this review is in a minority (Goldberg *et al.,* 2019). To improve understanding, Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014) call for future research to identify how curricula and academic abilities are affected by wellbeing promotion.

In all, this section has briefly introduced the extensive body of literature which provides a strong evidence-base for the benefits of whole-school wellbeing promotion. It has critically assessed recent evidence highlighting a range of school-based approaches. Several key components have been recognised to be shared by differing approaches including skills and knowledge learning, using a whole-school approach and the impact of wellbeing practice on academic performance. Additionally, it has highlighted the benefits of integrating whole-school wellbeing promotion into daily school life and evidenced how schools fail to maximise benefits by falling short of a whole-school approach. Whilst the discussion has acknowledged substantial evidence, the following section identifies four issues where leading academics recognise current knowledge gaps.

1.5.1 Requirement for evidence at primary school level

Whole-school wellbeing promotion literature has focused primarily on young people in secondary level education (Weare and Nind, 2011; Murphy *et al*., 2017; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018; O'Reilly *et al*., 2018). Despite many widely-cited reviews, it appears that only two reviews have solely focussed on the primary school setting (Adi *et al.,* 2007; Fenwick-Smith,

Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018). Whilst Adi *et al.*'s (2007) systematic review on MHP in primary schools has been influential within UK education, it is now fifteen years old. Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson's (2018) systematic review is more recent, yet its inclusion of seven programmes across eleven studies demonstrates the limited scope of high-quality evidence at primary-school level.

Where evidence exists, it makes a persuasive argument that early introduction to wellbeing promotion is more effective over the longer-term. Durlak and Wells (1997) found interventions for two- to seven-year-olds to be more effective than those for older age groups. Additionally, Hallam's (2008) UK study, concluded that older children exhibited more established patterns of thoughts and behaviours, making change harder through the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) programme. Weare (2005) also reported that wellbeing issues became more entrenched and numerous over time. More recently, studies show that where initiatives are introduced in primary schools, pupils develop competencies in the skills associated with flourishing (Hall, 2010; Clarke, Bunting and Barry*,* 2014; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018).

New governmental policies also emphasise the importance placed on English primary schools as settings for promoting pupils' wellbeing (Gov.UK, 2020a). The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines for social and emotional wellbeing in primary education supports wellbeing promotion in English primary schools (Adi *et al.,* 2007; NICE, 2013). Despite this focus on primary schools as settings for enabling pupils to flourish, research about practice relating to this age group remains limited. Therefore, this PhD project seeks to address this gap by focussing on whole-school wellbeing promotion within primary schools.

1.5.2   Additional evidence from the English education system

Durlak *et al*. (2011, p.420) argue maximum benefits exist where schools adopt 'programs that fit best with local settings*.*' This is echoed by Weare and Nind (2011, p.66) who call for schools to adopt initiatives that 'fit their context and can be easily implemented'. This implies that evidence-based practice is best informed by studies involving schools from similar education systems, with comparative funding and resourcing and involving pupils who share similar socio-cultural characteristics. Whilst other high-income countries are often considered comparable with the UK, local systems and practices vary (Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry, 2010). Therefore, whilst international research is widely useful in informing practice, there are some areas which have less relevance. For example, in the US and Europe schooling starts up to two years later than the UK,

therefore, evidence from these countries about the effects of wellbeing promotion does not take account of four- to six-year-olds (Durlak *et al*., 2011; Kiviruusu *et al.,* 2016). Additionally, the US education system employs a wider range of professionals in schools resulting in wellbeing promotion being undertaken by other professionals including occupational therapists (DeRuiter, Blackwell and Bilics, 2018). Again, this lacks relevance for English schools where teachers promote wellbeing. Evidence of this potential lack of transferability was illustrated in Omstead *et al.*'s (2009) study of four Canadian primary schools adopting an Australian approach to whole school wellbeing promotion. Whilst funding had originally been available for Australian schools, there was no funding in the Canadian schools and this was found to be an influencing factor in its limited success. Whilst this example does not relate to the UK, it illustrates the challenge of transferring evidence between countries. It might, therefore, be implied that the most relevant evidence base for English schools is UK-based. However, despite approximately 4.5 million pupils in 16,700 English primary schools potentially receiving whole-school wellbeing promotion, evidence is scant. Researchers recognise further evidence from England is required (O'Reilly *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, in seeking to address this gap in knowledge, this project will focus on English primary schools.

1.5.3   Consideration of context and complexity

The themes of context and complexity have recurred throughout this literature review, with key academics identifying their impact on improving pupils' wellbeing. In their comparative case study analysis of two 'disadvantaged' schools in Ireland, Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry (2010) made a persuasive argument that school context affected the success of a wellbeing initiative. They established that on face value two primary schools appeared to be similar settings with comparative family demographics. However, specific details such as the high turnover of pupils at one school, parental attitudes to education and levels of school support in the local community made a substantial impact on outcomes. Furthermore, Omstead *et al.'s* (2009) Canadian study, found that context was essential to the stakeholders' perceived success of the wellbeing programme. Staff turnover, weak leadership and a lack of initial understanding appeared to contribute to less successful outcomes. Research suggests where consideration is given to the local community context, such as through parenting interventions and partnerships with local community groups, interventions are more effective (Hallam, 2008; Weare and Nind, 2011; Weare, 2015). Durlak and Dupre (2008) identify that ethnicity, parenting, attachment style and socioeconomic status influence the success of MHP. This evidences a requirement to understand how contextual factors promote or hinder whole-school wellbeing promotion.

However, despite the strength of evidence about the importance of context, academics recognise that it is often neglected in whole-school wellbeing promotion research. In their review, O'Reilly *et al.* (2018) call for greater recognition of environment, calling for future research amongst different populations and contexts. This is echoed by Pawson and Tilley's (1997, p. 85) requirement for closer focus on the characteristics of the environment to 'determine what works for whom and under what circumstances'. Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014, p.737) in their study of the UK SEAL programme suggest consideration of 'social-contextual factors' requires researchers to 'recruit samples of schools with predefined variability'. In all, it appears relevant for this PhD study to consider the role of context, and its inherent complexity, within this thesis. The study will, therefore, seek to explore a range of English primary schools with diverse characteristics and contexts.

1.5.4   Engaging children in the research and development of whole-school wellbeing promotion

Current evidence suggests that the participation of pupils in both researching and developing whole-school wellbeing promotion is important (page 13) (Hall, 2010; Clarke, Bunting and Barry, 2014; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018). Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson (2018) argue that listening to pupils' views provides a wider understanding about wellbeing practice. As part of a larger mixed methods study, Clarke, Bunting and Barry (2014) engaged a large sample of Irish primary school children (N=161) in participatory workshops to investigate their perspectives of undertaking a 24-session Zippy's Friends programme to develop social and emotional learning. In asking children to complete a draw and write activity, respond to vignettes and undertake a group discussion, the authors acknowledged that this 'enriched our understanding' generating insights 'untapped by other research methods' (Clarke, Sixsmith and Barry, 2014, p. 578). However, the extent to which participatory methods are used in whole school wellbeing promotion research appears limited. In two major reviews, Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson (2018) and O'Reilly *et al*. (2018) reported that studies used adult (teacher and parent) evaluations only, which they considered to be a weakness of the research designs. Furthermore, in exploring stakeholders' experiences of a whole-school wellbeing project, action teams involved pupils, teachers and parents (Omstead *et al*., 2009). However, despite pupils' involvement, their voices were not captured through the research design. Moreover, where participation is used in its widest sense, pupils are engaged in the development of wellbeing practice as well as the research. As Weare and Nind (2011, p.66) suggest, this enables pupils to develop a sense of 'empowerment' and 'autonomy'. In Hall's (2010) case study, the

views of eighteen pupils were adopted to drive whole school change. Whilst the small number of pupils involved was acknowledged by Hall as a limitation of the study, it showed how children could successfully act as co-collaborators in the change process. Despite promising evidence, the involvement of pupils in researching this topic remains limited. Therefore, this study will use a participatory approach to capture pupils' perspectives and lived experiences to enrich the exploration of whole-school wellbeing promotion.

Having identified these gaps within the existing literature, the final section briefly summarises this chapter and identifies opportunities for further research.

1.6   Conclusion and the identification of an opportunity for further research

This literature review initially focussed on two topics, health promotion in the school setting and children's wellbeing. It then brought these individual topics together by drawing on literature about whole-school wellbeing promotion. A critical discussion of the literature identified strong evidence about the beneficial role of schools in promoting pupils' wellbeing. Key considerations included the importance of schools adopting whole-school and salutogenic approaches to wellbeing, recognising children's embeddedness in their context and how complexity and context influenced wellbeing practice. The importance of involving children in defining and researching wellbeing was emphasised. It was also recognised that whilst all schools aimed to enable pupils to flourish, they were challenged to balance 'wellbeing' in childhood with developing longer-term skills and knowledge for 'well becoming' in adulthood.

Whilst establishing a strong evidence base to inform whole-school wellbeing promotion, the discussion also recognised some knowledge gaps identified by key researchers. These were a lack of evidence at primary school level, limited existing knowledge from the English education system, the need to consider how context influences wellbeing practice and a lack of engagement with children in research. As a result, this thesis suggests there are four areas where additional research would add useful new knowledge:

1. New knowledge about whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools
2. An exploration of wellbeing practice in the English education system
3. An understanding about the influence of context on promoting pupils' wellbeing
4. Capturing pupils' perspectives and lived experiences of whole-school wellbeing promotion

The **purpose of the study** is, therefore, to generate new knowledge which contributes to these identified gaps (see Figure 1-2). The study will explore whole-school wellbeing promotion in a sample of English primary schools. It will consider how contextual factors support and hinder wellbeing practice. Whilst predominantly capturing evidence from adult stakeholders including headteachers and staff, it will also seek to capture children's perspectives through participatory research as part of the overall design. Throughout the research process, the PhD thesis will consider what it means for children to flourish and how schools deal with the tension of balancing 'wellbeing' and 'well becoming'. In pursuing this aim, the thesis asks the overarching research question:

How do schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish?

To answer this question as completely as possible, a series of sub-questions has been developed to direct the research process:

1) **What are the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion?**
2) **How is wellbeing practice implemented and sustained?**
3) **What are the contextual factors which influence whole-school wellbeing promotion?**
4) **How do pupils experience whole-school wellbeing promotion?**

In recognition of the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic and school closures, the study asks a final question:

5) **How has the disruption of Covid-19 reshaped practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing?**
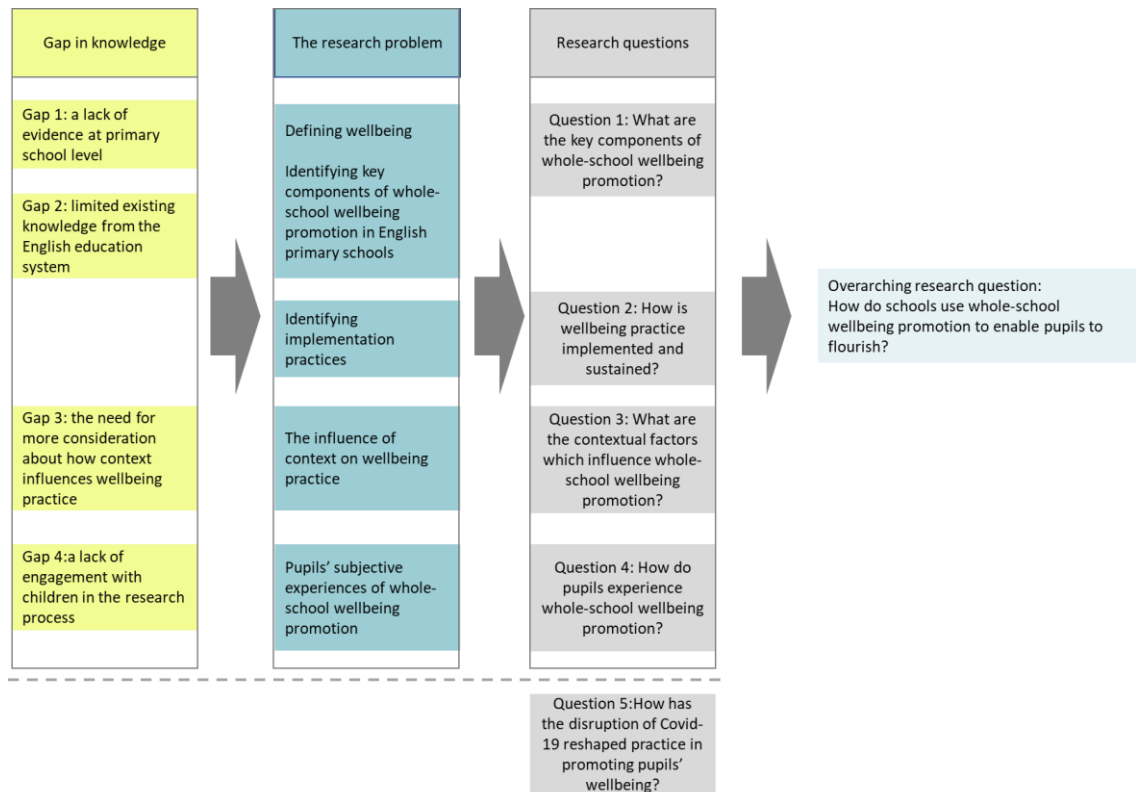
Figure 1-2 Research gaps, problems and questions

1.7 Outline of the following chapters

A summary of the following chapters is outlined below:

Chapter two develops a theoretical lens which will be used to make sense of data generated in this research process. It provides a rationale for combining the theories of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing, the health promoting schools framework (WHO, 1996) and Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological model. It proposes a conceptual model of the theoretical lens with a two-fold function: 1) as a tool for analysis and 2) as the basis for a new conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools. This model will be refined as new knowledge is generated after each phase of the project.

Chapter three considers the methodology and research design. It justifies the suitability of an exploratory approach using a qualitatively-driven, mixed-methods methodology to investigate the complex, multifaceted and subjective phenomena of whole-school wellbeing promotion. The chapter outlines a three-phase research design to capture and analyse data about the research topic, guided by the research questions, methodology and theoretical lens.

Chapters four, five and six present the research findings. Chapter four outlines key themes from a systematic analysis of international literature, presenting a broad picture of the key components and implementation practices amongst schools in high income countries, as well as considering how context influences whole-school wellbeing promotion. Chapter five presents findings from a secondary data analysis of twenty-six primary schools, providing a more focused analysis of whole-school wellbeing promotion in England. Chapter six focuses on an in-depth case study of wellbeing practice in a single English primary school, capturing pupils' and adults' voices through multiple research methods.

Chapter seven provides a critical discussion of the integrated findings in relation to the wider literature outlined in chapter one. The discussion answers the sub-questions and overarching question posed in this PhD project.

Chapter eight concludes the thesis by highlighting the contributions which have been made through undertaking this research. The chapter recognises some limitations that have arisen and provides a brief personal reflection on the undertaking of the project. It also considers the thesis' implications for professionals and policymakers and makes recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2 Developing a theoretical framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter develops a theoretical framework to bring together relevant theories to help data analysis and answer the research questions (Bryman, 2016; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). This study drew on three main theories: Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing, WHO's (1996) health promoting schools (HPS) framework, and Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological theory. The chapter revisits the complex and interdisciplinary nature of whole-school wellbeing promotion, arguing for a framework based on multi-disciplinary theories to illuminate this topic (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). Adopting Creswell and Plano Clark's (2018) steps for incorporating a social science theoretical lens, it critically assesses proposed theories and provides a rationale for their inclusion above other concepts. Finally, the theories will be developed into a conceptual model forming a theoretical lens to explore the research problem and resulting research questions, presented in Figure 2-6. The chapter establishes a two-fold purpose for this conceptual model: 1) to guide the research process and 2) as a starting point for developing an inductively-driven conceptual model for whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools. It is proposed that this model will be refined after each phase of the study, as additional knowledge is generated.

2.2 Revisiting the complex and interdisciplinary nature of the research problem

The literature review highlighted that whole-school wellbeing promotion was 1) a topic of interest across disciplines (Weare and Nind, 2011; Murphy *et al.,* 2017; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018; O'Reilly *et al.* 2018) and 2) was inherently complex (Rosas and Knight, 2019). Theoretical and empirical research underpinning wellbeing practice has developed across the disciplines of education, psychology, health promotion and health sciences (see Figure 2-1) (Murphy *et al.,* 2017; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson*,* 2018). Concepts of social, emotional and psychological wellbeing drawn from psychology were recognised as most relevant for schools (Seligman, 2011; Waters, 2011). Using school settings to promote pupils' wellbeing has been informed by the fields of public health and healthcare (Denman *et al.*, 2002). As whole-school wellbeing promotion is delivered by school staff, research has sought to gain the perspectives of educators as important stakeholders in the process (Durlak *et al.* 2011; Wood,

2018). As O'Toole (2017) reports, it is at the nexus of these disciplines that whole-school wellbeing promotion comes into existence. Thus, theory from a single discipline may fail to make best sense of this topic.
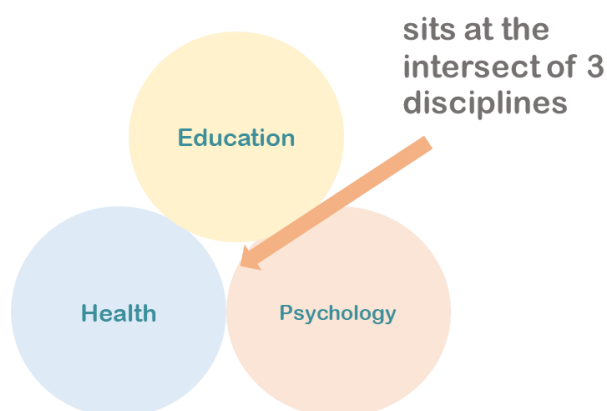
Figure 2-1 The interdisciplinary nature of whole school wellbeing promotion

Understanding complexity from Chapter 1, leading researchers call for empirical studies to focus on several key factors, including 1) the multiple components of an initiative and multiple levels at which they exist, 2) the influence of context and 3) the subjective realities of stakeholders (see Figure 2-2) (Medical Research Council, 2019; Rosas and Knight, 2019).
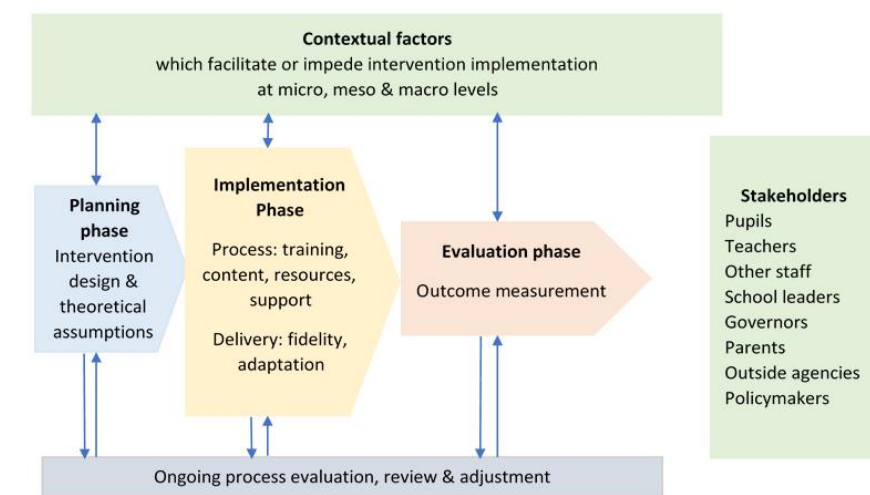
Figure 2-2 Complexity in whole-school wellbeing promotion

Therefore, it is argued seeking a theoretical framework with a multi-disciplinary perspective that considers complexity is most appropriate to shape this project's research process (CohenMiller and Pate, 2019). Recognising a combination of theories is required, this chapter now explores the

three theories selected as the basis for the theoretical framework (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018).

2.3   Wellbeing theory and Seligman's (2011) PERMA model

The purpose of selecting a model of wellbeing is to provide a clear definition and conceptualisation of this term. Existing research has been criticised for omitting definitions and assumptions within their studies (page 12) (Dodge *et al.,* 2012; La Placa, McNaught and Knight, 2013). Section 1.3 identified theories of social, emotional and psychological wellbeing as most relevant for whole-school wellbeing promotion, so models utilising other domains of wellbeing were not considered. From the mid-twentieth century new theories about wellbeing were developed by psychologists as increased focus was placed on the positive traits rather than pathologies (Maslow, 1954; Diener, 1984; Rogers 1961). More recently, theories combining hedonic and eudaimonia explanations have found favour academically (Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff*.,* 2002; Huta and Ryan, 2010; Seligman, 2011). A strength of this is improved understanding of the concept of 'flourishing' (Keyes and Annas, 2009; Diener *et al.* 2010). Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff (2002) define flourishing as experiencing higher levels of wellbeing, associated with individuals who cope well with life's adversities and have better life satisfaction (Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff, 2002; Huta and Ryan 2010). Positive psychology, developed in the late 1990s, reflects these concepts, making it a suitable field to adopt wellbeing theory for this project. Positive psychology also studies children's wellbeing, a population often overlooked in the development of other wellbeing theories (Fauth and Thompson, 2009; Waters, 2011). Therefore, Seligman's (2011) PERMA model has been chosen, proposing five elements of psychological wellbeing: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, and accomplishment. Positive emotions refer to feelings relating to happiness such as joy and contentment. Engagement relates to a sense of connection both to groups and activities. Relationships refer to positive, healthy networks where a person feels cared for and valued. Meaning refers to a bigger picture of life; that life is valuable. Accomplishment is associated with pursuing and achieving personal goals, promoting capability and achievement. The model draws on the underlying philosophical assumptions of positive psychology, proposed by Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi (2000, p.5):

> a science of positive subjective experience, positive individual traits, and positive institutions promis[ing] to improve quality of life.

This theory has the potential to explain the lived experiences of pupils alongside perspectives and attitudes of school staff in relation to whole-school wellbeing promotion. Additionally, it may aid

understanding about how relationships and school culture support or hinder pupils' flourishing. It may also be relevant for making sense of wellbeing at personal, classroom and school community levels and explain how multiple components increase potential benefits.

The model has several strengths. It reflects current discourse about benefits of combining hedonic and eudaimonic factors (Keyes and Annas, 2009; Diener *et al.,* 2010; Huppert and So, 2013). A sub-branch of positive psychology is positive education, which is highly relevant to the practice of whole-school wellbeing promotion. Positive education may be defined as promoting wellbeing alongside traditional learning, drawing on the PERMA principles of wellbeing (Seligman *et al,* 2009; Waters, 2011). Predominantly from Australia, a body of research reports on the positive outcomes of using the PERMA model of wellbeing to promote flourishing amongst school pupils (Waters, 2011; Norrish *et al.,* 2013). In White and Murray's (2015) study of an Australian secondary school, the PERMA model enabled an evidence-based, sustained whole-school approach which integrated wellbeing into all aspects of school life. Whilst this study benefits from a longitudinal research design, presenting long-term evidence of successful implementation, the school's private status and pupil age-range makes the research setting less relevant. However, it illustrates the value of the PERMA model as a framework. Kern *et al.'s* (2015) study in a boys' secondary school (n=516) and Lai *et al.'s* (2018) research in a primary school setting (n=726) used quasi-experimental designs to assess the validity of PERMA-based instruments for evaluating pupil wellbeing. Researchers found these to be effective measures due to the theory's ability to explain the multidimensional nature of wellbeing. Therefore, using the PERMA model as an evaluation tool would be relevant for guiding the analysis in this study.

However, the model has limitations and criticisms (Khaw and Kern, 2014; Wong, 2018). Wong and Roy (2018) argue the PERMA model fails to recognise the influence of cultural and value-based differences. Several researchers concur that these contextual influences inform pupils' subjective experiences of wellbeing (Lopez *et al.,* 2003). Therefore, a criticism of the PERMA model is that it focuses on pupils' internal mechanisms rather than their environment. In relation to this PhD study, it appears necessary to use an additional theory that considers context, thus Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological theory will also be adopted (page 33). A further criticism suggests that the PERMA model fragments pupils into a series of character strengths and emotions, rather than a whole, complex human being (Schwartz and Sharpe, 2006; Allan, Duffy and Douglass*,* 2015; Ivtzan *et al.* 2015). This criticism was reflected upon during the analysis process in Chapter seven. Despite these challenges, it is considered that existing successful application of the PERMA model in school settings makes it valuable as a lens for this study. Other theoretical models which purport to explain social, emotional and psychological wellbeing were

considered. However, those that used a single hedonic approach or eudaimonic approach were not adopted as not reflecting current thinking (Keyes and Annas, 2009).

2.4 School-based health promotion and the Health Promoting Schools framework

The purpose of selecting a theoretical model of school-based health promotion was to explain the key structures and processes required in designing, implementing and reviewing whole-school wellbeing promotion (Denman *et al.,* 2002). The literature review established that sustainable wellbeing practice resulted from a long-term focus, with wellbeing embedded into daily school life and encompassing a process of continual change (Denman *et al.,* 2002; Waters, 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011). A theoretical model encompassing these principles is WHO's health promoting schools (HPS) framework. WHO (1998, p. 11) defines a health promoting school as:

> one that constantly strengthens its capacity as a healthy setting for living, learning and working

The HPS framework was developed in the light of the Ottawa Charter on health promotion (WHO, 1986). The framework's underlying philosophy is that rather than an individual having complete influence over their own health, factors within their context impact levels of wellbeing (WHO, 1996). WHO (1996), therefore, proposed that health promotion in schools should consider how changes to the school has the potential to improve pupils' wellbeing through 1) healthy school policies, 2) school physical environment, 3) school social environment, 4) action competencies for healthy living, 5) school health care and promotion services, and 6) community links. This resulted in the development of the HPS framework, based on three domains 1) curriculum, teaching and learning, 2) school organisation, ethos and environment and 3) partnerships and services (see Figure 2-3). School curriculum refers to the teaching and learning of relevant curriculum content. Ethos and environment relate to the physical and cultural environment of a school, including its policies and procedures. Partnerships involves the interactions between pupils, staff, families and other community members, including relevant external services. The premise is that health promotion is holistic requiring a whole-school approach, focussing on all aspects of schooling and on members of the school community (WHO, 1996; Langford *et al.* 2014).   In terms of its suitability as a theoretical lens, the HPS model offers a truly whole-school focus making it relevant to the PhD's research topic (Roffey, 2015; Public Health England (PHE, 2014). It appears this

model may enable identification and evaluation of key components within the schools' planning, implementation and review practices.

Leading researchers have highlighted several strengths of the model as an aid to research. It is popular, enduring and has been widely used to guide both practice and research in school-based health promotion (Denman *et al.,* 2002; Aggleton, Dennison and Warwick*,* 2010; Langford *et al.* 2014). The HPS framework has had significant influence within international institutions including the European Network of Health Promoting Schools (ENHPS) and national schemes including 'National Healthy Schools Programme' which ran between 1999 and 2011 (Department for Children Schools and Families (DCSF), 2007; McHugh *et al.* 2020). The HPS framework has been used within the UK education system to guide research into health promotion practices; reflecting its application in this project (McHugh *et al.* 2020). Langford *et al.* (2014) used the HPS framework to guide a systematic literature review and meta-analysis of sixty-seven health promotion trials. The study evidenced that where the model was used to guide whole-school health promotion, there were positive improvements. With scant critique of the model and its widespread application, its ability to consider multiple components and complexity involved in promoting wellbeing, and its existing familiarity within schools, it has been selected for use in this research project.
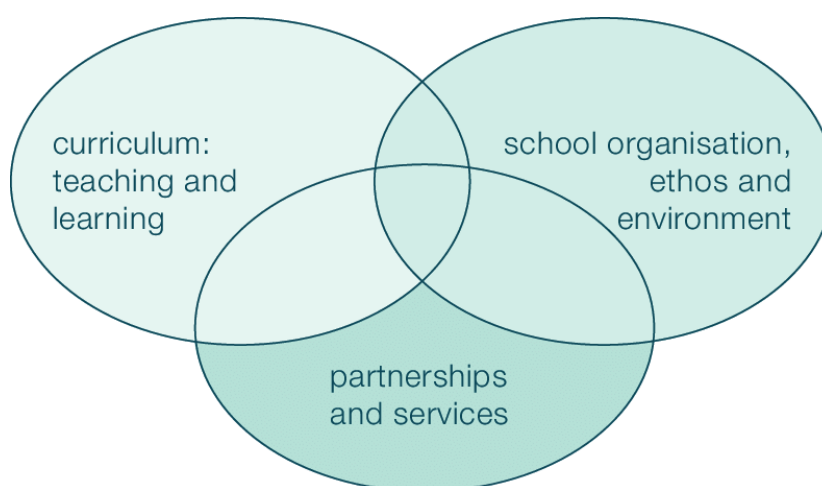
Figure 2-3 The three key characteristics of a health promoting school: Health promoting schools framework (WHO, 1996)

An alternative model, the PHE's (2015) 'Eight principles to a whole-school approach framework for promoting children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing' was also considered, but the advantages of the HPS framework included its longevity and wide adoption in previous research (Langford *et al.* 2014).

2.5   Theory of context and Bronfenbrenner's (2005) Bioecological theory

The literature review and section 2.2 identified the importance of recognising context as an influencer on both whole-school wellbeing promotion and pupils' wellbeing experiences (Clarke, O'Sullivan and Barry, 2010; Durlak *et al*., 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011). Therefore, the thesis sought to adopt a theory to explain a child's embeddedness within their context, with the potential to understand the interrelationships between pupils, school, home and other environmental factors (Schwartz-Shea & Yannow, 2012; Allan *et al.,* 2015). Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological theory was selected to understand this complex interplay, recognising the fundamental impact of context on a child's personal development as a series of interrelated, embedded environmental levels (see Figure 2-4). His premise is that a child and their environment constantly influence one another, and the theory has potential to make sense of the impact of relationships between pupils and these factors on their social, emotional and psychological development. Environment includes both local settings where a child exists such as the family, school and friends alongside a wider context of class, social and economic factors and the effect of time (Bronfenbrenner and Ceci, 1994). The bioecological model is a refinement of Bronfenbrenner's (1979) original ecological systems model and describes environment existing on five levels: the microsystem, the mesosystem, the exosystem, the macrosystem, and the chronosystem. The microsystem, closest to the child, refers to their local environment with family and school; relating both to organised groups/ organisations and the people within them. The mesosystem outlines the interrelationships between microsystems such as the influence of parenting on engagement in school. The exosystem is outside a child's direct environment, yet factors at this level will affect their development such as the impact of parents' work issues on children. The macrosystem includes the wider societal and cultural influences including intangible structures such as relationships between socioeconomic background and life opportunities. The final level is the chronosystem which describes changes in patterns over time, for example the impact of blending two families may be more disruptive to a child at the outset. Bronfenbrenner (2005) theorises the systems within these levels are nested and interrelated, with each having the potential to influence and be influenced. This later model emphasises the levels closest to the child, including schooling, and recognises that:

> development takes place through the process of progressively more complex reciprocal interactions between an active, evolving biopsychological human organism and the persons, objects, and symbols in its immediate external environment. (Bronfenbrenner, 1995, p. 620).

This theory appears appropriate as a theoretical lens for this study. Firstly, the model has made a seminal contribution to understanding child development, instilling confidence in its ability to explain contextual influence in relation to promoting pupils' wellbeing (Ettekal and Mahoney, 2017). There is also existing literature which has employed the bioecological theory as a theoretical lens to guide research both on the topic of wellbeing and within the school setting (Rosa and Tudge, 2013; Maynard *et al.,* 2014). In a series of studies on Australian primary schools, researchers consistently used Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological model to inform both the design of a mathematical intervention and to understand the influences on children's engagement with the intervention (Dockett and Perry, 2001; 2007; 2014). This implied the theory was useful both in the design and evaluation of interventions, and therefore, appears transferable to interventions of whole-school wellbeing promotion. Whilst this PhD study is exploring initiatives which are more encompassing than classroom interventions *per se*, the success of using the bioecological model to explain contextual influences in a school setting provides support for using the theory in this project. In a more relevant study, Brockevelt and Cerney (2019) used Bronfenbrenner's bioecological theory to analyse qualitative data from a series of semi-structured interviews with seventeen children. The theory was successful as a lens to investigate the role of interactions with children and their environments on their perceived levels wellbeing. This strengthens the argument for its choice.

A critique of the model is its inability to consider increasing globalisation, including global events. This limitation is highly relevant as this project took place during the Covid-19 pandemic which significantly impacted children's wellbeing, schooling and other aspects of their contexts not easily accommodated by the model (Christensen, 2016). Additionally, the theory generates complexity, and using Eriksson, Ghazinour and Hammarstrom's (2018) argument this study is likely to fall short of identifying and assessing all the factors and systems which impact on how a child experiences wellbeing promotion. Lastly, consideration needs to be given to using the theory in the way in which it was intended. Tudge *et al.* (2009) claim researchers may use the model to identify influencing factors within a child's context, which they consider 'misuses' the theory. Rather attention needs to be focused on the interrelations between these factors and children (Tudge *et al.,* 2009). Developing such understanding at this stage of the research process enabled this project to focus on correctly applying the theory.
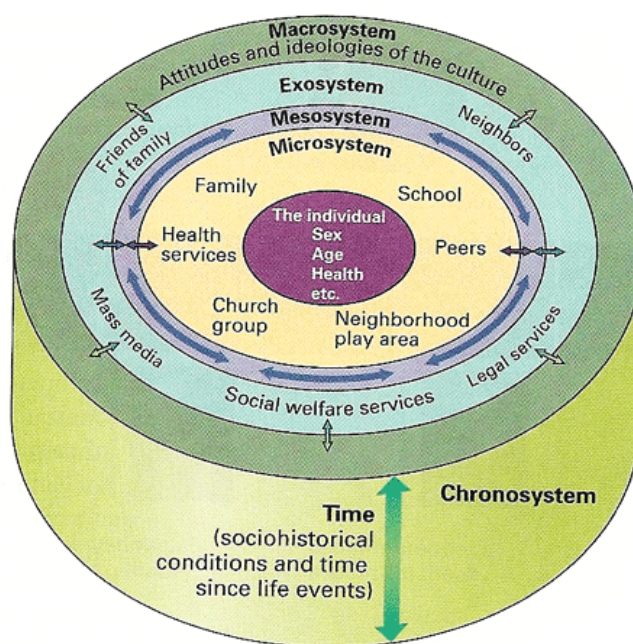
Figure 2-4 Bronfenbrenner's (2005) Bioecological theory

Other models were considered to understand context. Of note, Engel's (1977) biopsychosocial model of health and Stokols' (1996) ecological framework for health promotion but had less relevance for a school setting.

2.6   The approach to developing a theoretical framework

2.6.1   Addressing the research problem with the theoretical lenses

This chapter has identified and justified the adoption of three suitable theories to incorporate into the theoretical framework, from the disciplines of psychology, health promotion and sociology. They have the potential to make sense of the interdisciplinary nature of the research problem and the complexities of whole-school wellbeing promotion. Additionally, Figure 2-5 outlines how these theories can be used to address the research questions and provide new knowledge in relation to the research problem (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

Gap in knowledge	The research problem	Research questions	Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing	WHO's (1996) health promoting schools framework	Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological model
Gap 1: a lack of evidence at primary school level Gap 2: limited existing knowledge from the English education system	Defining wellbeing Identifying key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion in English primary schools	Question 1: What are the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion?	✓	✓	✓
	Identifying implementation practices	Question 2: How is wellbeing practice implemented and sustained?	✓	✓	
Gap 3: the need for more consideration about how context influences wellbeing practice	The influence of context on wellbeing practice	Question 3: What are the contextual factors which influence whole-school wellbeing promotion?			✓
Gap 4: a lack of engagement with children in the research process	Pupils' subjective experiences of whole-school wellbeing promotion	Question 4: How do pupils experience whole-school wellbeing promotion?	✓		✓

Figure 2-5 How the theoretical framework addresses the research questions

Seligman's (2011) PERMA model will be used to provide a definition of wellbeing for this project. In addition, the model's five dimensions of wellbeing will be used as criteria against which to evaluate schools' overarching visions for whole-school wellbeing promotion and consider pupils' lived experiences. Furthermore, both the PERMA model and the HPS framework will be used to identify the key components of design, implementation practices and review methods generated through the three phases of data collection. The HPS framework will be used to understand the structures and processes, curricula adopted and physical and intangible environments of schools in relation to wellbeing. The bioecological model will be used to explain both the multiple levels (pupil, classroom, school, local authority, government) at which wellbeing promotion exists as well as how interrelations with contextual factors influence wellbeing practice. Finally, as the literature review made a strong case that pupils' and staffs' perspectives on whole-school wellbeing promotion were subjective, the PERMA model and bioecological model will be used to explore the multiple viewpoints of this social phenomena (Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Seligman, 2011). In all, this combination of theories can guide and address the research problem and questions in this study.
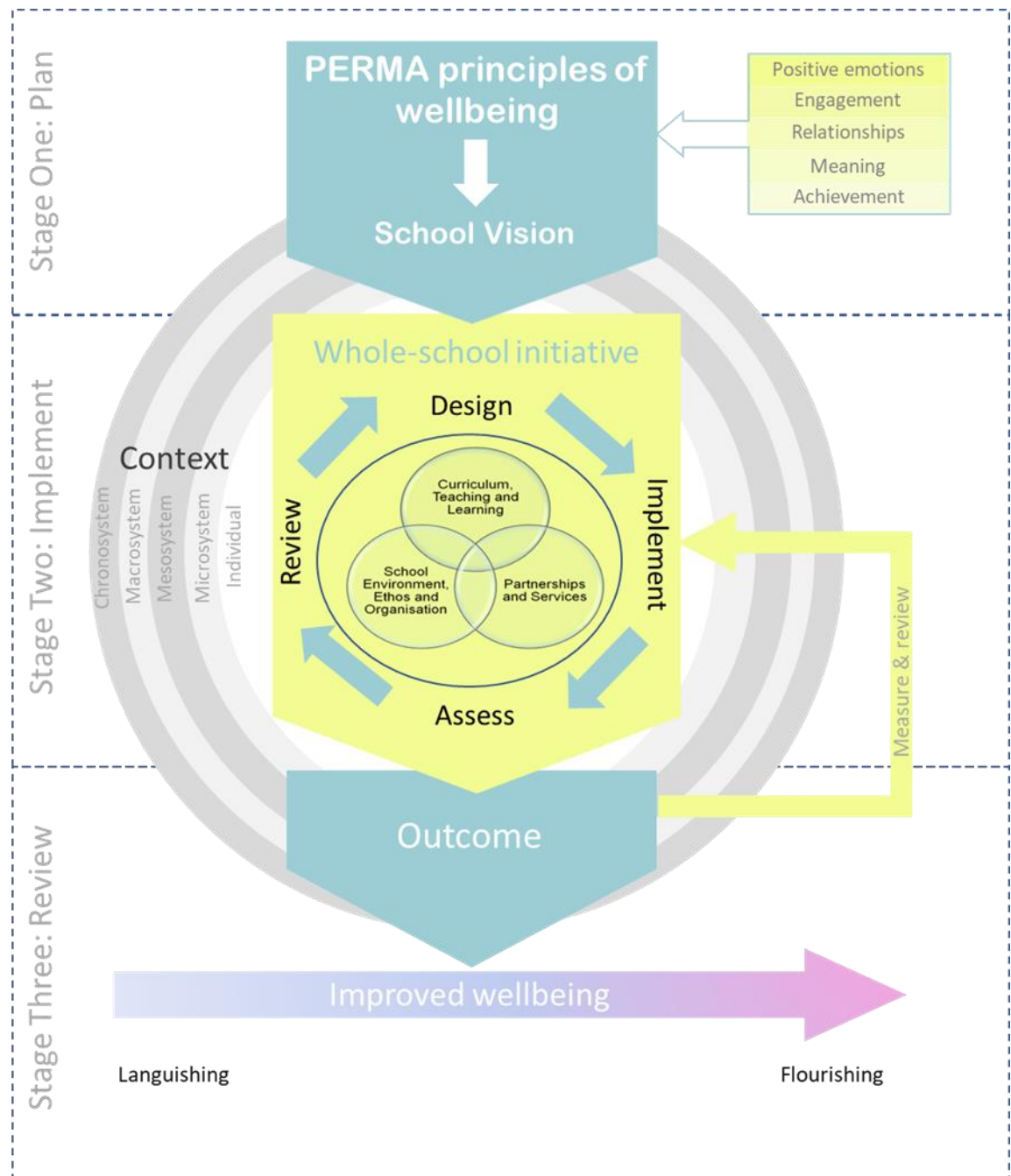
Figure 2-6 The conceptual model derived from combining the theoretical perspectives of Seligman's (2011) PERMA theory of wellbeing, the three key characteristics of WHO's (1998) health promoting schools framework and Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological theory.

Having established that these theories, in combination, consider the major aspects of the research problem, they were used as a basis for the theoretical framework for the study. This framework was developed into a conceptual model shown in Figure 2-6. This model appears to benefit from the strengths of the individual theories developed by seminal researchers within

their fields. As each theory is widely used and has recognised underlying assumptions, their incorporation into the conceptual model's design seeks to provide credibility and confidence (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018).

The literature review identified that schools adopted a commonly shared process for whole-school wellbeing promotion comprising planning, implementing and reviewing (page 18) (Weare and Nind, 2011; Murphy *et al.,* 2017; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018; O'Reilly *et al.* 2018). This study, therefore, uses this simple process as the backbone of the model and places the three theories within the most relevant stages of the process. In stage one, the planning stage, Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing is included to provide a focus for data relating to the broad approaches, visions and definitions of wellbeing practice. In stage two, WHO's (1996) HPS framework is used as an overarching lens through which to view the components involved in schools' designs and implementation practices. Stage three is the reviewing process where both outcomes (the extent to which pupils' wellbeing has improved) and process evaluation (an assessment of wellbeing practice itself) are undertaken and is anticipated that this stage will be driven by theories most relevant to the factor under review. As context has been identified as an important element at all stages of the process, the model is embedded with Bronfenbrenner's (2005) ecological levels.

Whilst difficult to convey in diagrammatic form, it is envisaged that this process is unlikely to be linear and the stages will not be discrete. Rather, it is likely that in whole-school wellbeing promotion, schools will have made continual adjustments to the initiative and move back and forwards between the stages (Rosas and Knight, 2019). Likewise, in regard to the research process, the theoretical models will not only be relevant to explore and understand the data relevant to the stage of the process in which they are situated but can be used as a method of explanation for other areas of the analysis. For example, where the PERMA model would appear to provide a mechanism to consider schools' overarching visions of wellbeing, it also may be useful to explain how curriculum content influences specific dimensions of pupils' wellbeing in the implementation stage of the model (Seligman, 2011). Despite the more iterative rather than linear nature of design and research, this model appears to usefully represent the theoretical lens which will be used to inform and guide the remainder of the research process.

In response to a recognised research gap in knowledge alongside limited guidance and training for education professionals on the topic (pages 7 and 23), this thesis proposes to develop an inductively driven conceptual model for whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools. This new model is anticipated to develop over the research process as additional knowledge is generated. Therefore, it is proposed that the conceptual model of the theoretical will be used as a

starting point for the new conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools and will be refined in the light of new findings after each phase of data collection and analysis.

2.7   Conclusion

In summary, this chapter has explored useful theories to guide the research process and make sense of the data analysis, proposing a conceptual model of the theoretical lens which encapsulates three theories into a single framework. The chapter understood no single theory could provide a complete understanding of the complex, interdisciplinary topic of whole-school wellbeing promotion, or adequately answer the research questions to generate a comprehensive exploration of the research problem. The models selected were Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing, WHO's (1996) health promoting schools (HPS) framework and Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological systems theory. The combined theoretical framework was then presented as a conceptual model (see Figure 2-6). It was proposed that the conceptual model was used flexibly to make sense of research data as they became relevant. Additionally, the conceptual model was presented as a foundation on which to develop an inductively-driven conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools, refining the model after each phase of the research process as new knowledge is generated.

Chapter 3   Methodology and research design

3.1   Introduction

This chapter examines the way in which the study was carried out. It outlines its exploratory nature, and justifies the methodological approach, namely, a qualitatively-driven mixed methods methodology. The major focus describes the three phases of the research design, incorporating a systematic literature review (phase one), a secondary data analysis using a representative sample of twenty-six English primary schools (phase two) and an in-depth case study of whole-school wellbeing promotion in one English primary school (phase three). Consideration is given to the way in which qualitative and quantitative data were combined through an integrated analysis of the findings, in line with a mixed methods methodology (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Finally, ethical issues are critically assessed before drawing a conclusion.

3.2   Providing a rationale for the research methodology

3.2.1   Using an exploratory research approach

This study adopted an exploratory approach to understand how primary schools designed, implemented, reviewed and sustained whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish. An exploratory study may be defined as one that investigates a topic where little is currently known (Bryman, 2016). The rationale for using this approach is that the literature review identified specific knowledge gaps in the existing evidence (page 23). Moreover, leading researchers have called for a broader knowledge base, implying a sense of the unknown (Murphy *et al.,* 2017; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson , 2018; O'Reilly *et al.* 2018). It, therefore, appears appropriate that using an exploratory design, which discovers new knowledge, has the potential to address the knowledge gaps identified in section 1.6. The overarching research question was adopted as a suitable type of question for an exploratory study (Bryman, 2016), asking:

How do schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish?

3.2.2   A qualitatively-driven, mixed methods methodology

To answer this research question, the thesis needed to be guided by an appropriate methodology to derive a suitable research design (Headley & Plano Clark, 2020). A mixed methods (MMR) methodology was chosen to explore the topic of whole-school wellbeing promotion. MMR is defined as an approach that combines a range of research methods to collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative data, as a way of attempting to provide the most complete answer to the research question (Creswell, 2014; Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Within education, Robson and McCartan (2016) argue that such a methodology addresses the challenges of researching in a real-world context, making it suitable for exploring wellbeing practice across a range of primary school settings. Moreover, this methodology has the benefit of facilitating large-scale data collection, whilst capturing rich and detailed understanding of children's lived experiences (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Additionally, it has the advantage over a purely interpretivist approach that it will uncover knowledge unachievable by using a mono-paradigm alone (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Whilst traditionally MMR methodology has adopted more quantitative research methods, current discourse demonstrates a growing interest in a predominantly qualitative approach (Mason, 2006; Morse and Cheek, 2014). Thus, adopting mainly qualitative data collection and analysis methods in this project's research design enabled the exploratory approach of the project (Bryman, 2016). A qualitatively-driven mixed methods methodology may be defined as one where the theoretical 'drive' of the research is qualitative, with a greater weighting placed on this data type (Morse and Cheek 2014). As a result, the project was underpinned by the philosophical assumptions associated with qualitative research methods, namely, an interpretivist paradigm (Schwartz-Shea and Yannow, 2012; Bryman, 2016). Alongside, the project 'borrowed' relevant quantitative methods as a 'supplementary strategy' to provide a more complete answer to the research questions than available through a wholly qualitative approach (Morse and Cheek 2014 p. 3).

Confidence in this methodology was sought through the endorsement of MMR by educational scholars (Bryman, 2016; Robson and McCartan, 2016). Secondly, the British Education Research Association's (BERA 2018) ethical guidelines places equal value on the validity of all research methods as suitable for the school setting, again endorsing MMR. A growing popularity for this methodology is evidenced in international, peer-reviewed publications, with numerous citations of studies using an MMR design in academic and practice-based education literature (Cohen *et al.*, 2011; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018). Moreover, previous studies have evidenced the suitability of MMR to explore whole school wellbeing promotion (Clarke, Bunting and Barry, 2014; Wood, 2018). MMR is also being increasingly adopted by PhD candidates, and

the exponential rise in published articles using this methodology at an early career stage provides support for its use in this PhD study (McKim, 2017).

Current discourse identifies challenges in producing high quality research (Greene, 2007; Bryman, 2016). Leading theorists argue that two major issues exist: poor research design and a lack of integration of findings (Bazeley, 2004; Bryman 2006; Mason, 2006). Therefore, this study sought to mitigate for these factors. Firstly, it adopted O'Cathain, Murphy and Nicholl (2008) Framework for Good Reporting of a Mixed Methods Study (GRAMMS) to guide the research design and identify potential weaknesses as the process progressed. A strength of this framework is that it has been endorsed by Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009), leading MMR researchers. Secondly, careful consideration was given to incorporating the qualitative and quantitative findings in the integrated analysis forming the discussion in Chapter 7 (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). It is anticipated that this focus on quality improved trustworthiness in the thesis' findings (Hammersley, 1992; Teddlie and Tashakkori 2009).

3.2.3 Philosophical assumptions of a qualitatively driven mixed methods methodology

A qualitatively-driven MMR methodology is underpinned by an interpretivist philosophy (Morse and Cheek, 2014). Ontologically, interpretivism recognises the world as complex, dynamic and multifaceted in which interactions between unique individuals continually occur, resulting in multiple perspectives of reality (Schwartz-Shea and Yannow, 2012). It is these perspectives, interpretations and meanings that this approach seeks to explore to generate new knowledge about whole-school wellbeing promotion (Bevir and Rhodes, 2002; Patton, 2002; Schwartz-Shea and Yannow, 2012). Interpretivist assumptions appear appropriate for guiding a research design which seeks to capture and explore the perspectives of pupils, staff and school leaders (Bevir and Rhodes, 2002). Furthermore, it has potential to understand the complexity of multiple factors within the process of promoting wellbeing (Schwartz-Shea and Yannow, 2012). Taking a multifaceted approach also provides a lens through which to explore the influence of context on both wellbeing promotion and the individuals involved (Creswell, 2014).

To capture the subjective nature of people's experiences, interpretivist research methods seek to collect rich, detailed data from different individuals (Schwartz-Shea and Yannow, 2012). Epistemologically, interpretivism proposes that knowledge occurs through language and image-making, as social interaction is a key part of knowledge formation within this paradigm (Bryman, 2016). Common research methods include interviews, observations and textual, image and artefact analysis to elicit qualitative data (Bryman, 2016). It, therefore, appears to be particularly

suitable for underpinning the three-phase research design in this PhD study which seeks to triangulate knowledge generated from a range of sources. The analysis will combine spoken accounts, textual data, images and audio-visual artefacts on schools' websites, as well as pupils' drawings. In all, the suitability of an interpretivist philosophy is outlined in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1 An interpretivist perspective of whole-school wellbeing promotion

Complex intervention component	How interpretivism views the component (ontology)	How interpretivism studies the component (epistemology)
Complex, multifaceted	• Reality is socially constructed • There are as many truths as individuals • The initiative is formed by a complex web of interacting components • The initiative exists through an interplay of social interactions	• Through 'thick', detailed description' • By capturing multiple perspectives from multiple stakeholders • Through 'plausible conjecture'
Context dependent	• Initiatives cannot be separated from their contexts. • Contexts are in continual change due to dynamic social, political, economic, environmental & cultural factors	• Sitting the findings within the initiatives' social, historical, political, economic and cultural contexts • Understanding the initiative within its unique setting at multiple levels
Multiple levels	• Stakeholders experience and engage in initiatives at co-occurring levels e.g. individual, classroom, school	• Understanding findings at individual & structural/ organisational levels e.g. Individual, classroom, school, local authority
Multiple stakeholders	• Each person experiences a subjective, unique truth • People's meaning-making is manifested in their social interactions • People are experts about their perceptions & lived experiences i.e. their unique truth	• Collecting & analysing multiple stakeholders' views • By capturing actions, speech & artefacts as externalised symbols of subjective meaning-making
Continual change	• The content, structure and processes of initiatives are subject to review, development & modification • Stakeholders' meaning-making is continually reshaped by social interactions & context • The context in which the initiative exists is influenced by continually changing factors at all levels	• Acknowledging the study as a snapshot in time • Findings are based on transient, subjective truths created at the moment of data collection

Based on Rosas and Knight (2019) and Schwartz-Shea and Yannow (2012)

3.3   Research design

The chapter now outlines the three-phase research design driven by exploratory, qualitatively-driven MMR approach. Phase one incorporated a broad systematic literature review, phase two undertook a secondary data analysis of English primary schools and phase three comprised a single case of whole-school wellbeing promotion in an English primary school, providing both a breadth and depth to the analysis (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). This section begins by understanding how each phase will answer the research questions. Next, it critically evaluates and provides a rationale for the data collection and analysis methods chosen, sampling strategies, and procedures for each phase. The section refers to alternative methods which were considered during the design process. Finally, a discussion on how the findings from each stage were integrated as part of the MMR methodology will complete this section.

Figure 3-1 demonstrates how this research design sought to answer the five research sub-questions. The findings, along with interpretations are presented in Chapter 4, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6. These were then integrated to address the research questions in Chapter 7.

Research questions	Phase one: Systematic literature review	Phase two: Secondary data analysis	Phase three: Case study
Question 1: What are the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion?	✓	✓	✓
Question 2: How is wellbeing practice implemented and sustained?	✓	✓	✓
Question 3: What are the contextual factors which influence whole-school wellbeing promotion?	✓		✓
Question 4: How do pupils experience whole-school wellbeing promotion?			✓
Question 5: How has the disruption of Covid-19 reshaped practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing?		✓	✓

Figure 3-1 How the research design addresses the research questions

3.3.1 The overall design

A three-phase design was chosen to triangulate data from a range of research methods and voices to provide a more complete exploration of the recognised complexities of whole-school wellbeing promotion, as outlined in Figure 3-2 (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 2016). By analysing the data after each phase, the findings were able to iteratively inform the subsequent phases of the research design with the benefit of shaping the later phases to be most relevant to answering the research questions (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). Phase one undertook a systematic literature review (SLR) to provide a broad understanding of whole-school wellbeing promotion from an extensive body of international evidence. Literature was selected from high income countries as most relevant for the English education system. The purpose of this phase was to present a broad thematic analysis about how schools design, implement and review wellbeing practice with an aim of enabling pupils to flourish. Additionally, it assessed how factors in schools' contexts promoted or hindered whole-school wellbeing promotion. This phase sought to address sub-

questions one, two and three. The knowledge generated during this phase contributed a new stand-alone analysis of the current literature base, in the form of a review. In addition, these findings were used to develop a typology of key components for whole-school wellbeing promotion which was used to identify the population for phase two, the secondary data analysis of English primary schools. The findings were also used to refine the proposed conceptual model.

Phase two, a secondary data analysis (SDA), focused on the English education system and explored how primary schools promoted pupils' wellbeing. This phase had a narrower focus than phase one, yet still had the benefit of generating broad knowledge across a representative sample of schools. Its purpose was to collect and analyse qualitative and quantitative data taken from secondary datasets within the public domain. The findings complemented those of phase one by generating further evidence about the key components used by schools to design, implement and review whole-school wellbeing promotion. In addition, within the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, the design was modified to explore the ways in which school closure reshaped how schools addressed pupils' wellbeing. This phase sought to answer sub-questions one, two and four. This phase provided a second stand-alone analysis and was used to further refine the proposed conceptual model and partly inform the question schedule interviews in phase three.

Phase three, a case study, provided an in-depth analysis of whole-school wellbeing promotion in a single English primary school. A narrative interview, semi-structured interview, observation through field notes and content analysis of relevant documentation enabled a rich, detailed analysis of wellbeing practice (Morse and Cheek, 2014). The findings also highlighted how contextual factors influenced the school's capability to enable pupils to flourish. Additionally, this phase adopted a participatory research design to capture the voices of children, with an aim of exploring their lived experiences of whole-school wellbeing promotion (Nind, 2014). As an in-depth study, this phase sought to address all the research sub-questions and further refine the conceptual model.

The findings from all three phases were then integrated to provide a further analysis of the data in its entirety. This final analysis was designed to provide answers to the sub-questions and overarching research question, addressing the research problem and fulfilling the aim of the PhD study.
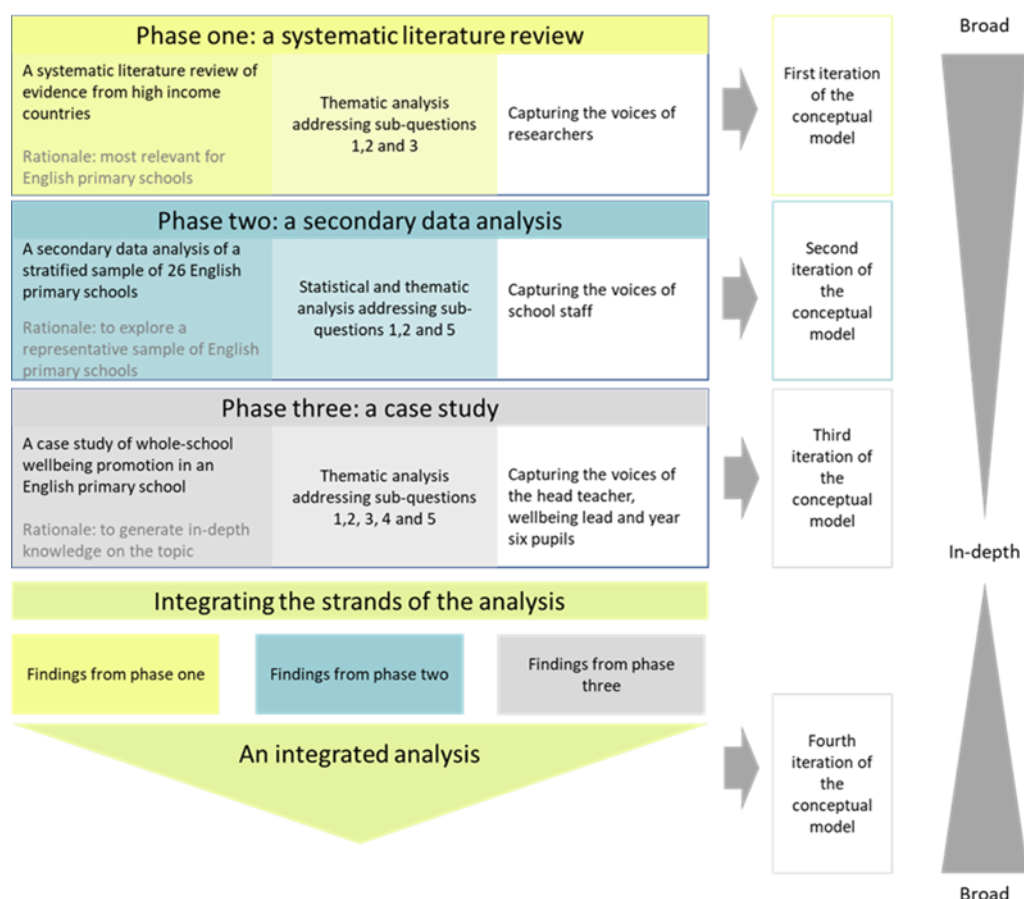
Figure 3-2 A representation of the research design detailing the three phases of data collection and analysis and the final integrated analysis, integrating the strands of the analysis in line with the mixed methods methodology adopted for this PhD study.

3.3.1.1 Data analysis

This study has adopted Braun and Clarke's (2019) reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) to generate new knowledge from qualitative findings by 'embrac[ing] reflexivity, subjectivity and creativity as assets' (Byrne, 2022, p. 1393). This method recognises that analysis takes place where the dataset, theoretical philosophies and researcher's skills meet (Braun and Clarke, 2019; Byrne, 2022). It was chosen as a widely adopted method which 'embraces qualitative research values' making it appropriate for this qualitatively-driven PhD project (Braun and Clarke, 2021, p. 333). RTA enabled patterns of meaning about concepts to be recognised both in relation to answering the research questions as well as highlighting important topics to the respondents and within the secondary datasets (Braun and Clarke, 2019). This study's analysis was predominantly data-driven using an inductive coding approach (Braun and Clarke, 2019). However, some deductive codes developed from the theoretical lens were used to organise the findings in relation to the stages of planning, implementing and reviewing in whole-school wellbeing promotion (see Figure 2-6). This

reflects a common approach to using the RTA method, whereby scholars recognise some deductive coding is required to answer the research questions (Byrne, 2022). To focus the analysis on both how staff and pupils construed and experienced whole-school wellbeing promotion, semantic coding ('surface meanings') and latent coding ('hidden meanings') were jointly used to make best sense of the data (Byrne, 2022, p. 1397).

Recognising my active and influential role as a situated, novice researcher in the interpretive process, I sought to ensure my:

> reflective and thoughtful engagement with [the] data and… reflexive and thoughtful engagement with the analytic process (Braun and Clarke, 2019, p.594).

I adopted Byrne's (2022) worked example of the six-phase process of Braun and Clark's (2019) RTA framework to guide the analysis (Figure 3-3). As Braun and Clarke (2019) and Byrne (2022) both recognise the recursive rather than linear approach of RTA, the analytic process for each phase of the project took several months to complete with toing and froing between the datasets, coding and generated themes to ensure the most credible development of new knowledge. Alongside this process I kept reflexive notes to make visible the impact of personal beliefs, assumptions and attitudes on the analysis (page 69) (Dodgson, 2019). For transparency, a worked example of the analytic process from the head teacher's narrative interview is shown in appendix E.6.
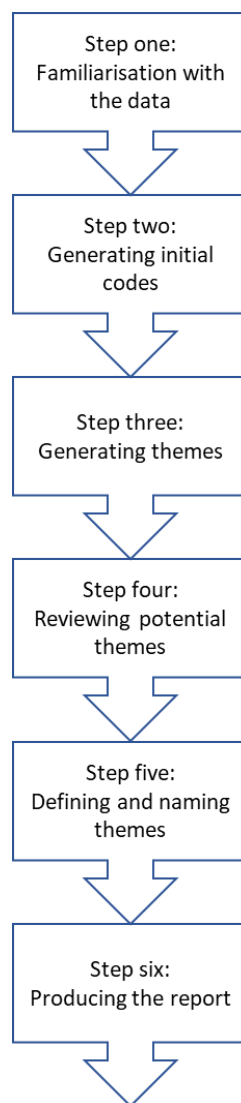
Figure 3-3 Six step process to reflexive thematic analysis

Source: Byrne, D (2022) 'A worked example of Braun and Clarke's approach to reflexive thematic analysis'. *Quality and Quantity*, 56, pp. 1391–1412.

3.3.2   Phase one: A systematic review of international literature (SLR)

3.3.2.1   Research design and rationale

Phase one used a SLR to explore the existing international evidence-base from high income countries and the findings are presented in chapter five. An SLR is defined as a review which captures all existing literature about a topic (Liberati *et al.,* 2009; McKenzie, Beller and Forbes, 2016). It follows a protocol to select and evaluate research to minimise bias in answering the research question (Dewey & Drahota, 2016). Whilst established theory proposes that an SLR follows a prescribed format, this review has slightly modified the format to make it suitable for this PhD thesis. This includes the shortened timeline for the process due to the smaller part the SLR plays in relation to the overall research design, as well as the fact that it is carried out by a

single researcher rather than a team. To instil confidence in the study's findings, it was important to be transparent about these adjustments and a detailed presentation is given in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2 A comparison of a formal SLR process with the modified version adopted in this project

Component	Systematic literature review	Modifications for this study
Definition	High-level overview of primary research on a focussed question that identifies, selects, synthesises and appraises all high-quality research evidence relevant to that question	Overview of primary research and reviews on a focused question that identifies, selects, synthesises and appraises high-quality research evidence relevant to that question
Goals	Answers a focussed clinical question Eliminate bias	Answers a series of focused real-world questions Minimise bias
Question	Clearly defined and answerable clinical question	Clearly defined and answerable real world, school-based question
Components	Pre-specified eligibility criteria Systematic search strategy Assessment of the validity of findings Interpretation and presentation of results Reference list	Pre-specified eligibility criteria Systematic search strategy Assessment of the validity of findings Interpretation and presentation of results Reference list
Number of authors	Three or more	One PhD researcher
Timeline	Months to years (average 18 months)	Six months
Requirement	Thorough knowledge of topic Perform searches of all relevant databases	Considerable knowledge of topic Perform searches of all relevant databases
Value	Connects practicing clinicians to high quality evidence Supports evidence-based practice	Connects practicing educational professionals to high quality evidence Supports evidence-based practice

Adapted from: Kysh (2013): Difference between a systematic review and a literature review.

Chapter 3

The theoretical lens developed in Chapter 2 was used deductively to focus the systematic literature review on the stages of planning, implementation and reviewing whole-school wellbeing promotion as well as recognising the influence of complexity and context on the process. It sought to provide a broad set of findings about 1) the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion, commonly shared by schools, 2) a critical exploration of implementation practices, 3) how schools sought to review outcomes and processes and 4) how context influenced practice. Specifically, it sought to answer the sub-questions:

1) What are the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion?

2) How is wellbeing practice implemented and sustained?

3) What are the contextual factors which influence whole-school wellbeing promotion?

High income countries were selected as being most like the UK and, therefore, most relevant for schools within the English education system. To gain both a broad and deep understanding of this topic, textual findings from qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods empirical literature, together with evidence from reviews were considered. Relevant data were extracted, synthesised and analysed to address the research sub-questions (Robson & McCartan, 2016; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The assumption being that evidence from a range of methodologies allowed better understanding of complex interventions by investigating both 'confirmatory' and 'exploratory' questions (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Noyes, Booth and Moore, 2019). A literature review was considered as an alternative research method that had the potential to generate similar knowledge, however this did not appear to have the same rigour as an SLR and, thus, results would lack the same level of trustworthiness (Bryman, 2016).

Search strategy

A systematic search for relevant research took place across seven databases: ERIC, Australian Education Index, CINAHL, MEDLINE, PsychINFO, SCOPUS and Web of Science. These databases, related to education, health sciences and psychology, and were selected due to the interdisciplinary nature of whole-school wellbeing promotion recognised in section 2.2. The terms "wellbeing or well being or well-being "OR "mental health promotion" OR "positive education" AND "whole-school or whole school" OR "universal" AND "intervention" OR "implement*" were searched in each database. The justification for this search was that literature relating to wellbeing promotion includes a diverse range of terms, as demonstrated in section 1.5. It was acknowledged that whilst the phrases above were considered most frequently used, it is not a comprehensive search of all potential terms and so some relevant studies may have been lost. However, it was deemed that restricting the search terms allowed a manageable level of results to be obtained. The search was undertaken by a single PhD researcher and, therefore, lacked the

scrutiny of a team of researchers, with the potential for researcher bias to affect the literature included (Liberati *et al.,* 2009, McKenzie, Beller and Forbes, 2016). However, to enhance quality as much as possible the protocol was, otherwise, followed as closely as possible.

Procedure

Teddlie and Tashakkori's (2009) 12-step framework for conducting a literature review was adopted as an overall procedural approach for the SLR, as outlined in Figure 3-4. The rationale being that this framework was produced by leading mixed methods theorists, and thus highly relevant to the MMR methodology driving this PhD thesis. Additionally, in proposing this framework the authors have drawn on work by other leading theoretical scholars including Creswell (2002), Gall, Gall and Borg (2007), Johnson and Christensen (2004) and Mertens (2005), implying a further confidence in the quality of this approach. Within this overall process other frameworks were introduced to enhance the process and will be introduced throughout this section.

Data collection

A systematic search was undertaken as outlined in the 'Search strategy' section above (see Appendix C). The PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) was used to guide this process (Liberati *et al.,* 2009). This framework has been recognised as providing an unbiased process through which to search for relevant literature to include in an SLR. The PRISMA flow diagram enabled a transparent way of presenting the selection process (Liberati *et al*., 2009). After an initial identification of relevant results, a screening process took place and duplicate studies were removed. Following this, the abstracts for each article were viewed virtually and screened for relevance against the following set of inclusion and exclusion criteria:

Inclusion criteria

- Published in English
- Between 2009 and 2019 (as most relevant for a rapidly changing research topic)
- In pre-school, primary and primary/secondary schools (ages 3 to 18)
- Universal interventions for all children and young people
- Evidence from education, health sciences, psychology and sociology
- Worldwide
- Peer-reviewed empirical literature, book chapters, PhD theses or opinion pieces

Exclusion criteria

- Studies focusing on mental illness prevention

- Interventions targeted to certain groups

- General health promotion rather than promoting wellbeing (e.g. exercise, obesity, smoking)

- Focussing on secondary school only

For the remaining papers, PDFs of the full articles were obtained, and the main body of text assessed for eligibility for inclusion in the study against the same set of criteria. Hong *et al.'s* (2018) mixed methods appraisal tool was used to assess the quality of publications. The strength of this tool is its ability to assess a range of research designs including qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods, reflecting the types of publications being included in this SLR (Smith *et al.,* 2021).

Data analysis

The data analysis was carried out using Nvivio version 12, with a PDF of each article being imported into the software. Initially, articles were read and re-read to provide familiarity (Bryman 2016). Braun and Clarke's (2019) widely tested RTA framework was adopted to analyse the textual data from the selected published papers (see Figure 3-4). Deductive codes were constructed from the theoretical lens prior to the analysis and shown in red in Appendix C.3. Further inductive codes were developed through immersion in the data (Appendix C.3).

The codes were set up in Nvivo and relevant data was highlighted and extracted into each code. Codes were considered one at a time, with all papers scanned for relevant data. Papers were read and re-read to ensure appropriate data had not been overlooked. In a second step, the PDFs were re-read and a further series of codes was generated inductively, driven by the content of the data. From this process, a series of descriptive codes were produced (Elliott, 2018). These codes were explored to recognise broad patterns of meaning within the data, producing several initial themes (Creswell, 2014). A process of reflecting on and assessing the themes against the PDFs was undertaken to ensure the analysis was broadly representative of the original papers, with further refinements made (Creswell, 2014). These themes have been used to organise the presentation of the findings in chapter five, with more weighting given to those themes for which there was most evidence.
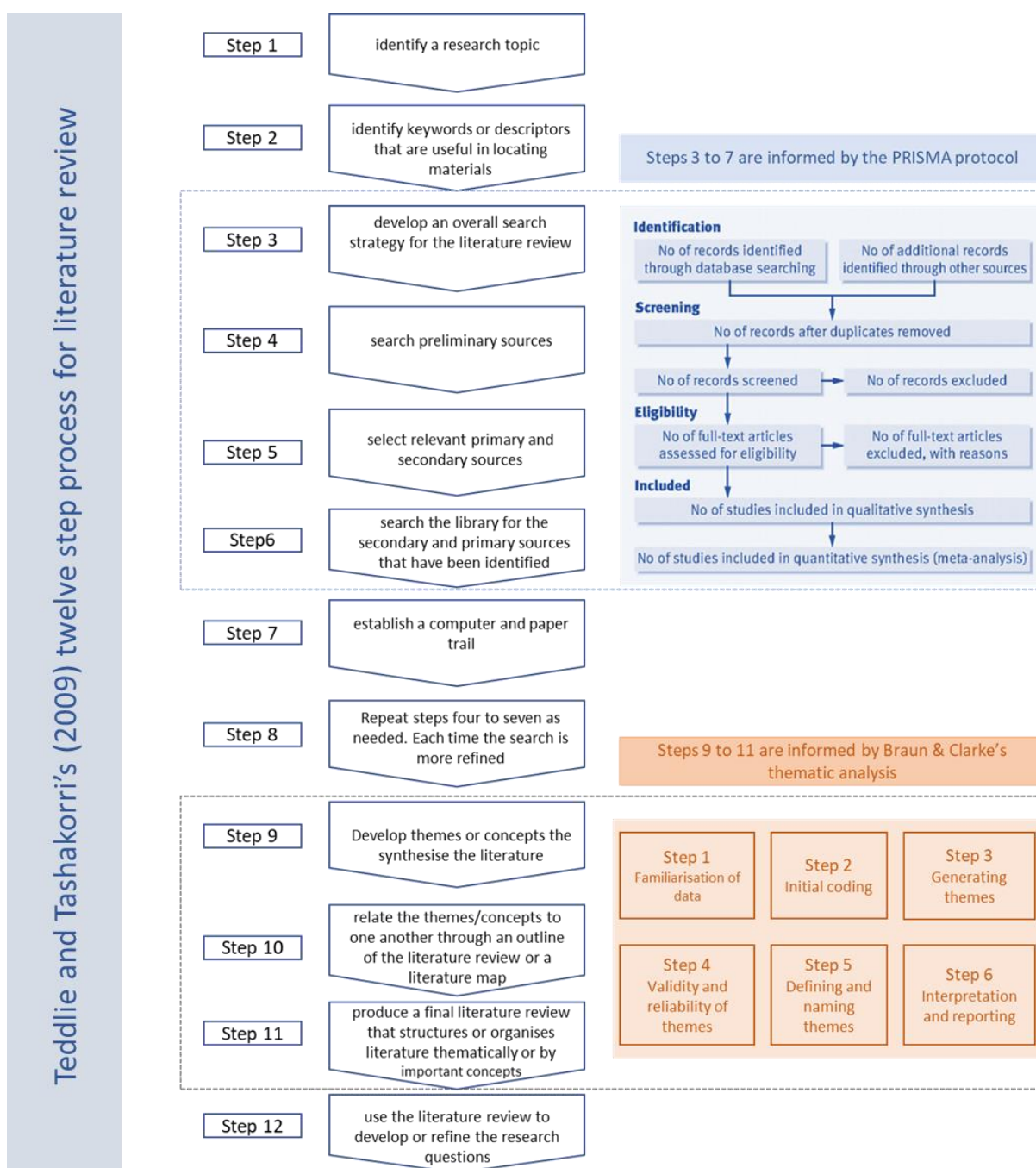
Figure 3-4 Theoretical frameworks guiding the systematic literature review

Enhancing quality

A series of frameworks was used to guide the research process for phase one. The rationale being that these have been developed by eminent scholars within the research areas of MMR, systematic literature reviews and qualitative data analysis. The rationale for adopting these theoretical frameworks sought to offset the limited skills of a novice researcher, through adopting the inherent strengths and quality built in to tested and respected frameworks (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

The literature search sought articles from peer-reviewed journals only, offering the inherent quality standards implied by such publications (Superchi *et al.,* 2019). In addition, the MMAT appraisal tool was used to offset any limitations of the peer review process, which has been previously critiqued by a series of academic researchers (Yaffe, 2009; Superchi *et al.,* 2019). The full results from each stage of the search process are included in Appendix B for greater transparency. Transparency and trustworthiness in the findings are also sought in presenting an audit trail of the development of codes and themes in Appendix C.3.

3.3.3 Phase two: A secondary data analysis of English primary schools

3.3.3.1 Research design and rationale

Phase two used a secondary data analysis (SDA) to explore how English primary schools have designed, implemented and reviewed whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish, and the findings are presented in chapter six. The study used a widely recognised definition, that SDA utilises an existing dataset to address a research question different to that for which the data were originally collected (Glaser, 1963; Hakim, 1982; Jary & Jary, 2000; Hewson 2006). This had the benefit that this PhD study could analyse a larger dataset than could have been assimilated as a PhD student undertaking primary data collection. The rationale for using SDA is its perceived value to produce high-quality research, which the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC, 2019) recognises as a fundamental requirement for social science research. In addition, the method was selected for its convenience and cost-effectiveness (Dale, Arbor and Procter*,* 1988; Bryman, 2016). This method also allows a PhD researcher to spend more time on the analysis stage, as data can be extracted relatively quickly (Bryman 2016). Moreover, during the Covid-19 pandemic at a time of school disruption, the SDA enabled the project to continue during school closures when it was not possible to undertake primary data collection. It also removed an additional burden for school professionals designated as keyworkers, which alternative research methods may have done (Sturgis, Smith and Hughes, 2006). There is an increasing regard for qualitative secondary data research suggesting its suitability for a qualitatively-driven mixed methods study (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). However, perhaps the greatest challenge in using the SDA method, is that data has not been collected to address the specific research questions posed in this study (Davis-Kean and Jager, 2017). However, it was concluded that an SDA research design had the potential to generate considerable, relevant data, making it appropriate for generating new knowledge about English primary schools' approaches to promoting wellbeing.

Alternative research methods were considered which might have facilitated large-scale data collection in this phase of the study, the most promising being a census survey. Conducting a cross-sectional, online census survey had the potential ability to capture a large quantity of data cost-effectively, whilst minimising data collection time (Creswell, 2014). However, empirical and anecdotal evidence suggested a steady decline in completion of school surveys, arising from both the volume of requests and burden of completion, resulting in very low response rates (Sturgis, Smith and Hughes, 2006; Fink, 2009). In consultation with experienced academics in the School of Education, it was anticipated that rates may be as low as 5% to 15% if this method was undertaken. As a result, it was concluded that a survey method may not fall short of the project's aims and was, therefore, not deemed an appropriate method.

In line with SDA assumptions, phase two used existing data from three sources within the public domain (see Figure 3-5). Firstly, the Department for Education (DfE) statistical data related to sample schools was extracted from the Gov.UK website. Secondly, textual data relating to wellbeing promotion was mined from Ofsted inspection reports. Finally, textual, image and audio-visual data relating to promoting pupils' wellbeing was collected from the sample schools' websites. Reflecting a qualitatively-driven mixed methodology, more weighting was placed on qualitative data collection and analysis.
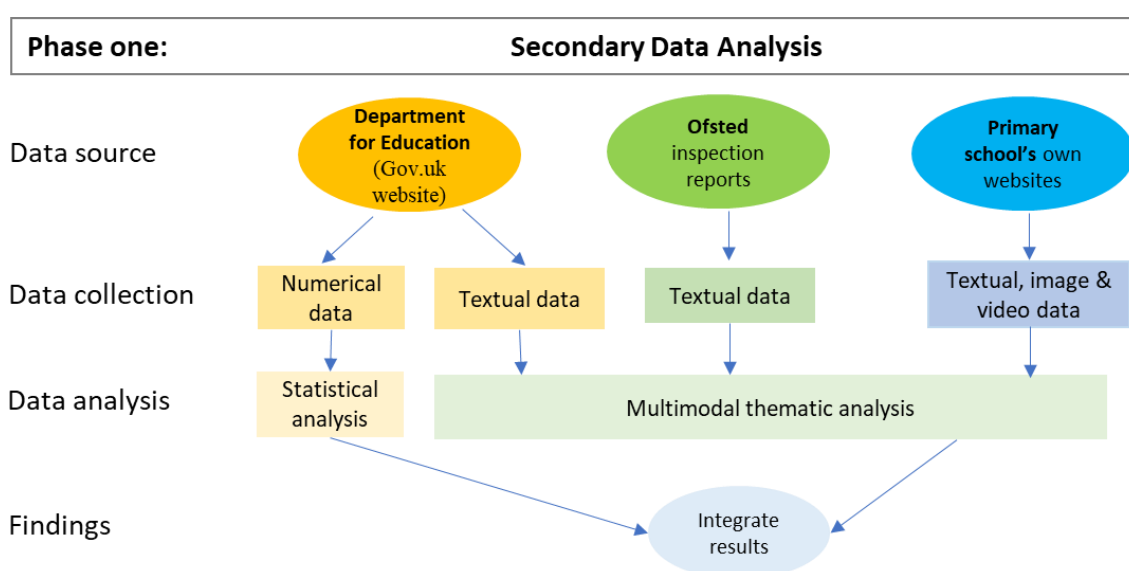
Figure 3-5 Design for phase two: a secondary data analysis

Phase two was guided by Johnston's (2017) framework for conducting an SDA, outlined in Figure 3-6. This was selected in the light of scant procedural theory relating to this research method,

despite its growing popularity within the disciplines of education and social science (Andrews *et al.*, 2012). The rationale for using this framework was the popularity of the widely cited peer-reviewed article in which it appeared (over seven hundred citations). Its adoption in existing peer-reviewed publications, implies its perceived credibility (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Johnston, 2017).

Step 1	Develop the research questions
Step 2	Identify the dataset(s)
Step 3	Evaluate the dataset(s) — What was the purpose of the original dataset? Who was responsible for collecting the information? What information was actually collected? When was the information collected? What methodology was employed in obtaining the data?
Step 4	Management of the primary data including access to raw dataset
Step 5	How consistent is the information obtained from one source with information available from other sources?

Adapted from: Johnston, M. (2017). Secondary Data Analysis: A Method of which the Time Has Come. *Qualitative And Quantitative Methods In Libraries, 3*(3), 619-626.

Figure 3-6 Johnston's (2017) framework for SDA

Sampling method

Defining the population

The population was defined as English state-funded, mainstream primary schools deemed to be undertaking whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish. The population was established through a two-step process:

Step 1: Identifying the potential population

As there is no national list of schools promoting wellbeing, a suitable population needed to be identified. Several sources appeared appropriate for determining the population, and the results of these were aggregated to determine an overall population of English primary schools deemed to be undertaking good practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing (Table 3-3). Firstly, a search identified schools recognised by third party organisations as demonstrating good practice. This included Mentally Healthy Schools, the Education Wellbeing Award providers (the National Children's Bureau and Optimus Education) and Place 2 Be. The rationale for this selection was that all three organisations are specialists in working with schools on this topic, so their identification of high-quality practice was of importance for the development of an overall population.

Secondly, searches were made using the search terms i) 'wellbeing' and 'primary school', ii) 'mental health' and 'primary school' and iii) 'positive education' and 'primary school'. Searches were made via Google and limited to results within the first 10 pages to generate a manageable volume of results.

Table 3-3 Sources from which the overall population was drawn

Source	Method of identification
Primary schools who have a mental health policy	Identified through Mentally Healthy Schools website & google search (see below) https://www.mentallyhealthyschools.org.uk/resources/mental-health-and-wellbeing-school-policies/?searchTerm=mental+health+policy
Primary schools who have achieved the NCB/Optimus Education Wellbeing Award for Schools (WAS)	Identified through the WAS website case studies https://www.awardplace.co.uk/case-studies

Primary schools who achieved a Place 2 Be Wellbeing in Schools award	Identified through the Place 2 Be website https://www.place2be.org.uk/about-us/news-and-blogs/2019/march/place2be-presents-the-wellbeing-in-schools-awards-2019/
Google search 'wellbeing' and 'primary school'	School websites which appeared in the first 10 pages of the search results
Google search 'mental health' and 'primary school'	School websites which appeared in the first 10 pages of the search results
Google search 'positive education' and 'primary school'	School websites which appeared in the first 10 pages of the search results

Step 2: Assessing potential schools against criteria for inclusion

Each school was then evaluated against inclusion and exclusion criteria, with only those meeting the criteria deemed suitable for inclusion in the population (see Table 3-4). This ensured that the population comprised English mainstream primary schools using a whole-school approach to promoting wellbeing.

Table 3-4 Criteria for school suitability

Inclusion criteria	Exclusion criteria
Schools educating pupils from 4 to 11 years old	Independent schools
State-funded schools	Special schools
Schools in England	Schools in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland
Schools with a mental health or mental wellbeing policy	Schools not demonstrating a whole-school approach to wellbeing
Schools who have been acknowledged as demonstrating best practice through an external organisation eg. an award	
Schools who demonstrate a whole-school approach to promoting mental wellbeing	

This process yielded a study population of one hundred and thirty-five schools (see appendix D.1).

Sampling

<u>Sample size</u>

A stratified sample of twenty-six schools was included in the SDA, the justification being that it allowed the analysis to capture a diverse array of school settings and characteristics, whilst enabling an in-depth analysis within the available word count (Bryman, 2016). Of these schools, a purposive sample of twelve schools were selected for a further qualitative analysis, chosen to represent a diversity of approaches and school characteristics within the overall sample (see appendix D.3.1).

<u>Stratified sampling strategy</u>

A stratified sampling method was selected to gain a nationwide understanding of the topic by seeking to ensure representation of a wide-ranging selection of English primary schools (Bryman, 2016). Stratification was based on a number of characteristics and informed by the sampling design used by Brown (2018) in the DfE 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools'. Brown (2018, p.8) justifies the strategy to 'ensure representativeness of schools with different characteristics and to limit the likelihood of biases'. This strategy was chosen as being both relevant to the topic and already established in published research. The strategy included stratification based on six categories: geographical location, socioeconomic status, location (urban/rural), Ofsted rating and school type. Brown's (2018) sampling strategy was modified to incorporate the latest government statistics on school demographics and a full outline and justification of these changes can be found in the appendix B.1.

Procedure

Data collection

Data were captured during March and April 2020 during a period of school closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic, resulting in both broad knowledge about the topic and specific knowledge relating to the impact of school closure. An Excel spreadsheet was used to capture information on the overall population relating to the stratification categories (appendix D.1). At this stage schools were anonymised by giving them an alphabetical identifier, in the form A, B, C ..DC. The stratified sampling strategy was used to select twenty-six English primary schools, offering a broad representation of whole-school wellbeing promotion. Relevant, anonymised data for each school were extracted into a new Excel spreadsheet for numerical analysis. Qualitative data were imported into Nvivo for analysis, with additional hardcopies of relevant Ofsted reports and school webpages printed.

Chapter 3

Data analysis

The analysis comprised a qualitative thematic analysis and quantitative content analysis, with a larger weighting placed on the thematic analysis in line with a qualitatively-driven, mixed methods methodology. As with phase one, Braun and Clarke's (2019) RTA framework was used to guide the thematic analysis (page 48). Coding was inductively generated through immersion with the data (appendix D.5).

A smaller quantitative content analysis was undertaken using relevant textual and numerical data from all three datasets. A content analysis may be defined as the systematic search of material to uncover patterns of meaning through an analysis of concepts (Holsti, 1968). Descriptive statistics were used to make sense of and present these findings (Bryman, 2016). The content analysis was performed using an Excel workbook. Relevant data were input for each school which was organised using the same deductive codes of planning, implementation and review as phase one. The statistical tools within Excel were used to sort and count the frequencies of codes. The qualitative and quantitative results are presented side by side for comparison in Chapter 5, a recognised presentation style for MMR methodology (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Fetters, Curry and Creswell, 2013; Guetterman *et al.,* 2015).

Enhancing quality

The use of guiding frameworks was adopted to maximise trustworthiness in the results and transparency in the process (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Bryman, 2016). Johnston's (2017) framework for SDA was used to guide the selection process and quality assurance for the datasets. Brown's (2018) sampling strategy was adopted to ensure a representative sample of English primary schools. Braun and Clark's (2019) RTA framework guided thematic analysis. Krippendorf's (2004) seminal text on theoretical principles directed the content analysis.

It is anticipated that quality was improved by the robustness of the datasets used (Johnston, 2017; Davis-Kean and Jager, 2017). The DfE school statistics are produced in line with the Code of Practice for official statistics and Ofsted's inspectorate adhere to quality assurance practices including clear and timely reporting using a guiding framework (Hood *et al.,* 2019). Transparency in the process was established by including the analytic process in Appendix D.

3.3.4   Phase three: A case study of an English primary school

3.3.4.1   Research design and rationale

Phase three used a case study design to provide a rich, detailed understanding of how whole-school wellbeing promotion was used in an English primary school to enable pupils to flourish (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2002). A case study may be defined as an in-depth exploration of a bounded system (Creswell, 2007). It appears that there are several strengths of using this approach. Case study methodology is commonly used as a basis for education research, providing evidence that it is a suitable method for this study (Yin, 2002; Yazan, 2015). It recognises the holistic nature of wellbeing practice and assumes its embeddedness within its context, reflecting the complexity and contextual considerations identified in sections 1.5.3 and 2.2 (Stake, 1995). Additionally, case study design enables exploration of real-world phenomenon in their natural settings, reflecting this project's exploration of English primary schools (Merriam, 1998). Moreover, Yin (2002) argues that a case study method is particularly suitable for evaluating initiatives by triangulating data from several sources, in line with the project's mixed methods approach. Yet it is recognised that there are challenges in adopting this method. Merriam (1998), echoed by Yin (2002) and Stake (1995) argue that it is difficult for a case study method to capture all the complexities associated with the phenomena. To mitigate for this issue, this project adopted a range of research methods within the case study design to develop an in-depth analysis, exploring major areas of complexity whilst recognising that its scope is limited (Bryman, 2016). Additionally, Yin (2002) proposes that it may be difficult to identify the boundaries around the case, as the case and its context may be difficult to separate, of which the project will remain aware. Despite these challenges, a case study method appeared appropriate for the detailed analysis undertaken in the final. Although alternative research methods were sought, it was not considered that any had the flexibility and scope of a case study design.

The case study was directed by the results of phase two and revision of the conceptual model, in line with the iterative approach of this research design. It incorporated five research methods: 1) a narrative interview with the headteacher, 2) a semi-structured interview with the wellbeing lead, 3) participatory research involving a map drawing activity with year six pupils, 4) observation through field notes and 5) a content analysis of relevant school documentation (see Figure 3-7).
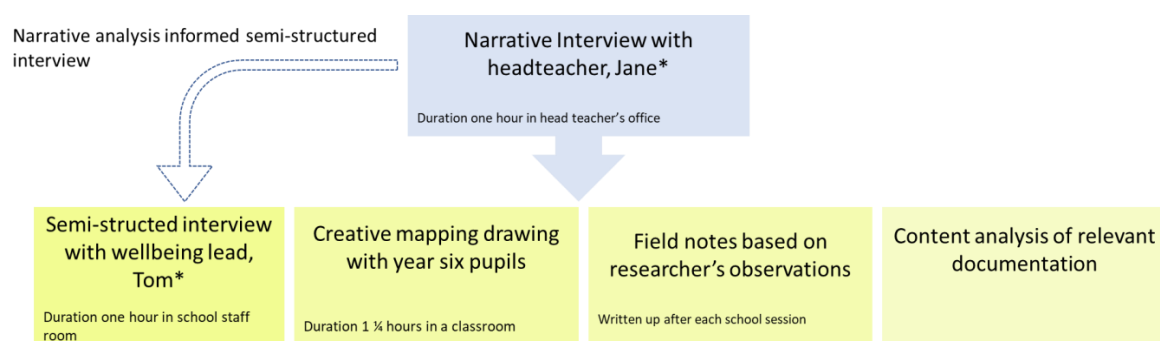
Figure 3-7 Case study design

A narrative interview was chosen to use with the headteacher as it enabled rich, detailed data to be collected on the personal experiences of whole-school wellbeing promotion over the last two decades at the school (Creswell, 2014). The purpose of a narrative interview was to elicit the story of wellbeing promotion from the gatekeeper of an English primary school, enabling an interrupted, free-flowing narration (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000). A challenge of using this method was the lack of experience of the PhD researcher in using this technique, with the potential that valuable knowledge may remain uncovered (Edwards and Holland, 2014).

A semi-structured interview method was undertaken with the school's wellbeing lead, a staff member with specialist involvement in promoting pupils' wellbeing. An initial analysis of the narrative interview was used to partly inform the interview schedule for this interview. This method was selected due to its inherent credibility as a popular and tested method for qualitative research, providing robustness in data collection (Hammersley, 2013). Semi-structured interviews are widely used in mixed methods studies in education and health disciplines to evaluate a diverse range of complex interventions, suggesting its appropriateness for this study (Silverman, 2014). This method allows flexibility through adaptation of the schedule of questions to explore unanticipated and interesting topics, enabling a truly explorative approach (Hammersley, 2013; Edwards and Holland, 2014). However, a limitation with both interview methods is that valuable knowledge may remain unknown as the interviewee chooses what to make visible (Silverman, 2014).

Increasingly used within education, a participatory approach was adopted to capture pupils' subjective lived experiences of whole-school wellbeing promotion (Nind, 2014). A strength of this approach is that it allowed children to participate as 'collaborators' and 'active social agents' rather than 'objects' of research, as pupils have 'something salient to contribute to the question in hand' (Cornwall and Jewkes, 1995; Tisdall *et al.,* 2009, p.1; Bell and Cartmel, 2019). As an

approach more commonly used in research on inclusion, a strength of this study is that it 'borrows' the benefits of an established and tested method from one field to bring benefit to another (Kellett, 2011; Nind, 2014). Within this approach, the case study used the activity of mapping as a drawing technique with which to capture the lived experiences of pupils (Literat, 2013). A strength of drawing is that it is inclusive and allows all pupils a method for expressing their perspectives on whole school wellbeing promotion and their own wellbeing (Literat, 2013).

Observations were made during each visit to the school and kept as a series of field notes. This research method created a systematic description of how the case study promoted wellbeing in a real-world setting (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Three categories were considered during visits: 1) stakeholders, 2) activities and 3) environment. Observation data provided additional meaning to topics identified by staff and pupils as well as highlighting additional relevant issues.

A document analysis was used in combination with the other methods to triangulate the data as a way of enhancing credibility and quality within the case study (Denzin, 1970; Creswell, 2014). A further strength is that the document analysis contextualised data generated through the other research methods (Bowen, 2009).

Sampling

An English primary school was purposively selected as a case of interest having undertaken whole-school wellbeing promotion for over two decades (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). The rationale being that this case provides an 'information-rich' sample through which to produce new knowledge (Patton, 2002 p.230).

Procedure

Data collection

The narrative interview

The narrative interview with the headteacher was completed in April 2021 in her office, lasting approximately one hour and was guided by Jovchelovitch and Bauer's (2000) basic phases of the narrative interview framework. The interview was conducted by myself and used a SQUIN (single question initiating narrative) structure to enable the headteacher to tell the story of designing, implementing, reviewing and sustaining the whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish (appendix B.9) (Wengraf, 2001). Techniques of probing were used minimally to seek

clarity and two follow-up questions were used after the initial storytelling to uncover further details about the influence of context and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic (Jovchelovitch and Bauer, 2000). Documentation referred to by the head teacher was printed out following the interview and used as part of the document analysis.

<u>The semi-structured interview</u>

The semi-structured interview was conducted between myself and the school's wellbeing lead (a class teacher) in June 2021 and lasted approximately an hour, in the empty staff room. An interview schedule informed by the head teacher's narrative interview, literature review, theoretical model and findings from phase one (appendix B.10). Some deviation from the schedule enabled areas of interest to be explored as they emerged (Edwards and Holland, 2014).

<u>The mapping activity</u>

The mapping activity was undertaken in July 2021 with seventeen year six pupils, enabling pupils' subjective experiences of wellbeing and whole-school wellbeing promotion to be captured in an inclusive approach (Literat, 2013). The task lasted one and a quarter hours. The format of the activity was co-developed with the headteacher ahead of time and asked pupils to consider their wellbeing journey through their time at school (appendix B.11). Due to remaining social distancing restrictions, I outlined the activity for the pupils at the start but was required to socially distance, restricting my engagement in the ongoing task.

Data analysis

The interviews were transcribed *verbatim* prior to analysis using Microsoft Word, and stored anonymously (Bryman, 2016). These transcripts, alongside the data extracted from the school documentation, was read and reread to familiarise myself before importation into Excel and Nvivio software. Braun and Clarke's (2010) RTA method outlined in section 3.3.1 was used to inductively generate a series of codes and themes. Pupils' maps incorporated textual and visual data, with textual analysis being carried out in the same method as above. Visual data were reviewed using Bland's (2012) process for analysing children's drawings. Analysis focussed on 'the features given the most emphasis by the artist' (Bland, 2012, p. 238). Drawings and text from the maps were read concurrently for comparison of pupils' sense-making (Lodge, 2007; Bland, 2012).

3.3.5 An integrated data analysis

A MMR methodology requires the strands of the analysis arising from multiple research methods to be integrated for meaningful knowledge construction (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009; Cresswell,

2014). After the three phases of data collection and analysis, a final integrated analysis using Braun and Clarke's (2019) RTA framework was completed using the combined findings of chapter five, six and seven. Text from these chapters was imported into Nvivo and further inductive codes and themes were generated. This integrated analysis forms the basis for the discussion in chapter seven, where the research questions are considered in the light of this combined new knowledge.

3.4   Ethics

Ethical validity for this study can be considered the potential benefit of enhancing wellbeing and increasing the evidence-base, outweighing any negative factors of participation. The downside is anticipated to be participation time for stakeholders involved (Angen, 2000).

3.4.1   Ethical approval

Ethical approval was sought and obtained for phases two and three of the study. Appendix B.12 shows supporting evidence from the University of Southampton Ethics Committee.

3.4.2   Ethical issues

A range of ethical issues affect this PhD study, namely 1) general research issues, 2) researching with children and 3) researching during the Covid-19 pandemic.

3.4.2.1   General issues

In all phases, confidentiality and data storage complied with the Data Protection Act (2018) and the University of Southampton's data management policy. Appendix B.13 outlines this project's data management plan. Phase one of the research design, the systematic literature review, did not require ethics approval. Phase two, the secondary data analysis, collected data from sources in the public domain and required data to be stored confidentially. Schools were anonymised using alphabetical codes, and school details were kept separately from other data. Data was stored on Microsoft Excel spreadsheets on the University of Southampton's Onedrive, in accordance with the study's data management plan. The plan was reviewed and updated as necessary.

In phase three, ethics approval was completed in May 2021. The case study used a series of research methods, with associated ethical issues. Gatekeeper approval was obtained from the headteacher (appendix B.2). Informed consent was obtained prior to participation by school staff

in the interview process, and the voluntary nature and right to withdraw at any time explained (Bryman, 2016). Participants were presented with a participant information sheet (PIS) and were asked to complete a consent form (appendices B.3 and B.6).

In relation to the mapping activity with year six pupils, consent was sought from pupils' parents/carers, and assent from children was required (appendices B.4, B.5, B.7 and B.8) (Bryman, 2016). Consideration was given to explaining the research in the most appropriate manner for families and children, in collaboration with the head teacher who was the gatekeeper with professional expertise and had extensive knowledge of the school community and setting (Fargas Malet *et al.* 2010).

3.4.2.2   Researching with children

This study considered the recognised imbalance of power between researcher and child participants and sought to mitigate its impact during the research process (Josselson, 1996; Munro *et al.* 2004; Clark, 2005). The mapping activity was deliberately selected to redress power imbalance. Drawing is recognised as a method which mitigates the hierarchy between researcher and child (Literat *et al*., 2013).

The study also sought to address a general criticism when researching with children, that the child's voice is often overlooked (Hall, 2010; Nind, 2014). Whilst the original research design anticipated a larger participatory element with pupils as co-collaborators in the research process, this had to be scaled back in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. However, the revised design has maintained the drawing research method within the case study. The mapping task enabled children to express their views and opinions through an age-appropriate activity (Literat *et al*., 2013). Furthermore, it was an inclusive approach which enabled all children to participate regardless of language ability, a strength in the case study school where there was a large group of pupils with special educational needs or disability (SEND) (Literat *et al.,* 2013). However, it was recognised that drawing may not be motivating to all children and, therefore, not all children's voices may be heard equally, an ethical concern which was considered during the research process (Literat *et al.,* 2013).

Finally, it was acknowledged that potentially sensitive issues may have arisen, and procedures were put in place for pupils to be supported by the head teacher and class teachers if necessary (Hertz, 1997). The existing pupil-teacher relationship was considered a first place of support. If escalation had been deemed appropriate, the schools' ongoing safeguarding policies would have been followed. However, with the study's focus on the positive aspects of promoting wellbeing, it

was hoped that the topic would have minimal detrimental impact for participating children, as was the case.

Researching during the impact of Covid-19

The impact of Covid-19 on this research study has been considerable and is discussed in section 8.6. As a result, the original research design was significantly modified to accommodate a lack of accessibility for researching in schools. One limitation of the modified design is the reduced involvement of children in the research process. Therefore, this thesis recognises the ethical compromise that has arisen, where new knowledge has been predominantly driven by adult perspectives.

As there have been substantial periods of school closure during the time allocated for data collection, school staff have been focussed on providing virtual teaching, and providing in-school provision for keyworkers' and vulnerable children. At periods where schools have been open, schools' primary concerns had been for ensuring the welfare of pupils and staff. As a result, ethical issues about primary data collection with busy professional groups in a pandemic arose (Superfine, 2020). This study has addressed this issue by placing a higher weighting on secondary data to overcome the lack of primary data collection opportunities.

However, relying on secondary datasets brings its own ethical issue. In this study, data was produced by government bodies, school inspectors and school leadership on school websites. This highlights a limitation of the modified study design, that whilst professional views are captured, a range of other stakeholders' views remained unheard (Erves *et al*., 2017). Missing voices within the modified study included a greater number of pupils, class teachers, parents/carers and school governors.

3.5   Reflexivity

Reflexivity in this qualitatively driven PhD project explores how I am 'situated relative to the research' (Dodgson, 2019). I recognise skills and attitudes I bring to this study (Buetow, 2019). I have personal experience of the English education system from myself and my children. As a trained occupational therapist, this has provided transferrable skills to build rapport, take an open-minded, respectful approach to others and use evidence-based, systematic approaches to collect and make sense of people's subjective realities. Prior experience in children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHs) developed my belief in the benefits of promoting children's wellbeing from an early age. This viewpoint provided passion to shape my research

choices and resilience to endure challenges. Yet, this stance introduces biases about the positive benefits of promoting wellbeing, which I have attempted to set aside in exploring the sense-making of others. Whilst being familiar with school settings during health-related visits, I do not have an educational background which limits understanding of how teachers experience their own roles in enabling pupils to flourish.

I have sought to offset my limited research experience by adopting theoretical frameworks to guide data collection and analysis (Berger, 2015; Dodgson, 2019). To improve trustworthiness, I have used direct quoting, member checking after interviews, triangulation of voices and research methods, an audit trail of analytic processes and reflexive notes recorded on a Word document. Whilst I consider prior experience and maturity enabled an easy rapport with interviewees enabling open and thoughtful responses in the case study, I recognise how my role as an outsider who make several relatively short visits to the school leaves areas of useful knowledge still untapped. In relation to the pupils, I sought to make choices that would address ethical implications about the imbalance of power in researching with children (page 68). Furthermore, in choosing Braun and Clarke's (2019) RTA framework, this had the advantage of promoting a reflective and reflexive approach to generating new knowledge during the analytic process (page 48).

3.6   Conclusion

An exploratory approach has been used to generate new knowledge about whole-school wellbeing promotion in English primary schools, an area in which existing evidence is limited (page 23). As a suitable methodology for an exploratory approach, a qualitatively-driven MMR methodology has been used to direct the research process, underpinned by an interpretivist ontological and epistemological worldview. The research design comprised a three-phase process of 1) a systematic literature review, 2) a secondary data analysis of twenty-six English primary schools and 3) a case study of wellbeing practice in a single English primary school. A final integrated analysis combined the findings to answer the research questions and address the research problem. Ethical issues and process of reflexivity were identified. The next three chapters present findings from each of the three phases of data collection and analysis.

Chapter 4   Findings from Phase One: A systematic review of international literature

4.1   Introduction

Phase one adopted a modified systematic literature review (SLR) to analyse recent peer-reviewed literature from high income countries as part of the exploratory approach adopted to understand how primary schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish (page 50). This phase sought to capture all evidence related to the topic through a systematic approach to data collection and analysis. It is an intentionally shorter chapter, as the project sought to focus more extensively on data from English primary schools, in phases two and three. The purpose of this chapter, therefore, was to generate a broad base of new, relevant knowledge focussing on three of the research sub-questions (see Figure 3-1):

1) What are the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion?
2) How is wellbeing practice implemented and sustained?
3) What are the contextual factors which influence whole-school wellbeing promotion?

A detailed outline of the data collection and analysis methods is found in section 3.3.2.

This chapter is presented in three parts. Part one presents the characteristics of the selected publications. Part two adopts deductive codes derived from the theoretical lens (page 37) as a framework to capture, extract and make sense of collected data (Bryman 2016). It also presents findings through further inductively generated themes following immersion in the data (Bryman, 2016). The findings are presented in three sections:

- Key components of wellbeing initiatives
- Implementation practices
- The influence of contextual factors

Part three employs the presented findings to refine and update the conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools.

4.2   Characteristics of the papers included in the review

In line with the Cochrane method for systematic literature reviews, this study used the PRISMA process to identify relevant articles for inclusion in this review (see 3.3.2). Using the procedure

outlined in 3.3.2, the search identified twenty publications suitable for analysis (see Figure 4-1).
The analytic process is included in Appendix C.

PRISMA flow diagram
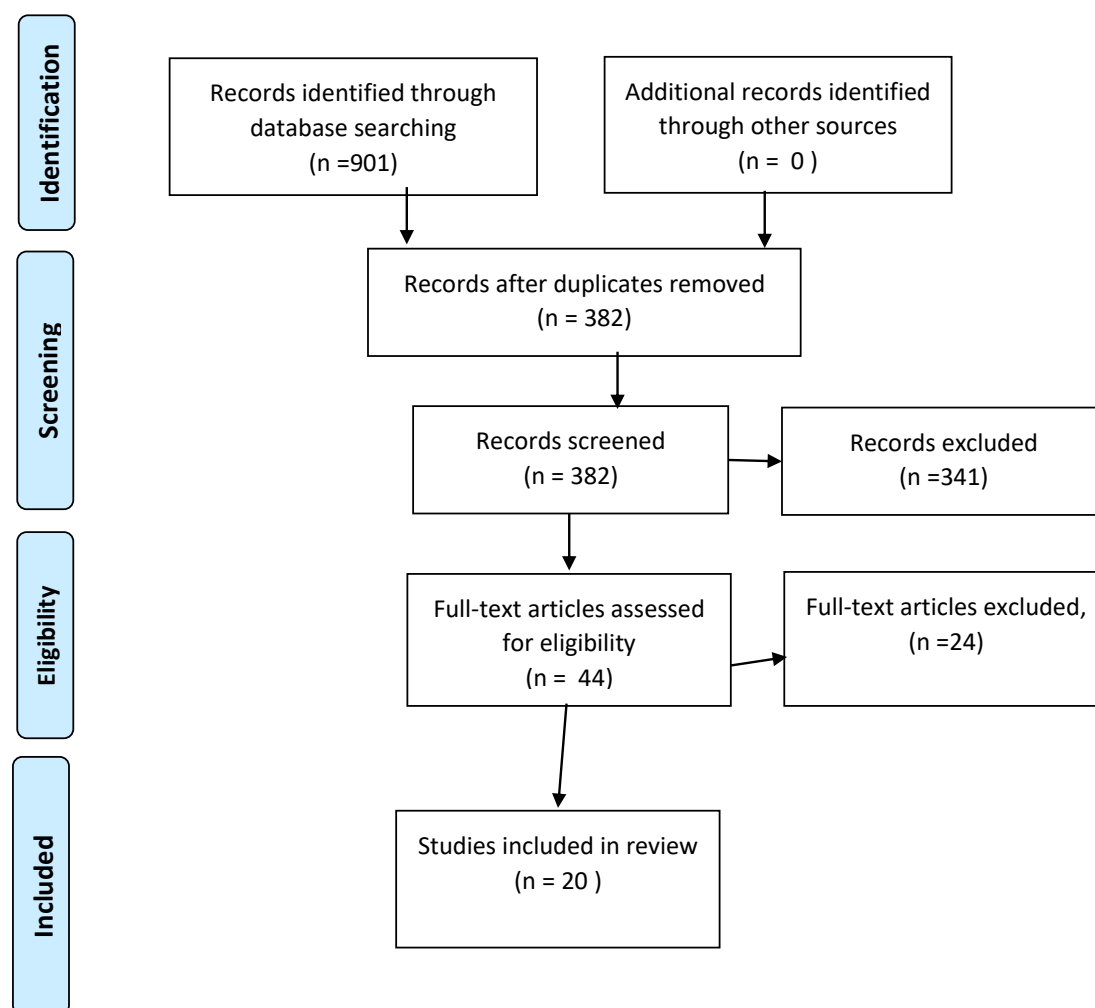
Figure 4-1 PRISMA process for identifying relevant publications for inclusion in the systematic literature review

The research comprised six reviews, twelve empirical studies, one protocol and one opinion piece (see Figure 4-2). Publications came from the Australia, Canada, Europe (Finland, Greece, Holland, Ireland and Norway) the UK and the US, and were published between 2009 and 2019. Eight

papers were published between 2009 and 2012 and 12 papers since 2014. Seven studies were recently published between 2017 and 2019. The six reviews comprised three literature reviews, two systematic reviews and a meta-analysis. All reviews were published between 2011 and 2018, with two reviews coming from each of the UK, US and Australia. The majority of articles were empirical research (n=12) of which six used a quantitative design, two used a qualitative design, two incorporated a mixed methods approach and two studies used case studies. Within the quantitative research, four used a quasi-experimental method and two published the results of randomised control trials (RCTs). The former has sample sizes between n=4980 and n=598 and four studies were published since 2014. Four articles reported research from Europe and two from Australia. Five of the remaining empirical articles were published in the UK or Europe, and as is typical of a qualitative-based design the sample sizes of the qualitative studies and case studies were between eighteen and twenty-nine participants.
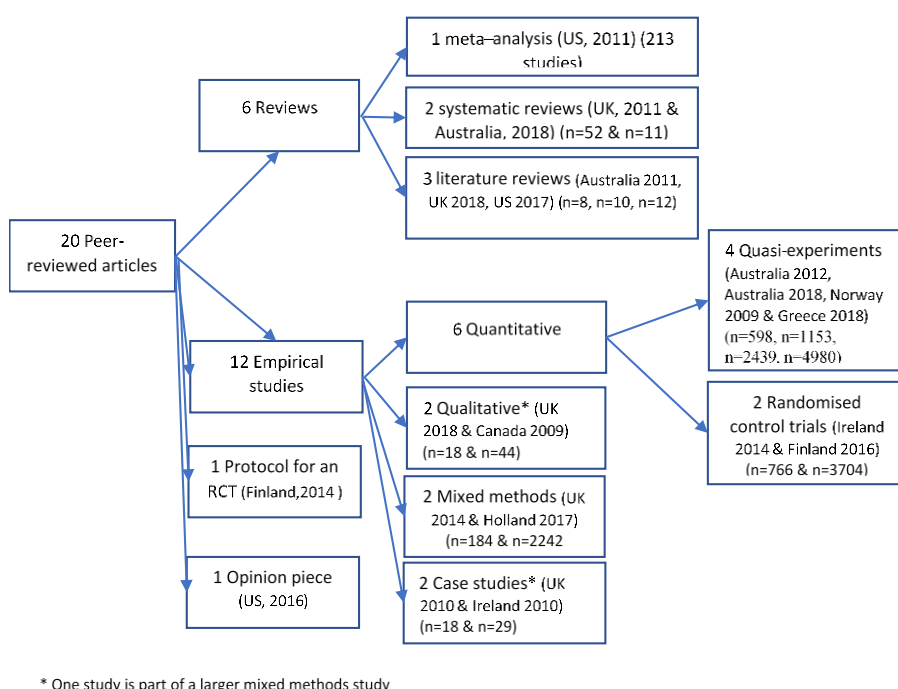
Figure 4-2 The results of the systematic search

4.3   The findings

The theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2 was used as a lens through which to make sense of the resultant data (see Figure 2-6). It highlights the importance of identifying key components of design, implementation and review, as well as how context influenced schools'

wellbeing practices. Using Braun and Clarke's (2019) RTA process deductive and inductive themes were developed as shown in Figure 4-3 (page 48 and appendix C.3 for an audit trail).

Development of themes in the SLR
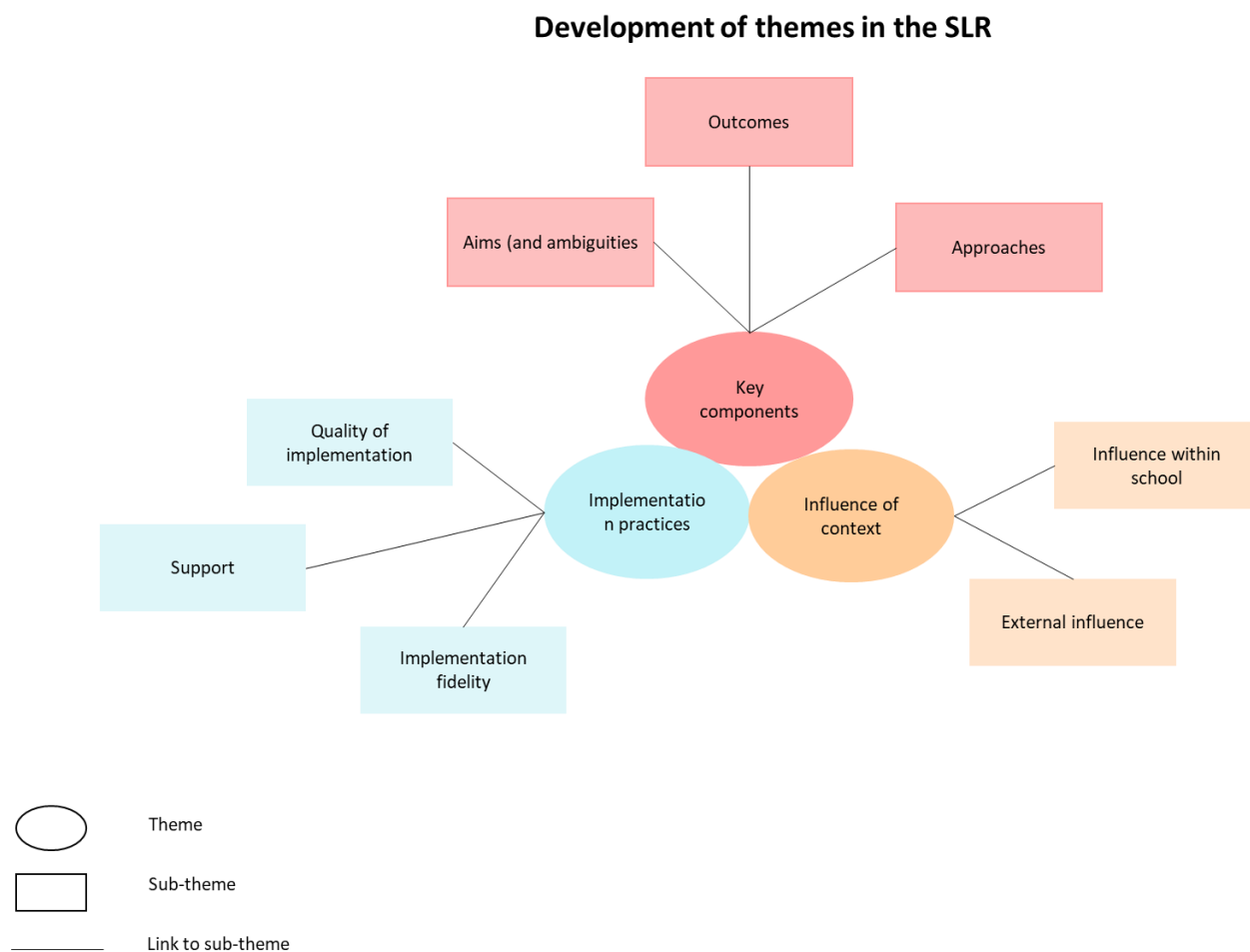
Figure 4-3 Development of themes in the SLR

4.3.1 Key components of wellbeing initiatives

Key components are defined as the most significant factors, and the purpose of identifying these is to translate effective results into clear, practical knowledge for future interventions (Sutcliffe *et al.,* 2015). In all papers except Wood's (2018) empirical study, researchers identified positive effects of whole-school wellbeing promotion. It may, therefore, be implied these findings offer exemplifications of promotion in real world settings, with the potential to inform future practice. Using the analytic process described above, four themes were developed: 1) aims (and ambiguities), 2) outcomes, 3) approaches: top-down and bottom-up and 4) content.

4.3.1.1 Aims (and ambiguities)

Fundamental to whole-school wellbeing promotion is understanding what is trying to be achieved, and articles identified a variety of aims (Rosas and Knight, 2019). Four of the six reviews defined the initiatives as mental health promotion (MHP) (Weare and Nind 2011; Murphy *et al.,* 2017; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018; O'Reilly *et al.* 2018), whilst Durlak *et al.* (2011) reported the results of social and emotional learning (SEL) programmes and Waters (2011) reviewed positive psychology initiatives (PPIs). A distinction between the aims of these interventions became evident. In a widely cited meta-analysis of 213 SEL interventions, Durlak *et al*. (2011, p. 406) reported such programmes aimed to develop '*cognitive, affective and behavioural competencies*' such as self-awareness, identifying and managing emotions, relationship skills and responsible decision-making. In contrast, whilst the remaining five reviews all reported that MHP and PPIs sought to develop similar socioemotional skills, there was also a wider-reaching scope within their aims. Additional goals included developing a positive school community, supporting parents, promoting stress management, developing resilience, encouraging positive wellbeing and happiness, identifying and building character strengths and the reduction of anxiety and depressive symptoms (Waters, 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011; Murphy *et al.,* 2017; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018, O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018). An advantage of including these reviews is their synthesis of a large volume of empirical evidence on which to base an understanding of intervention components, unachievable by a search of empirical studies alone (Bryman, 2016). From these, it appears that there is a distinction between the aims of different intervention types, with SEL programmes commonly having narrower aims compared with a wider focus of MHP and PPI interventions.

However, the analysis identified cases where terminology was used inconsistently, creating ambiguity, and it appeared this had two distinct effects. Firstly, in both Weare and Nind's (2011) systematic analysis of 52 systematic analyses of MHPs and Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson's (2018) more recent, but smaller systematic review of 11 resilience-building interventions, similar initiatives were described by a variety of terms. Whilst they appeared to describe a divergent set of programmes, in fact, they shared similar aims, components and outcomes. Thus, the findings highlight that a consensus on definitions of terms may simplify the topic for readers. In contrast, Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson's (2018) review found multiple definitions of the term 'resilience'. This resulted in diverse programmes being described in the same terms, yet having multiple aims underpinned by different theories, with varying content and divergent outcomes. In both examples, it may be concluded that ambiguity over terminology creates a potential for confusion and misinterpretation.

Amongst the empirical literature reviewed, ambiguity was evidenced in Kourmousi *et al.'s* (2018) study examining a national teacher-led programme to develop socio-emotional skills amongst 6- to 8-year-olds in Greece. Whilst reporting to investigate the effectiveness of an MHP programme, it actually aimed to deliver a narrow intervention focusing on skills development; more suitably described as an SEL initiative.

In fact, the aims of the empirical studies were broadly in line with the reviews, identifying differences between the goals of SEL programmes and MHP initiatives; no studies undertook PPIs. Four articles, benefitting from large sample sizes (1,193 to 4,590 pupils), analysed SEL programmes with the aim of developing pupils' social and emotional skills including self-esteem, empathy, emotion management and problem-solving. In detail, Clarke, Bunting and Barry (2014) and Holsen, Iversen and Smith (2009) investigated internationally implemented, 'bought in' programmes designed by external providers; Zippy's Friends, and Second Step, aimed at 6- to 8-year-olds and 10- to 12-year-olds respectively. In contrast, Kourmousi *et al.* (2018) and Kiviruusu *et al.* (2016) evaluated nationally designed programmes, 'Steps for Life' for 6- to 8-year-olds and 'Together at school' aimed at 7- to 9-year-olds respectively. The latter studies were both strengthened by their use of a control group for comparison, however they engaged teachers in the conflicting roles of both facilitator and evaluator, which may have introduced inaccuracy as data was collected via self-reported questionnaires (Bryman 2016). A fifth study by Wood (2018) qualitatively explored the perceptions of UK teachers undertaking SEL programmes as part of a larger mixed methods study, reporting the same aims as above.

In contrast, the MHP interventions had broader aims to make whole-school changes to improve wellbeing. In Hall's (2010) case study of a UK primary school, the leadership team aimed to design and implement new wellbeing policy by consulting pupils via focus groups. Elsewhere, Elfrink *et al.* (2017) reported on an initiative which introduced a series of 'life rules' in 2 Dutch primary schools based on individual school values (eg. 'People get happy when I give them a compliment') and Omstead *et al.* (2009) evaluated the success of an intervention which sought to make pupils feel safe, connected and valued through pupil-parent-teacher action teams in 4 Canadian low-income primary schools. Like Hall (2010), both studies used qualitative methods to collect new knowledge about the nuanced lived experiences of multiple stakeholders, aiming to make changes to the school climate. However, as qualitative research is time-consuming and may, therefore, be carried out infrequently, it appears data was lost in the Canadian schools with high staff turnover, potentially losing valuable insights about why the schools only partially met their aims (Omstead *et al.,* 2009).

Additionally, Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014) and Dix *et al.* (2012) studied the effects of national strategies to implement school change through SEAL in the UK and Kidsmatter in Australia. It appears that where Kidsmatter had an aim to improve wellbeing through broad whole-school change, SEAL had a narrower aim of improving socio-emotional skills. Yet unlike the SEL initiatives evaluated earlier which used a single component, classroom-based approach to meet their aims, Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014) reported SEAL had 'a major emphasis' on engaging the whole school staff, parents and the wider community to improve school ethos.

4.3.1.2   Outcomes

Defining a clear outcome, the result of the intervention, is key for good practice (Rosas and Knight, 2019). All 6 reviews reported that interventions assessed the development of a variety of social and emotional skills, however they further identified that some studies used a broader set of outcome measures. For example, in both SEL and the wider focused MHP programmes, Durlak *et al.* (2011), Murphy *et al.* (2017) and Weare and Nind (2011) reported that studies measured a reduction in negative behaviours such as violence and bullying. Furthermore, academic achievement was identified as an additional outcome criterion in four studies (Durlak *et al.,* 2011; Waters, 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011; Murphy *et al.* 2017). However, it appears this might have been of less importance than other outcome measurements, with Durlak *et al.* (2011) reporting only 14% of 213 studies measured attainment.

Moreover, despite complex intervention theory proposing outcomes be measured by subgroup, most reviews failed to report assessment at this level (Rosas and Knight 2019). Only O'Reilly *et al.* (2018) sought to establish whether MHP interventions led to a decrease in socioeconomic status (SES) inequalities. However, reviewers recognised this as a limitation of existing research, with O'Reilly *et al.* (2018) and Durlak *et al.* (2011) recommending future examination between children from differing SES, ethnicity and cultural backgrounds and Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson (2018) proposing that effects by gender are investigated due to differing presentations of wellbeing issues between girls and boys. It might be implied that understanding how different groups of pupils benefit from whole-school wellbeing promotion enables schools to make appropriate adjustments to improve the benefits of practice.

Amongst the empirical literature, papers examining SEL programmes measured a similar range of outcomes to those identified in the reviews. Measures of effectiveness included improvements in social competence (Holsen, Iversen and Smith, 2009; Kourmousi *et al.,* 2018), emotional literacy (Clarke, Bunting and Barry, 2014) and personal control and behaviour (Clarke, Bunting and Barry, 2014; Kourmousi *et al.* 2018). In addition, Holsen, Iversen and Smith (2009) sought to identify changes in school and life satisfaction. However, Bjorklund *et al.'s* (2014) protocol for an RCT

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study, evaluated by Kiviruusu *et al.* (2016), differed from the other SEL interventions by identifying improvements in mental health as its primary outcome measure, with the development of socio-emotional skills as a secondary outcome. Except for Holsen, Iversen and Smith (2009), the studies did not include children in the evaluation process, recognised as a common shortcoming amongst MHP research by O'Reilly *et al.* (2018) and Hall (2010).

4.3.1.3 Approaches: top-down and bottom-up

Weare and Nind (2011) reported a useful distinction between a top-down approach which they described as commonly US-designed, with a single component of prescriptive lessons requiring implementation fidelity. In contrast, a bottom-up approach, frequently used in European and Australian interventions, has a flexible design, and involves multiple stakeholders and components. It appears from this review that where programmes had the narrower aim of improving SEL they shared similar characteristics to Weare and Nind's (2011) definition of the top-down approach. Whilst only Holsen, Iversen and Smith's (2009) study used a US-designed programme adapted for Norwegian primary schools, all five empirical studies of SEL interventions shared the features of being pre-packaged, delivered as a separate lesson in the classroom and designed to be consistently taught across a large volume of schools (Bjorklund *et al.,* 2014; Clarke, Bunting and Barry, 2014; Kiviruusu *et al.,* 2016; Kourmousi *et al.,* 2018). In contrast, a bottom-up approach was used by schools involved in MHP programmes (Omstead *et al.,* 2009; Hall, 2010; Elfrink *et al.,* 2017). With no design at the outset, interventions were developed during the process based on a theoretical concept or framework, reflecting a flexible and complex design.

Whilst Weare and Nind (2011) suggested that the benefits of this latter approach included empowering school stakeholders, creating autonomy and providing flexibility, O'Reilly *et al.'s* (2018) systematic review reported that where flexibility existed some participants reported confusion in how to successfully implement a bottom-up MHP intervention. They, therefore, proposed a *'need to balance prescriptive guidelines and flexible adaptations'* (p.658). This was echoed by Weare and Nind (2011) who proposed that where effective bottom-up programmes exist, formulating a set of guidelines may enable others to have a clearer understanding of existing evidence to inform future practice. Additional strengths to the bottom-up approach appear to include longer-lasting changes evidenced at multiple levels; in particular, improvements in children's abilities, positive change to classroom and school climates and adaptations to schools' structures and policies (Omstead *et al.,* 2009; Hall, 2010; Durlak *et al.,* 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011; Elfrink *et al.,* 2016; Waters, 2011; O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018). Moreover, Weare and Nind

(2011) concluded that successful MHP interventions not only changed behaviour but also attitudes, beliefs & values.

 In all, the findings identified two distinct approaches and was able to distinguish how a bottom-up strategy strove for greater change, involved more stakeholders, allowed greater flexibility and was evidenced to positively affect personal attitudes as well as the whole-school ethos. It could, therefore, be argued that adopting a bottom-up rather than a top-down approach, despite the identified difficulties, has greater scope to improve children's well-being, potentially making it a truer example of whole-school wellbeing promotion.

4.3.1.4   Content

Four empirical studies provided detailed descriptions of the content and format of SEL interventions. Despite different providers, they were found to share similar components including: 1) pre-intervention teacher training, 2) pre-packaged programmes with prescribed lesson formats, a teacher's manual and resources for teaching, 3) curricula designed to be taught once a week, 4) content was sequenced by following lesson plans and 5) there was a requirement for high implementation fidelity (faithfulness to the intended delivery process) (Holsen, Iversen and Smith, 2009; Clarke, Bunting and Barry, 2014; Kiviruusu *et al.,* 2016; Kourmousi *et al.,* 2018). Additionally, Durlak *et al.'s* (2011) extensive meta-analysis identified that well designed SEL programmes incorporated 'SAFE' components; being sequenced, active, focused and explicit.

Whilst it was shown that SEL used common content, on face value MHP and PPI interventions appear diverse in approach and, therefore, might be expected to share less similarities. However, three common components emerged: 1) the use of an external facilitator, 2) frameworks employed to guide practice and 3) involved parental collaboration. All studies agreed that the facilitators' role included explaining theoretical underpinnings and providing project momentum (Omstead *et al.,* 2009; Hall, 2010; Banerjee, Weare and Farr, 2014; Elfrink *et al*., 2017). Whilst Elfrink *et al.'s* (2017) and Omstead *et al.'s* (2009) studies were weakened by a lack of specificity, Hall (2010) reported facilitators as educational psychologists and Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014) used 'behaviour and attendance' regional advisors.

Secondly, all studies reported that a framework was used to guide the initiatives. Whilst Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014) evaluated the widely implemented SEAL strategy, the remaining studies adopted a range of frameworks which appeared suitable for the aims of their interventions. Omstead *et al.* (2009) adapted the Gatehouse project framework which had previously been evidenced as successfully improving children's mental wellbeing in Australia. Hall (2010) used the

Ten Element Map for Mental Health Promotion as a framework to both collect children's views and implement school policy change and Elfrink *et al.* (2017) used the model of Positive Education to promote values-based 'life rules' for pupils and school staff.

Thirdly, all studies except for Hall (2010), fostered school-parent collaborations with a view to engaging parents to reinforce wellbeing promotion messages at home. Additionally, Omstead *et al.'s* (2009) project involved parents as co-members of the action teams, being directly involved in the change process. Moreover, two of the three components, using frameworks and parental involvement, were also evidenced in effective MHP and PPI interventions within Waters' (2011) and Weare and Nind's (2011) reviews. The findings, therefore, demonstrate initiatives of the same intervention type appear to share similar components and, secondly, MHP and PPI approaches have similar components which are different to those of SEL programmes.

To summarise, this section has identified a range of key components relating to the planning and design of whole-school wellbeing promotion within the literature, proposing that clear differences exist between characteristics of SEL programmes compared with MHP and PPI initiatives. Furthermore, it has proposed that rather than there being discrete categories of interventions, they exist along a continuum between narrowly focused, skills-based initiatives and bespoke projects involving whole-school change. Whatever the intervention type, evidence suggests exemplary practice requires clearly defined terminology as well as a top-down or bottom-up approach appropriately aligned with the aims and intended outcomes of the initiative. However, even where design is exemplary and includes all the desired components, the analysis identified that the quality of implementation may affect the overall success of the intervention.

4.3.2   Implementation practices

Implementation may be defined as the process of executing an intervention (Rosas and Knight, 2019). Five reviews and 6 empirical studies considered how implementation influenced the overall effectiveness of whole-school wellbeing promotion, reporting the importance of high-quality implementation (Omstead *et al.,* 2009; Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry, 2010; Durlak *et al.,* 2011; Waters, 2011; Dix *et al*., 2012; Banerjee, Weare and Farr*,* 2014; Elfrink *et al.,* 2016; Murphy *et al.,* 2017; Dix *et al.,* 2018; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018; O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018). Durlak *et al.* (2011) and Weare and Nind (2011) proposed that the higher the quality of implementation, the greater the positive effects. This was echoed by Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014) who concluded that where implementation of the SEL programme was rated highly, children adopted more effective learning strategies and experienced greater levels of motivation.

Furthermore, Dix *et al.* (2012), in assessing the outcomes of the Kidsmatter programme across 96 Australian primary schools identified that where implementation was rated highly Year 6 pupils' academic achievement was 6.2 months ahead of those where programme implementation was poorly rated. Moreover, Omstead *et al.* (2009) concluded that where implementation was of high quality this cultivated amongst staff and pupils, a key component of long-term sustainability.

Despite the advantages of high-quality implementation, Durlak *et al.* (2011) found that only 43% of the 213 studies they reviewed, gave attention to implementation. Similarly, a lack of focus on implementation was recognised as a weakness in the research design of studies included in other reviews (Weare and Nind, 2011; Elfrink *et al.,* 2016; Murphy *et al.,* 2017; Dix *et al.,* 2018; O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018). By recognising the importance of high-quality implementation, Weare and Nind (2011) suggested it allowed schools to adopt a suitable framework with which to continuously evaluate the process to allow informed decision-making. Moreover, in his opinion piece, Durlak (2016) cautioned that where facilitators failed to consider the implementation process or it was poorly executed, it led to effective interventions being incorrectly abandoned. Whilst this discussion identifies the importance of good quality implementation, the discussion now turns to identify the key characteristics of successful practice.

4.3.2.1   Guidance and frameworks

Process frameworks provide a series of procedural steps and implementation guidance understands the characteristics of factors involved, both with a purpose of delivering high-quality implementation (Nilsen, 2015). In this review, four papers recognised such guidance and frameworks as important characteristics in producing positive intervention effects (Weare and Nind 2011; Waters, 2011; Durlak, 2016; Dix *et al.*, 2018). Therefore, it is suggested that an understanding of the fundamental elements of these is useful to inform future wellbeing practice.

Following his 2011 meta-analysis, Durlak (2016) used the extensive results to produce guidance on the key factors he had identified for successful implementation of SEL programmes. As a key researcher in the field, these appear valuable to consider. He reported that the following need consideration; fidelity (the degree to which the intervention is delivered as intended), dosage (the amount of the intervention received), quality of delivery, adaptation (changes to the prescribed initiative), programme differentiation (how unique it is from other interventions) and programme reach (who receives it). Furthermore, Durlak (2016) proposed a process framework emphasising that most steps needed to be completed during the planning stage before implementation began; including assessing the need for the intervention, assessing its fit with school values and resources, acquiring staff 'buy-in', considering adaptations to the programme and identifying an implementation evaluation team.

Whilst Durlak's (2016) approach was developed for narrower focused, pre-packaged SEL interventions, Dix *et al.* (2018) designed an evidence-based implementation measure for whole-school MHP reviewed by 598 Australian primary school principals, which appears more useful for bottom-up, bespoke MHP and PPI interventions. They echoed Durlak's (2016) proposal that a large proportion of work was needed at the planning stage, including defining current issues, setting goals and evaluating strategies, reviewing and adjusting plans and collaborating with parents, leadership and staff. With some similarities to Dix *et al*. (2018), Weare and Nind (2011) identified that for implementation to be considered of high-quality, this required well-defined goals, explicit guidelines and strong rationales. In addition, they emphasised ongoing quality control throughout the implementation process and the provision of thorough training.

Whilst Durlak (2016) and Dix et al. (2018) designed their own frameworks, Waters (2011) identified that the use of existing frameworks was also reliable. She highlighted two frameworks found to be effective in successfully implementing PPI initiatives, namely, the PERMA positive psychology model and the Positive Psychology Framework (Noble and McGarth, 2008; Seligman, 2011). Whilst not designed specifically to aid implementation, Waters (2011) concluded they considered factors leading to successful whole-school change, including embedding interventions within the general curriculum and broader learning environment (including the playground) and revising schools' structures, policies and processes. In all cases researchers identified that the effectiveness of the SEL, MHP and PPI interventions they reviewed was partly attributable to the use of considered procedural steps and clear understanding of implementation factors.

4.3.2.2   Support

It appeared that support was available from two sources: 1) external facilitators and 2) school leadership. Despite Bjorklund *et al.* (2014), Kiviruusu *et al.* (2016) and Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry (2010) reporting that teachers identified support as one of the most important factors for effective intervention implementation, it appeared from O'Reilly *et al.'s* (2018) review that gaps often arose in both initial training as well as ongoing support. Therefore, it appears appropriate to understand what components of support are most useful.

The role of external facilitators appeared different between MHP and SEL interventions. Durlak (2016) identified that a purpose of initial training amongst SEL programmes was to disseminate the theory behind the intervention, explain its core components and what flexibility there was for adaptation. However, Omstead *et al.* (2009) and Elfrink *et al.* (2017) investigating MHP interventions, identified that where the design was provided by external professionals, stakeholders including teachers reported that initial training was often too theoretical, leading to confusion around implementing programmes. In contrast, in an MHP intervention where teachers

were supported to undertake their own planning and design there was no such lack of clarity (Hall 2010). Ongoing support was more evident in MHP programmes, compared with SEL programmes. This is perhaps unsurprising as SEL interventions commonly provided structured, sequenced formats which teachers could more easily follow, requiring less external intervention.

Few papers referred to the importance of support offered by school leadership. However, Holsen, Iversen and Smith (2009) demonstrated that where headteachers were fully supportive of an SEL intervention, it was more comprehensively implemented across all age groups. Additionally, Omstead *et al.* (2009) reported that participants in the action teams perceived that where school leadership was more turbulent, resulting from high turnover, school change was less evident, and the project less successfully met its aim.

4.3.2.3   Implementation fidelity

Implementation fidelity (faithfulness to the intended delivery process) was discussed amongst several studies (Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry, 2010; Durlak *et al.,* 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011; Clarke, Bunting and Barry*,* 2014; Kiviruusu *et al.,* 2016; Kourmousi *et al.,* 2018). Durlak (2016) and Holsen, Iversen and Smith (2009) identified that where changes were made this involved 1) changes to content, such as making examples more relevant to their own pupils and 2) how often lessons were delivered (dosage).   Moreover, Murphy *et al.* (2017), in their recent review of large-scale MHP programmes, reported that the effects of such variations depended on whether programmes were designed to be adaptable or not.

To avoid the effects of poor implementation fidelity, studies identified a range of strategies to improve adherence. Amongst pre-packaged SEL interventions these included pre-intervention training, providing detailed materials and procedures for the content of sessions, completing protocol adherence checklists and regular review meetings (Clarke, Bunting and Barry, 2014; Bjorklund *et al.,* 2016; Kourmousi *et al.,* 2018,). In MHP programmes, Omstead *et al.* (2009) found that embedding the project into daily school life allowed action teams to be more engaged and motivated.

Furthermore, it appears that closer scrutiny at classroom-level may provide additional insights. In Holsen, Iversen and Smith's (2009) study a comparison identified that there was varying success between different classes in the same school, possibly due to differing programme fidelity. Some teachers changed examples given to their class and varied the amount of skills reinforcement during the day. Similarly, in a case study comparison of two schools, Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry,

(2010) found that teachers from the school where there was greatest variation in implementation fidelity, perceived the intervention to be less effective.

To summarise, it can be concluded that implementation practice needs to be assessed alongside intervention design to maximise the potential of whole school wellbeing promotion. Whilst it appears that all initiatives benefitted from following implementation guidance and seeking to provide high-quality support, SEL programmes in particular, whose effectiveness was based on following a prescribed, structured process of delivery, needed to consider the consequences of fidelity adherence.

4.3.3 The influence of contextual factors

An intervention does not take place in isolation but affects and is affected by environmental factors (Rosas and Knight, 2019). Whilst Murphy *et al.* (2017) concluded from their review of internationally delivered large-scale interventions that these could be successfully delivered across a diversity of cultures, all other researchers reported that intervention effectiveness was mediated by contextual factors (Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry, 2010; Durlak *et al.,* 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011). Furthermore, Durlak *et al.* (2011) reported that influencing factors occur at multiple levels; micro (individual and classroom), meso (school) and macro (society). Weare and Nind's (2011) review established that understanding multilevel contextual factors was essential for a school to be able to choose a suitable intervention.

At a micro level, the most frequently reported promotor of successful implementation was staff training (Weare and Nind, 2011; Durlak, 2016; O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018) and the major barrier was time constraints (Elfrink *et al.,* 2009; Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry *,* 2010). Whilst the consequences of these two factors is relatively straightforward, another significant contextual influence, stakeholders' attitudes and perceptions, can be considered more multifaceted, with research identifying that it had positive and negative impacts. It was widely regarded that negative attitudes and preconceptions of teachers and school leadership towards wellbeing practice acted as a barrier to successful implementation (Elfrink *et al.,* 2009; Omstead *et al.,* 2009; Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry, 2010; Durlak, 2016; Wood, 2018; O'Reilly *et al*., 2018). Wood (2018, p. 259) identified that negative attitudes towards subgroups of children and their families from '*Asian*' and '*lower class'* communities meant SEL programmes were not carried out as intended but viewed as a tool to correct '*wrong*' behaviour. Conversely, the findings also highlighted how positive attitudes and perceptions benefitted whole-school wellbeing promotion. Durlak (2016) found that staff with positive attitudes and commitment had the ability to act as role models improving the potential for effective, sustainable interventions.

At a macro level, Clarke, O'Sullivan and Barry (2010) found differences between two schools both identified as '*disadvantaged*', one in an established, supportive community, and another with a transient population from travelling families with few parent or community links. Parents of the first school perceived the SEL programme as more beneficial and provided higher levels of skills practice at home. The importance of parental involvement was echoed by Dix *et al.,* (2012) and Weare and Nind (2011) who both identified parental and community involvement as strengthening MHP interventions. Furthermore, Durlak (2016) identified political change influenced the importance placed on wellbeing, and O'Reilly *et al.* (2018) and Kiviruusu *et al.* (2016) identified the education system as a key influencing factor. Moreover, O'Reilly *et al.* (2018), Durlak *et al.* (2011) and Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014) concluded that the ethnic and socioeconomic profile of schools had the potential to influence intervention outcomes.

Whilst this section focused on the most frequently discussed factors related to context, it is not exhaustive, and acts as a starting point for understanding the influence of complex interrelationships between context and schools' wellbeing practice. It, therefore, appears that context may be better understood through the richer detail provided by the case study analysis in phase three of this project.

In all, it appears that rather than two categories of MHP/PPI or SEL initiatives, whole-school wellbeing promotion is a continuum from simpler programmes with narrower aims to multi-component initiatives aiming for long-term school change (see Figure 4-4).
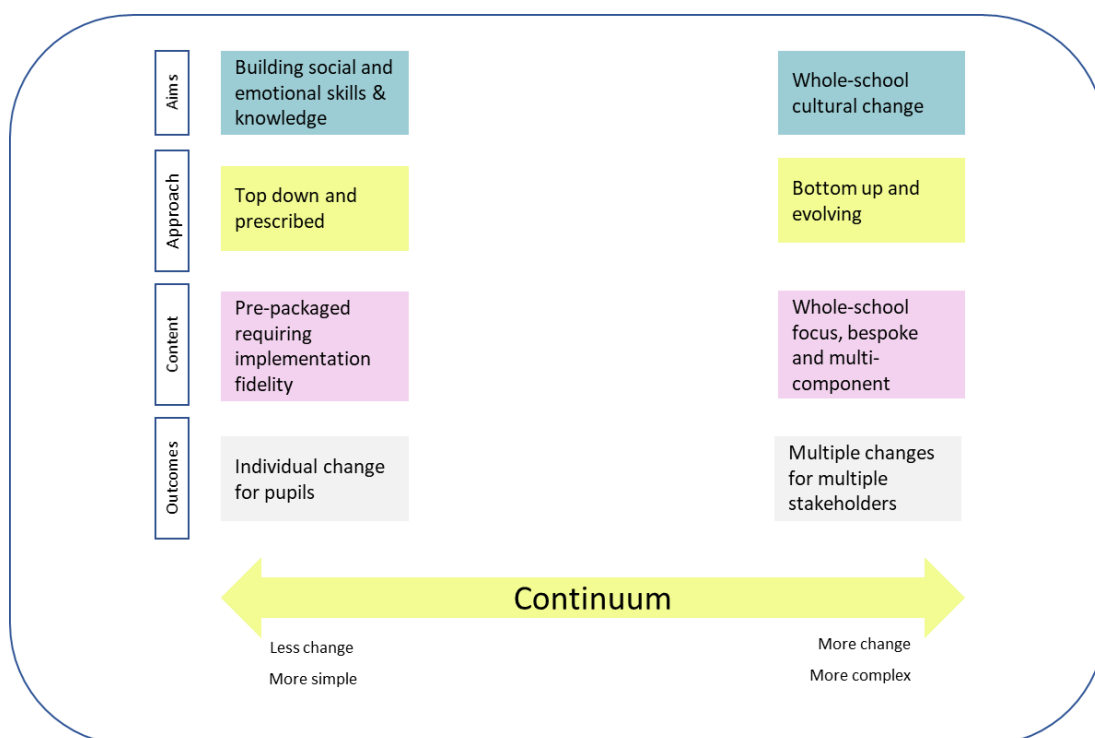
Figure 4-4 A continuum of school wellbeing promotion

4.4   Conclusion and refinement of the conceptual model

In addressing its aim of seeking to explore how primary schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion in high income countries, this chapter has successfully identified a range of common factors evident from recent literature. The findings have provided an initial response to the first three sub-questions. It has evaluated the similarities and differences in key components of top-down and bottom-up approaches, assessed how schools developed aims, design outcomes and adopted relevant content. It recognised the importance of high-quality implementation, exploring a range of implementation criteria. The findings also emphasised the impact of context, providing a nascent understanding of its influence on whole-school wellbeing promotion. It recognises the requirement for additional, relevant data as the research process progresses. As a stand-alone review, phase one has provided useful findings for primary schools across high-income countries, with all included reviews and all but one empirical study focusing on pupils under 12 years old. In relation to English primary schools, these findings suggest that SEL programmes are unlikely to have sufficient scope to fulfil the new requirements the DfE and Ofsted outlined in section 1.2. However, MHP and PPI interventions appear more suitable, being wider-reaching with a greater impact on children's wellbeing through promoting whole-school change.

The conceptual model has been revised to reflect the key findings from the SLR (see Figure 4-5). At the planning stage these include determining clear aims and definitions, establishing a strategic approach to drive wellbeing practice and changes to the school's environment and people. During the implementation phase, key components include a wellbeing curriculum, appropriate pedagogy and introducing other school activities. Furthermore, it focuses on the importance of evaluating wellbeing initiatives, both by measuring pupils' wellbeing levels as well as ongoing process evaluation.
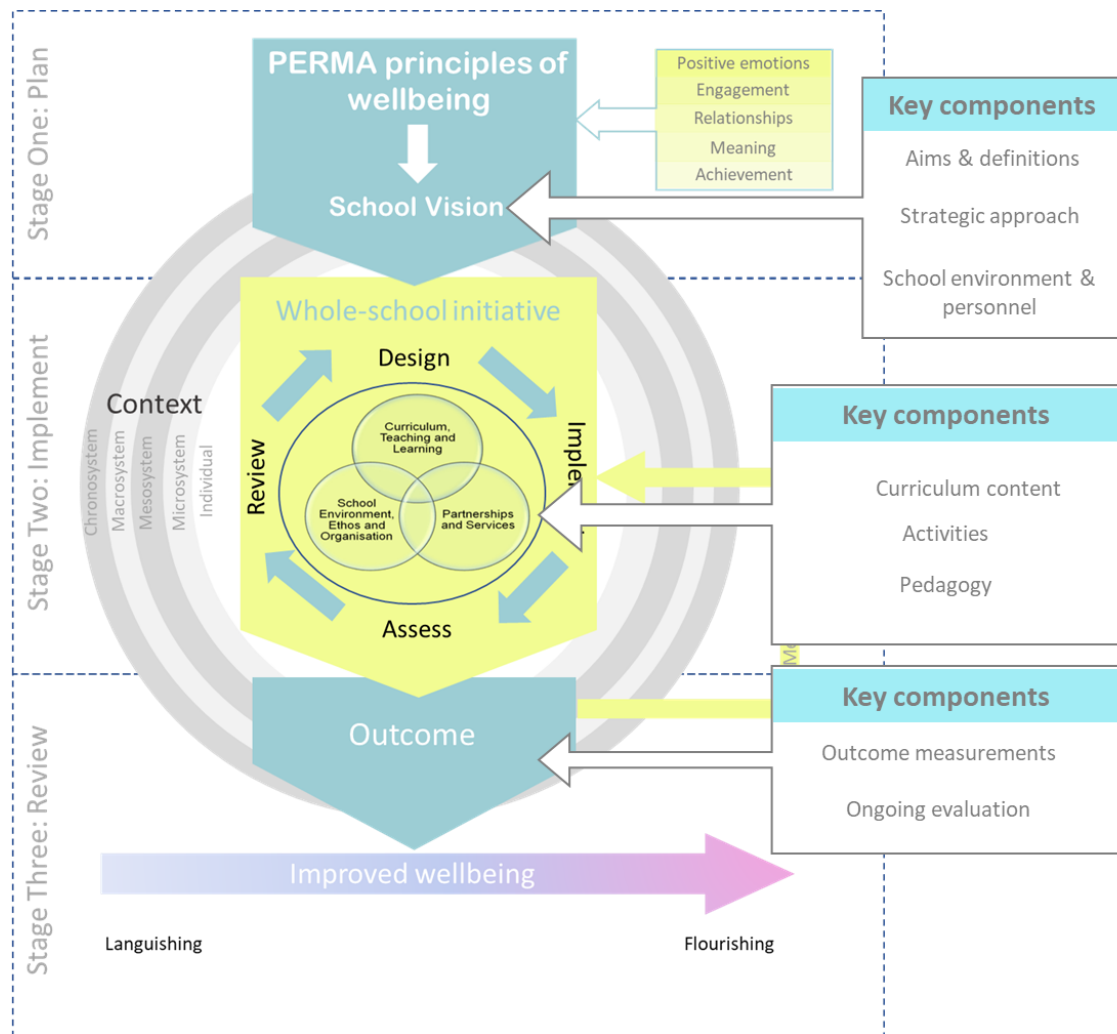
Figure 4-5 The revised conceptual model in the light of findings from the systematic literature review

Chapter 5   Findings from Phase Two: A secondary data analysis of English primary schools

5.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from phase two which focussed on the English education system, the setting of interest for this project. Using a secondary data analysis (SDA) informed by chapter four's findings, a sampling strategy was developed to explore schools undertaking a whole-school, multi-component approach which phase one had identified as most beneficial for pupils' wellbeing. A detailed outline of the data collection and analysis methods is found in 3.3.3.

This chapter focuses on answering three of the study's sub-questions:

1) What are the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion?
2) How is wellbeing practice implemented and sustained?
3) How has the disruption of Covid-19 reshaped practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing?

This chapter is organised in three parts. Part one provides a summary of the characteristics of the twenty-six English primary schools in the sample. Part two presents qualitative and quantitative findings as well as presenting changes in whole-school wellbeing promotion made during the first period of school closure beginning in March 2020. In line with a mixed methods methodology the qualitative and quantitative findings are presented simultaneously (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). Part three concludes the chapter and presents an updated conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools.

5.2   Part One: A summary of the sample characteristics

A stratified sample of twenty-six English primary schools was selected to ensure representation across a range of school characteristics (page 59 and Appendix D). This was deemed important to ensure the study sought 'diversity between' whole-school wellbeing promotion in naturalistic settings, addressing the call of scholars to consider this topic within diverse, real-world settings (page 22). A summary of school characteristics is presented in Table 5-1.

Table 5-1 Characteristics of sample schools

Location			School type			School size			Location	
London	5		Maintained (Community & foundation)	14		Large (<450)	7		Urban	22
East Midlands	4		Academy (minus free schools)	8		Medium (250<449)	7		Rural	4
North West	4		Voluntary aided / controlled	3		Small (>250)	11			
South East	3		Free schools	1						
South West	3									
West Midlands	2									
Yorks and Humber	2									
East of England	2									
North East	1									
Total	26			26			25*			26
						* One school was aged 4 to 18 years so not inlcuded in this total				
% receiving free school meals			**% English as an additional language**			**Ofsted rating**				
High (<30.1%)	8		High (>30%)	4		Outstanding	6			
Medium	9		Medium	4		Good	19			
Low (<16%)	9		Low (<14%)	18		Requires improvem	1			
	26			26			26			

5.3 Part two: Using the conceptual model as a lens to present the findings

The conceptual model, refined after phase one of the study, has been used deductively as a lens through which to make sense of numerical, textual, and audio-visual data from the three data sources: the DfE statistics, Ofsted inspection reports and school websites (see Figure 4-5). Quantitative and qualitative data relevant to each stage of the model have been collected and analysed, presented under three subheadings: stage one: planning (school vision), stage two: implementation (curriculum, activities, and pedagogy) and stage three: review (ongoing evaluation and outcome measurements). Whilst the qualitative data analysis was initially driven by the deductive coding, where new areas of interest arose a further series of inductively generated codes were also developed, a benefit of using a mixed methods approach (Teddlie and Kashikkori, 2009). Findings are presented side by side for comparison, in line with the mixed methods methodology. A fuller description of data collection and analysis methods for this phase of the study is available in section 3.3.3.

The findings from phase two are predominantly drawn from data collection from school websites and consideration has been given to the extent to which this is an indicator of wellbeing policy

and practice in English primary schools. The study found schools provided considerable information about the aims and strategies adopted to promote pupils' wellbeing, with the advantage of enabling a detailed exploration of whole-school wellbeing promotion 'between' diverse settings without requiring primary data collection during the Covid-19 pandemic (Keshawaraz *et al.*, 2010; Superfine, 2020). However, it is recognised that the predominant voice heard on websites was that of headteachers, meaning other voices were missing. Additionally, data was limited by what schools chose to include on their websites, with the potential that useful knowledge remained unknown.

5.3.1 Stage one: Planning and the school vision
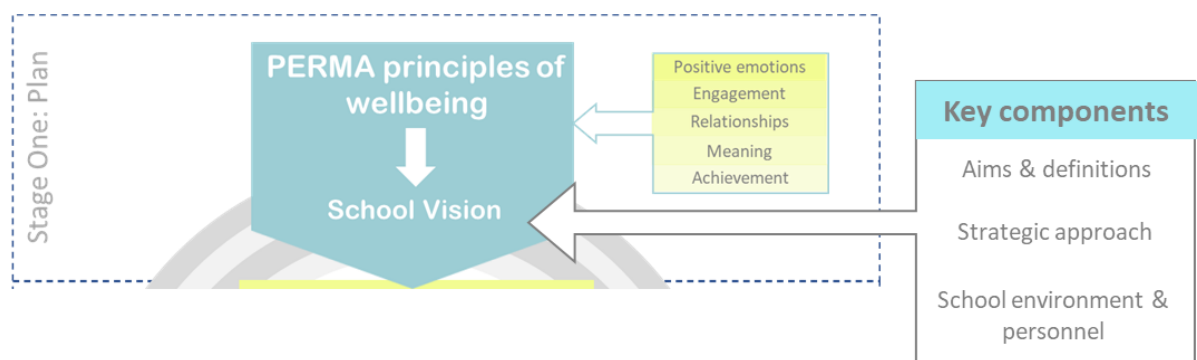
Figure 5-1 Stage One of the refined conceptual model

This section explores how the sample schools focused on planning whole-school wellbeing promotion. Quantitative findings will be reported first, followed by qualitative findings. In analysing the findings, it was deemed more useful to incorporate 'strategic approach' with 'curriculum content' in stage two (Figure 4-5), as the former underpinned the latter and by integrating the findings a more nuanced interpretation could be developed.

5.3.1.1 Quantitative findings

Aims and definitions

Aims

Schools used websites and policy documentation to outline the aims of whole-school wellbeing promotion, demonstrating an understanding that to enable pupils to flourish a multi-aim approach was required. Table 5-2 presents a frequency table of the aims identified from the content analysis. All sample schools focussed on learning and achieving, promoting wellbeing and building positive relationships as key aims. The extent to which schools shared the remaining wellbeing aims varied from twenty-two schools to a single school. On average schools stated between twelve and thirteen wellbeing aims, the range was between seven aims to eighteen

aims. These statistics imply schools employed multiple sub-goals to achieve their overall aim of enabling pupils to flourish. Overwhelmingly, wellbeing aims sought to promote positive attributes rather than remedy deficits. Only two outcomes fell into the latter category, namely '*increasing attendance*' (n=2) and '*having fewer disengaged pupils*' (n=1). Most sample schools adopted an entirely salutogenic approach to whole-school wellbeing promotion.

Table 5-2 Aims of school wellbeing initiatives

Aims	Number of schools using aim	% of schools using aim
Positive relationships	26	100.0
Positive mental health & wellbeing	26	100.0
Learn & achieve	26	100.0
Strong home-school partnerships	22	84.6
Confidence & self-worth	21	80.8
Be flourishing & happy	20	76.9
Celebrate whole child & uniqueness	20	76.9
Leadership skills	20	76.9
Healthy behaviours including self-regulation	19	73.1
Resilience	18	69.2
Realise child's potential	15	57.7
Promote staff wellbeing	15	57.7
Independence	13	50.0
Promote family wellbeing	12	46.2
Develop ethical citizens	11	42.3
Life skills	11	42.3
Be curious	9	34.6
Use values	7	26.9
Build character	6	23.1
Be creative	6	23.1
Aspire to dream & make change	3	11.5
Increased attendance	2	7.7
Fewer disengaged pupils	1	3.8

Salutogenic aims

Addressing deficits

These data were also considered through Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing, incorporated in the study's theoretical lens, see Figure 5-2. This identified the extent to which schools aimed to promote the theory's five dimensions of wellbeing: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement. Re-presenting the findings through this lens identified that schools predominantly developed aims associated with eudaimonic factors associated with wellbeing, within the dimensions of engagement, meaning and achievement. This accounted for fifteen of the twenty-one salutogenic aims identified. It also introduced an understanding that schools recognised the impact of the immediate environment on wellbeing,

with 15 schools aiming to promote staff wellbeing and 12 schools focussing on family wellbeing. The theoretical lens makes sense of this by understanding that pupils cannot be separated from their context and that family and school, within the micro-level, have considerable influence on pupils' personal development. Thus, improving staff and family wellbeing provides a more supportive culture for children at home and school, with increased potential for enabling pupils to flourish.

Positive emotions	Engagement	Relationships	Meaning	Achievement
• Positive mental health and wellbeing (26) • Flourish & be happy (20)	• Resilience (18) • Independence (13) • Be curious (9) • Use values (7)	• Positive relationships (26) • Strong home-school partnerships (22)	• Confidence and self-worth (21) • Celebrate whole child and uniqueness (20) • Healthy behaviours including self-regulation (19) • Develop ethical citizens (11) • Build character (9) • Be creative (6) Aspire to dream and make change (3)	• Learn and achieve (26) • Leadership skills (20) • Realise child's potential (15) • Build life skills (11) • Aspire to dream and make change (3)

- • Promote staff wellbeing (15)
- • Promote family wellbeing (12)

Figure 5-2 School aims through the theoretical lens of Seligman's (2011) PERMA theory of wellbeing

Definitions

Whilst all twenty-six schools stated an aim to improve pupil wellbeing, only six provided a definition of this term (see Figure 5-3). Three schools used WHO's (1986) definition (page 8), school AO quoted Mind's (2018) 'state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential'. School BV used Hartley-Brewer's (2001) definition that wellbeing is emotional health embedded in social relations which supports self-worth, and school K used their own definition as '*being comfortable, healthy and happy*'.

With 77% of schools omitting a definition, it may imply that school leaders assume that staff, pupils and parents have a common understanding of the topic, without potential for confusion or misunderstanding.
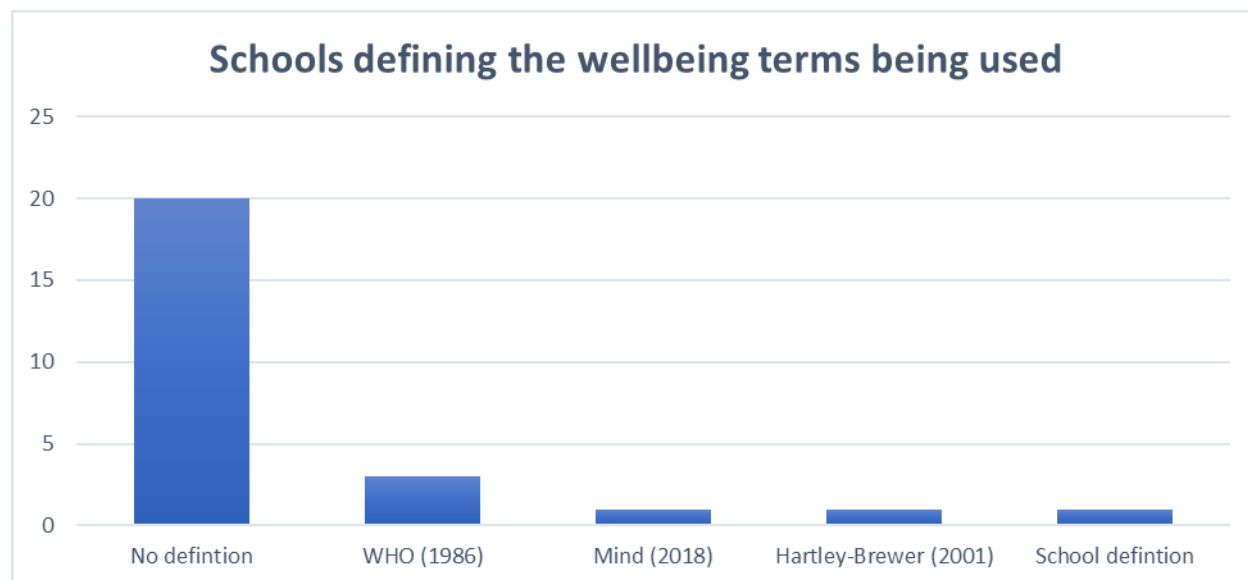
Figure 5-3 Wellbeing definitions used by schools

School environment and people

The analysis highlighted three types of environment associated with promoting wellbeing in schools: 1) cultural environment, 2) physical environment and 3) virtual environment.

Cultural environment

The cultural environment of the school may be considered its set of values and assumptions (Van Gasse *et al.* 2016). Figure 5-4 outlines the most frequently adopted values by sample schools. On average schools employed four key values. The most widely reported values were respect (54% of schools), kindness (38%), responsibility (27%), tolerance (27%), aspiring to achieve (23%) and building self-worth/ confidence/ esteem (27%).

Values adopted by three or more schools
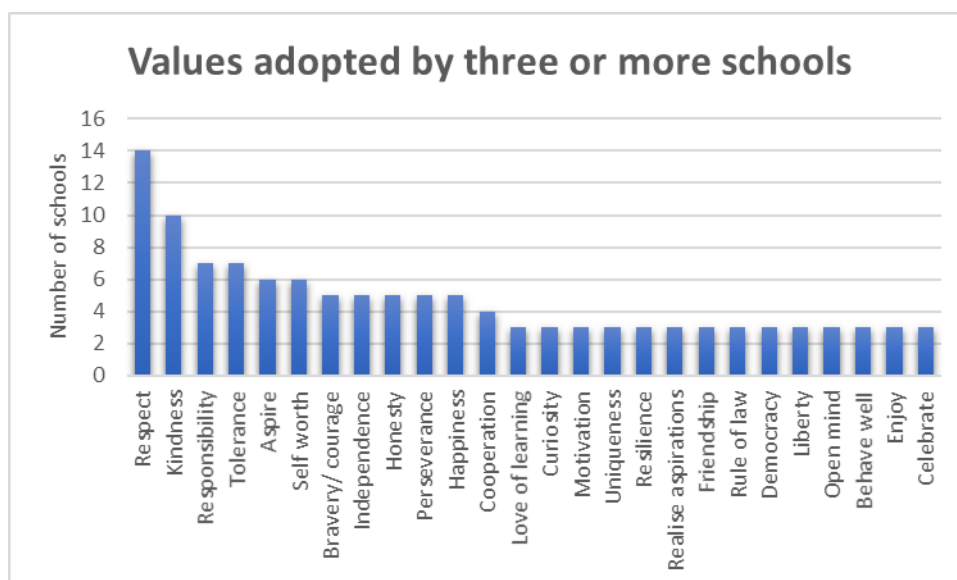
Figure 5-4 Values adopted by schools

To provide a more meaningful interpretation, these findings were deductively analysed further using Peterson and Seligman's (2004) Six Classes of Virtues Model, placing school values into the most relevant of six areas associated with higher levels of wellbeing (see Table 5-3). This was chosen as it forms a central component of the PERMA model of wellbeing, underlying the theoretical lens and is, therefore, highly relevant to the understanding wellbeing within this study. The virtues defined in Peterson and Seligman's (2004) concept are highlighted in blue, with remaining values having been identified in the data. The numbers in brackets show the frequency of their adoption by sample schools.

School values fall predominantly into the categories of 'courage' (n=65), 'justice' (n=50) and 'transcendence' (n=24). This is, perhaps, unsurprising because these categories contain some of the fundamental qualities pupils need for successful learning. The category of courage included facilitating children to aspire and be motivated (n=11), to encourage independent learners, develop responsibility, self-belief and self-confidence (n=28) and persevere through challenges by making mistakes, overcoming obstacles and being determined (n=18). The category of justice (n=50) appeared to reflect values consistent with creating a positive school culture, including respect (n=14), tolerance (n=7) and co-operation (n=4). These findings suggest that schools set out to achieve an open-minded, non-judgemental culture to provide pupils with an emotionally safe space to learn. Using Seligman's (2011) PERMA theory as a lens, the most frequent values adopted by schools are associated with eudaimonic experiences of wellbeing, enabling pupils to flourish in the longer-term through self-growth, satisfaction and achievement. In addition, the HPS framework makes sense of schools' focus on creating a culture of wellbeing as well as developing pupils' skills and knowledge, as these are two of the domains recognised to be important in promoting wellbeing in school settings.

Table 5-3 School values categorised by the Six Virtues Model

Six classes of virtues	Wisdom & knowledge	Courage	Humanity	Justice	Moderation	Transcendence
School values identified in the analysis **Number of schools adopting value in brackets**	Attitude to learning (1) Creativity (2) Critical thinking (1) Curiosity (3) Engagement (1) Love of learning (3) Reflectiveness (2) Thoughtfulness (1)	Aspire to improve/achieve (6) Bravery (5) Determination (2) Honesty (5) Independence (5) Initiative (1) Integrity (1) Motivation (3) Overcome obstacles (1) Perseverance (5) Realise aspirations (3) Resilience (3) Resourcefulness Seize success (2) Self-belief (1) Self-confidence/esteem/worth (6) Truth (2) Work hard (1)	Being green (1) Belonging (1) Empathy (2) Friendship (3) Kindness (10) Love (1) Positive relationships (1) Public service (1) Supportive (1)	Attainment for all (2) Citizenship (1) Collaboration (1) Co-operation (4) Democracy (3) Equality (1) Inclusiveness (1) Justice (2) Liberty (3) Open-mindedness (3) Partnership (1) Reciprocity (1) Respect (14) Rule of law (3) Service (1) Stronger society (1) Tolerance (7) Trust (1)	Behave well (3) Forgiveness (2) Humility (1) Patience (1) Politeness (1) Self-regulation (1)	Acceptance (1) Appreciation of beauty & excellence (2) Belief (1) Celebration (3) Enjoyment (3) Flourishing (1) Gratitude (1) Happiness (5) Hope (1) Humour (1) Optimism (1) Peace (2) Positivity (1)

Physical environment

The outdoor environment was cited by sixteen schools as being central to wellbeing, implying the importance of green spaces and nature (see Table 5-4). The most common space was a gardening area or an allotment (n=10). Schools also reported the importance of open spaces in the form of fields (n=6), nature reserves (n=6) and woodlands (n=6) for both formal and informal activities. Four schools highlighted outdoor spaces had been created specifically for wellbeing, two provided sensory gardens which encouraged children to practice mindfulness through sense awareness. A further two schools provided other spaces for quiet reflection. It appears schools understood outdoor spaces as both inherently beneficial for pupils' wellbeing and as a mechanism to support elements of whole-school wellbeing promotion.

Fewer schools reported the use of indoor spaces to enhance wellbeing (see Table 5-4). Six schools provided worry boxes or monsters, enabling children to externalise worries and communicate non-verbally. Four schools reported the presence of staff wellbeing advocates and champions, enabling communication about issues and promoting skills and knowledge for wellbeing. Two schools had also introduced music in corridors to promote mindful behaviour. Furthermore, the findings evidenced that display boards were used for two purposes; 1) to convey information about wellbeing (n=4) and to celebrate positive behaviours and achievements in line with school values (n=3), celebration being a trait associated with positive wellbeing.

Table 5-4 Use of outdoor and indoor spaces to promote wellbeing

Outdoor spaces	No of schools	Indoor spaces	No of schools
Garden/allotment	10	Worry box/worry monsters	6
Nature reserve	6	Wellbeing displays	4
Field	6	Adult wellbeing advocates	4
Farm animals	6	Celebration displays	3
Woodland	5	Music in corridors	2
Mindfulness/reflective space	2		
Sensory garden	2		

Virtual environment

Virtual space relates to online provision accessed through a range of electronic devices. Almost fifty percent of schools used this environment for activities associated with promoting wellbeing (see Figure 5-5). Most commonly, online space was used to share information about wellbeing with parents (n=12). Schools directed families to external organisations providing wellbeing

resources for children and families including mindful activities, practising gratitude and connecting with others. The space was also used to signpost adults to relevant services when issues or concerns arose within families. Additionally, two schools produced regular wellbeing newsletters, available through the website. Only one school provided pupils with their own wellbeing page, although many schools used this platform as a method of accessing learning tools for other curriculum subjects. The findings highlight how these schools understood the virtual environment as a space to positively develop the context surrounding pupils by developing closer relationships with parents through newsletters and other communications alongside focussing on improving family wellbeing through signposting.
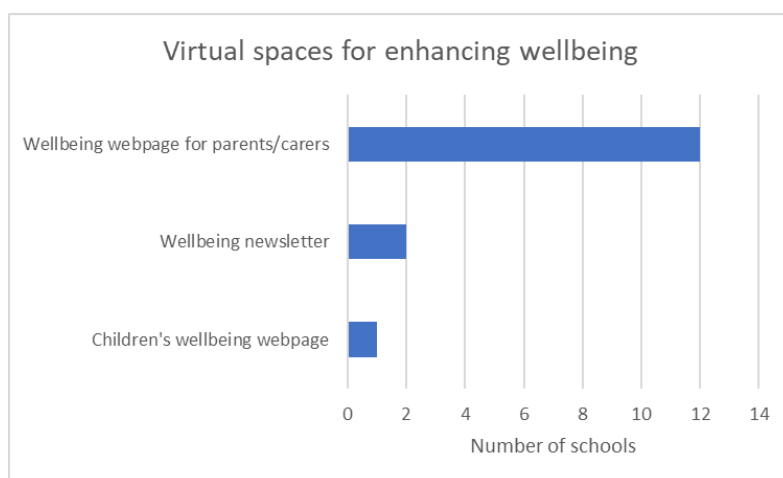
Figure 5-5 Use of virtual spaces for promoting wellbeing

People

All twenty-six schools evidenced strong leadership from headteachers in promoting pupils' wellbeing. Whilst three schools gave no further details about other stakeholder involvement, the analysis found initiatives in the remaining schools involved a range of individuals; 1) school staff, 2) the wider school community and 3) external people (see Table 5-5).

Fifteen schools had a wellbeing team with a designated mental health lead. Five schools reported one or more trained mental health first aiders. In addition to staff with specific wellbeing roles, most schools reported that all staff members were involved in day-to-day promotion of pupils' wellbeing. Moreover, school BF reported the training of lunchtime staff as part of their whole-school wellbeing approach. Involving all staff implies a consistency in the quality of all staff-pupil social interactions.

Pupils, governors and parents were also involved. In three schools, children were trained as wellbeing champions or mentors for their peers. One school reported a pupil wellbeing council, gathering peer feedback and assisting in implementing changes. School governors were reported as playing a pivotal role in promoting wellbeing in four schools and parents were trained as wellbeing champions in two schools.

External people were also involved with schools in two ways: 1) as partners in promoting wellbeing and 2) networking for knowledge exchange and support. The theoretical lens understands the importance of developing partnerships as a key domain in promoting pupils' wellbeing in school settings. In the first category, partners provided expertise about whole-school wellbeing promotion. In two schools action research was carried out in conjunction with academic researchers and school AW worked strategically with an educational consultant. In the second category, schools made links for knowledge exchange and support. Wellbeing staff in two schools attended local cluster groups for PSHE and wellbeing. In addition, where one school was part of an academy trust, mental health leads shared practice knowledge and experiences trust-wide. The findings highlight that most sample schools recognised the importance of involving staff in roles which supported wellbeing enabling supportive pupil-staff partnerships. However, most schools appeared limited in engaging families and developing external relationships to better support their wellbeing practice.

Table 5-5 People involved in school wellbeing initiatives

Category	Personnel	Number of schools
Staff involvement	Headteacher leadership	26
	Wellbeing team	15
	Staff wellbeing champions	2
	Wellbeing award action team	3
School community	Pupil wellbeing champions	3
	Pupil wellbeing council	1
	Parent wellbeing champions	2
	Wellbeing governor(s)	4
External personnel	Action research with academics	2
	Education consultant	1
	Multi-academy trust wellbeing team	1
	Wellbeing/PSHE cluster hub	2

5.3.1.2 Qualitative findings

Of the twenty-six schools in the quantitative analysis, twelve were selected to explore qualitatively (page 61). Selection was purposive to encompass both a diversity of school

characteristics and a breadth of wellbeing practice (see appendix D.3.1). The qualitative analysis explored the same datasets as the quantitative analysis.

Three themes were developed using the Braun and Clarke's (2019) RTA framework (page 48 and appendix E.6) and the audit trail from coding to generated themes is found in appendix D.5.1. The themes were 1) scope and timeframes, 3) the relationship between learning and wellbeing and 3) caring (Figure 5-6).
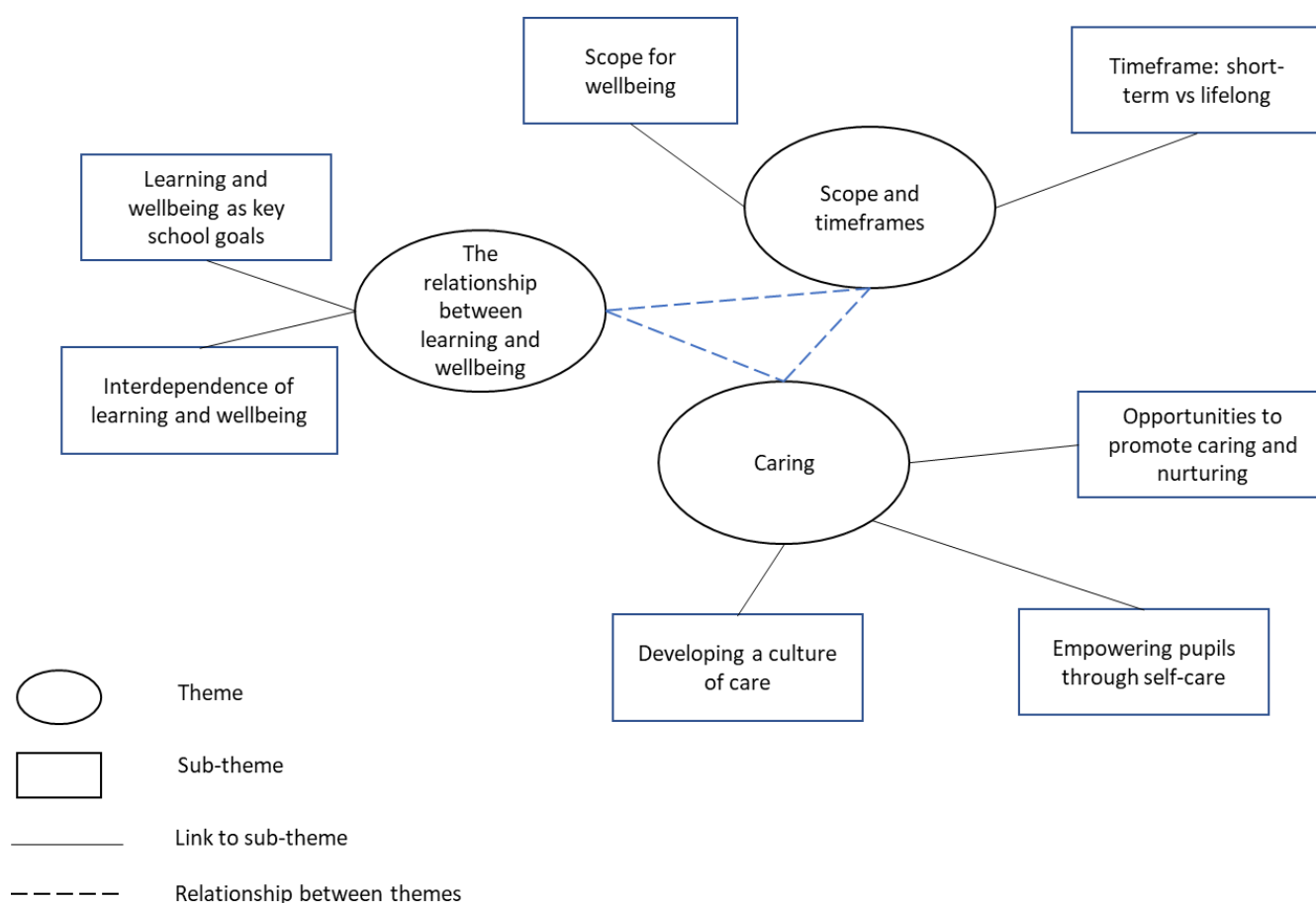
Figure 5-6 Thematic map for qualitative findings related to planning

Scope and timeframes

All twelve schools demonstrated a broad scope of aims for their wellbeing initiatives involving multiple stakeholders. This is reflected by the headteachers in schools DC and AO:

'We are a leading school due to our work on mental health and wellbeing in the school and across the wider community. This focus is reflected in everything we do: our curriculum, our teaching, our policies, our work with parents and our support for staff.' (School DC)

> *'The school embraces the Values Education which it delivers. This encompasses all interactions in school, between pupils and staff, among staff and among pupils. We aim for our Values to show through everything that is said and done in school.'* (School AO)

Here, headteachers imply a sense of integrating wellbeing in all aspects of daily school life with the whole school community, reflecting the characteristics of a whole-school approach. Whilst the second quote highlights the importance of values-driven communication within the school community, the headteacher in school DC recognises the value of relationships with '*parents*' and '*the wider community*'. This emphasises differences in the scope of schools' visions to promote wellbeing, a narrower scope focuses on school members whereas a wider scope recognises the importance of supporting pupils' wider contexts. Using the theoretical lens which recognises the influence of pupils' environment on wellbeing, a wider scope that supports families and the local community has the potential to better benefit pupils' development by improving the immediate environments in which they live, learn and play. Therefore, these findings add nuance to an understanding of a 'whole-school' approach in English primary schools.

The qualitative findings also highlighted the timeframe in which schools considered pupils' wellbeing. Some schools focussed on pupils' wellbeing during their time at school:

> *'Our aim is to provide the children within our care with the best possible start in life'* (School S)
>
> *'we want our school to be a healthy place for our minds and our bodies'* (School AW)

However, other schools identified their role as building foundations for lifelong wellbeing:

> *'…we believe that the development of a person into becoming a successful adult starts when they are very young. Our […] approach focuses on three aspects to becoming 'life ready', shaping the future of individuals.'* (School N)
>
> *'The skills needed throughout life can be taught and learnt at any age'* (School F)

Whilst evidence suggested that all schools recognised the importance of adopting whole-school wellbeing promotion to maximise pupils' wellbeing in the short-term in which they were in schools' care, schools N and F had differing perceptions about their school's roles. Further examination recognised that both schools had populations of families with higher disadvantage than the national average. It appears that these schools may have adapted their wellbeing

practice in relation to their local communities. Both schools offered extensive programmes of developing life skills for the longer-term, providing a range of opportunities outside regular teaching and learning. School N had developed a '*mind-body-soul*' approach with a focus on '*academic achievement, physical development and positive wellbeing*'. It achieved this through engaging pupils in seventy character-building experiences and developing eighty key life skills to ensure pupils were '*life-ready*'. School F focussed on developing the school environment to offer a range of bespoke opportunities. Leasing extensive grounds enabled pupils to undertake animal husbandry on the school farm and engage in outdoor pursuits, an artist in residence supported pupils' creativity and children had access to recording resources for music and school radio. Both schools had been recognised through national awards, including 'the happiest primary school in Britain', Place2Be award and TES awards. Whilst these are schools demonstrating extensive and sustained practice unachievable for many schools, the underlying principles they have adopted may have transferable value. In seeking to mitigate pupils' relative disadvantage against more advantaged peers, schools recognised that offering additional opportunities involving a diverse range of skills and experiences had the potential to enable pupils to flourish in both the short-term and in adulthood. Thus, the timeframe of these schools' vision was much longer than for most of the sample schools.

The relationship between learning and wellbeing

The findings suggest that all schools recognised an interconnection between learning and wellbeing. However, it emerged that schools approached these in different ways: 1) by adopting an encompassing strategic approach placing equal importance on learning and wellbeing and 2) using the benefits of wellbeing to enhance learning.

In the first approach, schools developed an overarching strategic vision which placed equal importance on both learning and wellbeing:

> '*Our wellbeing system, coupled with high quality teaching in pursuit of academic excellence, provides children with a place in which they can thrive as individuals*' (School N)

> '*We place great importance on developing the whole child academically, socially and emotionally.*' (School F)

This approach implies that schools recognise their role as focussing on the holistic development of the children. Therefore, key goals are wider than academic learning and performance, additionally encompassing social, emotional, psychological and physical aspects of pupils' development. Using

the theoretical lens, a broader set of school goals has the potential to better support pupils to experience the five dimensions associated with Seligman's (2011) PERMA theory of wellbeing.

In contrast in the second approach, school EE focussed on the benefits of pupil wellbeing for learning:

> *' [We] are committed to children's wider well-being by… inspiring each child to become an effective learner'*

> *'…we recognise that the personal development of pupils… plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve.' (School EE)*

With this focus, the school recognised that promoting wellbeing enabled pupils' to have greater readiness to learn. Although, whole-school wellbeing promotion may not have been viewed as a key school goal, its importance was understood as a driver for learning and achievement. From this, it may be implied that wellbeing practice is not perceived as a stand-alone activity with a narrow focus of improving the levels of pupils' wellbeing. Rather, schools understand that pupils' development cannot be fragmented into learning or wellbeing but exists as a whole. Thus, there is a symbiosis in promoting wellbeing and learning simultaneously.

It also appeared from the findings that many skills had associated mutual benefits for learning and wellbeing:

> '*we will ensure children do not give up, relish a challenge, learn from mistakes and persevere until they see success*.' (School AO)

> *'The school places emphasis on problem-solving, positive self-assessment, time for reflection…'* (School BV)

These quotes illustrate a range of skills which are traditionally associated with making pupils good learners. Having previously identified that supporting these traits was associated with a culture for wellbeing. For example, '*ensur[ing] children do not give up'* is synonymous with resilience and was identified as a value related to courage in Table 5-3. This suggests that rather than values and traits being mutually exclusive there is an overlap between categories.

Chapter 5

Caring

Caring was a concept that was broadly discussed by sample schools, with schools understanding its importance for wellbeing in several ways. All schools recognised the importance of a culture of care for pupils' wellbeing:

'*We pride ourselves on the great care that is given to all pupils in our school*.' (School AO)

'*We pride ourselves in being a welcoming, friendly school with a positive caring environment based on Christian values*.' (School BV)

Additionally, care was recognised by Ofsted in school N:

'*The school's work to provide care and support to enable pupils to flourish is exemplary*.'

These quotes imply that care was perceived to be driven by adults within the school community. School BV highlights how the principles of care were derived from religious underpinnings. In contrast, school AO assumed a philosophical stance which valued the uniqueness of pupils, promoting:

'*a climate of understanding, acceptance and encouragement … where each child's worth is acknowledged and valued.*'

Whilst pupils were the passive receivers of care in the proceeding quotes, a few schools understood the importance of empowering pupils to develop methods for self-care. This is exemplified in school EE's PSHE curriculum:

'*Stop and reflect on actions for a more mindful response [and] unlearn habits/behaviours that are unhelpful*' (School EE)

The emphasis here was for the school to enable pupils to develop their own skills. This quote recognises the importance placed on pupils as social agents to '*reflect*' and '*unlearn*'. The implication is that learning and practising transferable skills is more beneficial for pupils than relying on a supportive environment, which may not always be available.

Caring relationships were also recognised by schools as facilitators for wellbeing:

'*We aim to build trusting and empathic relationships with all our pupils and their families*'. (School AW)

Caring relationships were facilitated through an atmosphere of openness and sharing a common language to talk about feelings and perceived challenges:

'We are a 'talking school'; we encourage our children to share their concerns at all times'

(School AW)

The identification of the importance of caring relationships can be explained through the theoretical lens of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing, stating that positive relationships are a necessary dimension for individual flourishing. Thus, there is value to developing care in all relationships. Whilst the previous quotes focussed on an adult-driven approach, school BF encouraged pupils to develop caring peer relationships. As a result, a year one pupil requested:

'Can I sit with my friend because we fell out and we want to think about it so we can be okay and think about that we are best friends'

This demonstrates that, even at a very young age, pupils who are empowered by schools have the potential to develop sophisticated skills and knowledge which enable them to flourish. Other schools also demonstrated strategies to promote caring skills. As well as promoting relationship skills, several schools provided opportunities for pupils to nurture their environment through caring for animals and gardens, painting murals and maintaining school surroundings.

5.3.2   Stage two: Implementation
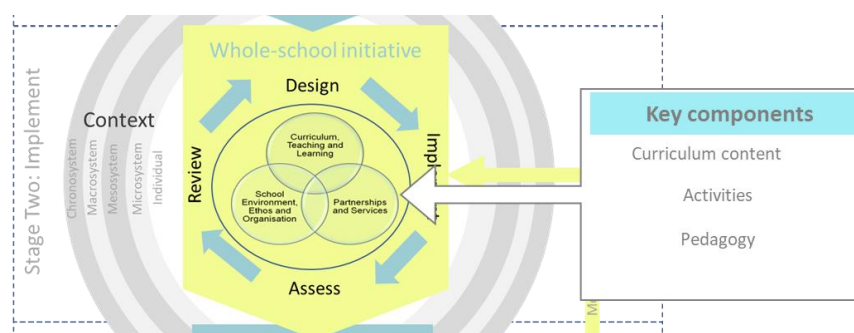
Stage two of the conceptual framework addresses the design and implementation of whole-school wellbeing promotion. The findings from phase one identified three key components: curriculum, activities and pedagogy, which have been used to organise and understand the data.

5.3.2.1   Quantitative findings

Curriculum content

The curriculum content may be defined as the wellbeing concepts which are transferred to children through knowledge and skills development. Two features emerged from the data; 1) the diverse curricula used by schools to promote wellbeing and 2) the complex way different curricula were blended into a whole-school approach. These appeared to be driven by the wealth of strategic approaches adopted by schools. A strategic approach is the overall way the school seeks to fulfil the aims of whole-school wellbeing promotion. All schools identified one or more strategic approaches to promoting wellbeing. Seven had formalised this in a policy document and one school by way of an audit. This implies that 73% of sample schools did not have a wellbeing policy. However, this is not a mandatory requirement currently and, even if schools have a policy they may choose not to share it on their website. Despite the lack of formalised documents, the analysis revealed several approaches that informed schools' wellbeing initiatives.

The underpinning principles of school strategies appeared to fall into four broad categories; 1) evidence-based approaches, 2) provision by external organisations, 3) the criteria for obtaining an award and 4) a bespoke approach (see Table 5-6). Figure 5-7 demonstrates the most common strategy (n=17) used bought-in or free provision from external providers, thereby, using the strategies inherent in these organisations' content and resources. Fifteen schools used evidence-based approaches and frameworks to inform practice and eight schools used the criteria for obtaining awards. In addition, there was a single case of a school partnering with an educational psychologist to devise a bespoke school vision with wellbeing as a central component. The graph also demonstrates that schools adopted multiple approaches in wellbeing practice with sixty-five percent of schools blending more than one of these approaches. This is unsurprising given the findings have already demonstrated that schools use multiple aims, thus it is appropriate that multiple approaches are required to meet those aims. Of the eight schools using a single strategic approach, four schools had or were in the process of achieving a wellbeing award, implying these schools perceive fulfilling the required criteria was sufficient to promote pupil wellbeing.
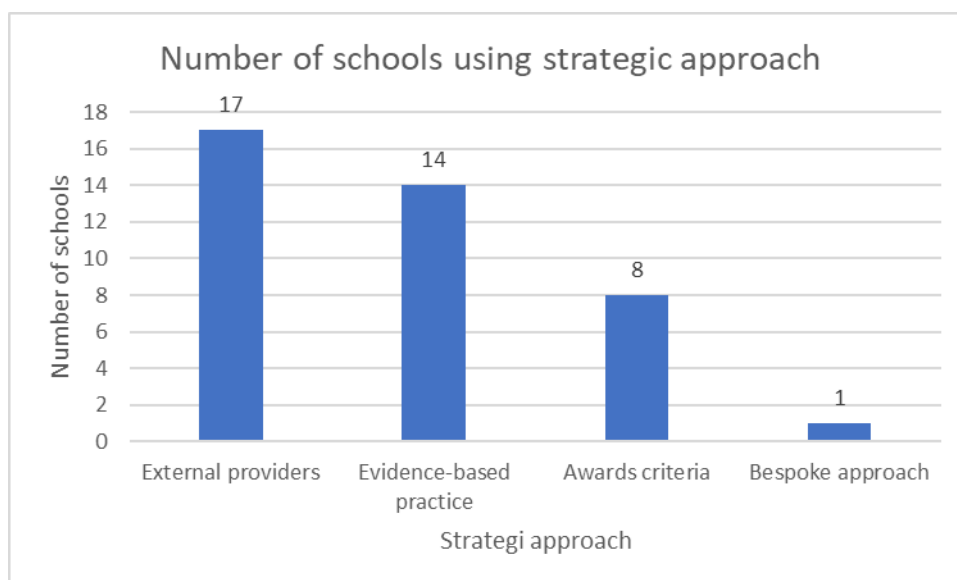
Figure 5-7 Number of schools adopting strategic approaches

Table 5-6 presents a detailed exploration of the approaches used by the sample schools to develop curricula. Eighteen different evidence-based approaches and twenty-three external providers were employed. With this diversity, the frequency of use of most approaches was small, except for Growth mindset (n=7) (a theory that enables flourishing), outdoor learning (n=9) (developing skills for holistic flourishing), values-based learning (n=5) (promoting a set of positive values) and the Healthy Minds provision (n=4) (a health-based organisation focussed on mental health and wellbeing). This implies that schools developed bespoke approaches to whole-school wellbeing promotion.

Table 5-6 Strategic approaches used by schools

Type of strategic approach	Approach		Number of schools using approach
Evidence-based approaches	Growth mindset		7
	Values based learning		5
	Character education		2
	Outdoor learning		9
	Philosophy		2
	Leadership learning		1
	Meta-cognition/neuroscience		1
	Maslow' hierarchy of needs		1

	Wellbeing as a curriculum driver		1
	Visible learning		1
	Risk taking		2
	Positive psychology		2
	Self-directed learning		1
	Building learning power		1
	Trauma informed approach		1
	Restorative practice		1
	Secure base		1
	Protective behaviours		1
Provision by external organisations	Healthy Minds		4
	SEAL		3
	Local authority		3
	Forest School		2
	Mind Up		2
	Place2Be		2
	Children's University		2
	Compass Buzz		2
	Relax Kids		1
	SUMO		1
	PATHs		1
	Thrive		1
	Zippy's/Apple's Friends		1
	Chill Skills		1
	Rest Easy		1
	Heartsmart		1
	Conscious Discipline		1
	Jigsaw PSHE		1
	Wellbeing Compass		1
	Zones of Regulation		1
	Worth It		1
	Go Noodle		1

	Zumos		1
Criteria for obtaining an award	Wellbeing Award for Schools		4
	Carnegie Excellence in Mental Health		2
	AcSEED (emotional wellbeing award)		1
	Peaceful School		1
Bespoke approach	Development of the school vision with an educational psychologist		1

The results identified two broad categories on which curriculum content was developed: 1) evidence-based approach and 2) content from external providers.

An evidence-based approach

Nineteen schools mentioned a theoretical or evidenced-based framework underpinning their curriculum content (see Figure 5-8). Approximately half (n=10) used a single approach, with the remaining schools (n=11) blending between two and six theories. Most commonly, 65% of schools combined two theories, demonstrating the complexity that was introduced into curricula.
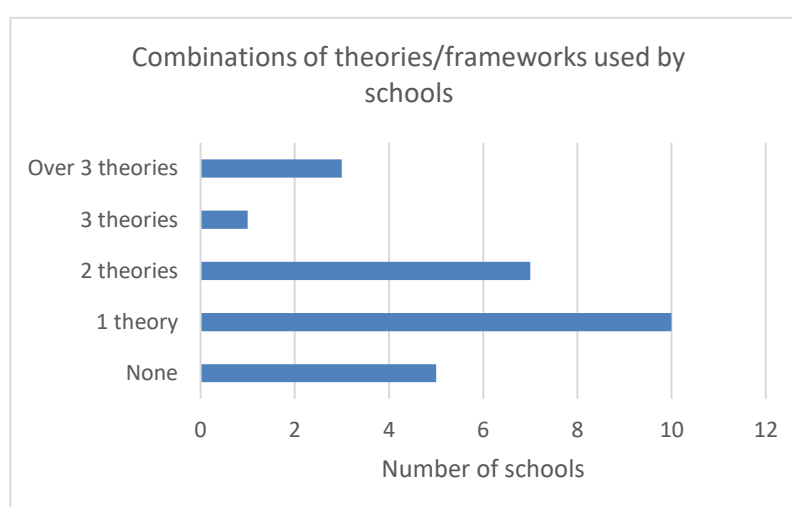
Figure 5-8 Theoretical or evidence-based frameworks adopted by schools

Chapter 5

It appeared that these approaches could be categorised into four broad categories; 1) jointly benefitting learning & wellbeing, 2) salutogenic approaches to wellbeing, 3) pathogenic approaches to wellbeing and 4) other theories (see Table 5-7). Most adopted approaches included outdoor learning supported by a peer-reviewed evidence-base (n=9), the theory of growth mindset (n=7) and values-based learning (n=5), all strategies that underpinned both learning and wellbeing. This reflects perceptions from the qualitative theme of the relationship between learning and wellbeing in section 5.3.1.2, where schools recognised the mutual benefits of simultaneously promoting learning and wellbeing.

Table 5-7 Categorising approaches adopted by schools

Category	Theory/framework/evidence	Description	Frequency of adoption in schools
Jointly underpinning learning & wellbeing	Outdoor learning	Developing a range of skills for holistic flourishing	9
	Growth mindset	Developing skills to flourish	7
	Philosophy	Developing critical, confident and independent thinking	2
	Risk taking	Enabling children to develop skills through positive risk taking	2
	Meta cognition/neuroscience	Learning skills to self-regulate own learning	2
	Self-directed learning	Recognising needs and self-directing learning	1
	Building learning power	Empowering children to reflect and self-direct learning in a supportive culture	1
Salutogenic approaches to wellbeing	Values based learning	Promoting a universal set of positive values	5
	Character education	Developing a set of positive character traits	2
	Positive psychology	Developing positive skills and understanding motivations to promote wellbeing	2
	Leadership learning	Facilitating children to develop positive leadership skills	1
	Wellbeing as a curriculum driver	Promoting wellbeing in all aspects of the curriculum	1

Pathogenic approaches	Trauma informed approach	To be aware of mental health and promote the skills for positive wellbeing	1
	Restorative practice	Improving relationships and community	1
	Secure base	Providing relationships for secure attachment	1
	Protective behaviours	Developing confidence and resilience by feeling safe	1
Other	Maslow's hierarchy of needs	Understanding children's motivations & meeting needs	1
	Visible learning	Understanding teaching through the eyes of pupils	1

Curriculum content from external providers

The results found that schools used curriculums from four different types of providers; 1) commercial companies, 2) third sector organisations including charities in the UK and a US not-for-profit organisation, 3) national or local government initiatives and 4) NHS provision. Twenty schools reported that they used content from external providers. Within these schools twenty-two external providers were used (see Table 5-8).

There was little consensus in the use of curriculum content from external providers. The most adopted provider was Forest School (n=8) which uses trained staff to engage children in specific forms of outdoor learning, promoting a range of relevant skills and experiences for learning and wellbeing. In contrast, the second most frequently bought-in curriculum was MindUp, specifically designed to promote pupils' wellbeing. Each of the following providers was used by two schools: PATHS, Thrive, Zippy's Friends, Relax Kids and Zones of Regulation. The first three companies provide programmes with similar content designed to develop a range of social and emotional skills and knowledge. The second two providers have narrower content focussing on specific areas associated with wellbeing: meditation and emotional self-regulation. This may explain why schools may have blended a number of strategic approaches into curricula, as some strategies have been perceived to be insufficient to comprehensively guide its design.

Table 5-8 Curriculum content from external providers

Type of provider	Name of programme	Brief summary	Frequency of adoption in schools

Commercial company	Relax Kids	Relaxation & mindfulness classes	2
	Chill skills	Mindfulness & meditation	1
	SUMO	Building resilience, confidence and motivation to cope with challenges (Stop, Understand, Move On)	1
	PATHS	Developing social and emotional learning	2
	Thrive	Developing social and emotional learning	2
	Zippy's Friends/ Apple's Friends	Developing social and emotional learning	2
	Chill Skills	Relaxation, mindfulness and emotional learning	1
	Rest easy	Mindfulness and emotional learning Recognise Emotions, Stop Think, Engage Awareness & Support Yourself,	1
	Heartsmart	Developing social and emotional learning	1
	Conscious discipline	Developing social and emotional learning	1
	Jigsaw PSHE	Developing social and emotional learning	1
	Wellbeing Compass	A method to measure the impact of wellbeing initiatives in school	1
	Zones of regulation	Developing skills for self-regulation	2
	Worth it	Promoting wellbeing and resilience	1
	Go Noodle	Movement and mindfulness	1
	Zumos	Building wellbeing, resilience and confidence	1
Third sector organisations	Forest School	Developing holistic growth through outdoor learning and risk-taking	8
	Place2Be	Improving emotional wellbeing	1
	Children's University	Providing experiences to build confidence and aspiration	1
	MindUp	Developing social and emotional learning and mindfulness	3
	Compass buzz	Promoting mental health & wellbeing	1
National and local government	SEAL	Developing social and emotional learning	1
	Local authority approach	Developing positive mental health & wellbeing	1
NHS provision	Healthy minds	Developing positive mental health & wellbeing	1

Almost half of schools using external providers (45%) adopted content from a single provider. However, the remaining schools (n=11) blended content from two or three providers in their whole-school approach (see Figure 5-9).

The use of external providers amongst schools
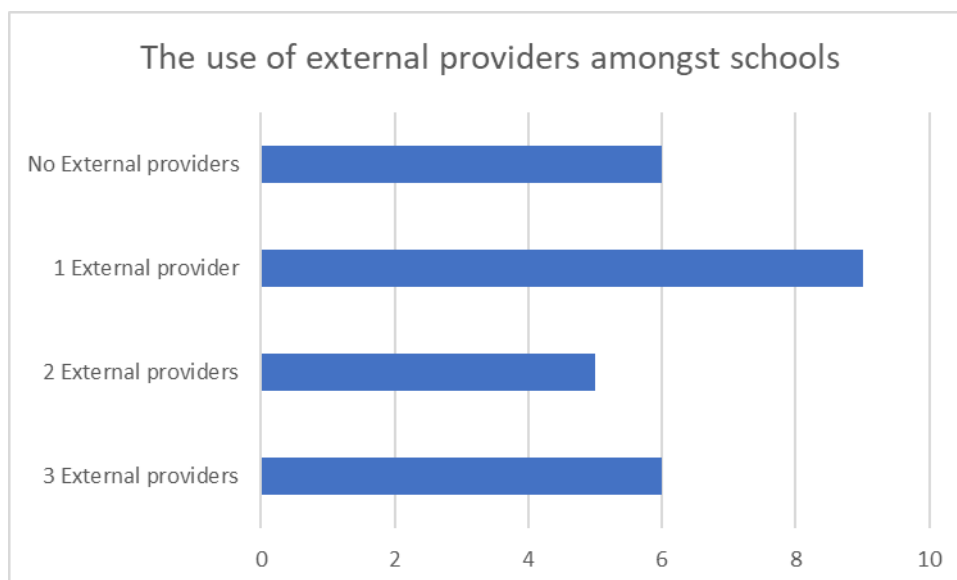
Figure 5-9 The use of external providers

Activities

In addition to a wellbeing curriculum, the findings showed that twenty-five additional activities associated with wellbeing were shared by three or more schools (see Figure 5-10). The most frequently adopted were opportunities for pupil voice (n=20), leadership roles for older pupils (n=14), encouragement for pupils to talk openly/raise concerns and be listened to by adults (n=13), a focus on physical exercise (n=13), periods for reflection (n=11) and developing community relationships (n=12). In addition to the activities for pupils, opportunities to promote staff wellbeing (n=15) and parental wellbeing (n=12) were frequently focussed upon as part of a whole-school approach. Whilst Figure 5-10 shows activities adopted by three or more schools, some activities were practised by only one or two schools including sessions on the role of a man for year six boys (n=2), Children's University (n=1) and the provision of social prescriptions (non-medicalised methods for enhancing wellbeing) for families.
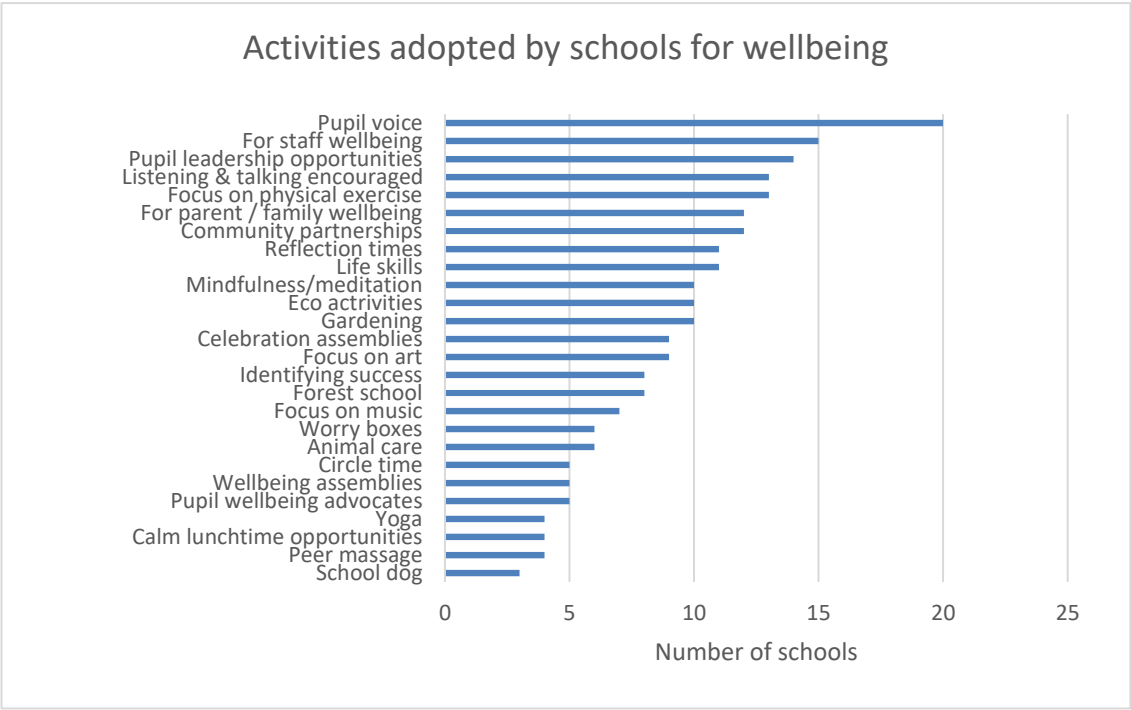
Figure 5-10 Activities adopted by schools for wellbeing

Pedagogies

Twenty-four schools referred to the pedagogic aspects of whole-school wellbeing promotion. Pedagogy relates to the way in which wellbeing content is delivered (see Figure 5-11). In contrast to the diverse and numerous aims and strategic approaches identified previously, schools adopted similar pedagogic styles. Six areas of interest emerged from the data; four related to behavioural aspects of teaching, one to staff involvement and one to the environment in which learning took place. The most used pedagogic strategies fell into the latter two areas. Firstly, ten schools reported that all staff were involved in the promotion of wellbeing in both formal and informal situations. In addition, ten schools reported that outdoor learning was fundamental to the delivery of curriculum content (n=10). The importance of these cases implies that promoting wellbeing outside the classroom setting and through informal social interactions is a valuable component.

In terms of pedagogical strategies for promoting wellbeing, schools provided opportunities for critical thinking and problem solving (n=9), modelled behaviours associated with positive wellbeing (n=5) and provided pupils with positive and high-quality feedback (n=4). This implies that teachers recognise the importance of engaging pupils as active learners, empowering them through pedagogy by facilitating pupils to develop and practise skills through setting challenges

where critical thinking and problem solving is required. Using positive feedback gives pupils further agency through recognising and building on strengths, thoughts and behaviours that they already demonstrate. Modelling was not only used with the school community, but in four schools aspects of wellbeing promotion was modelled to visiting staff from other schools.
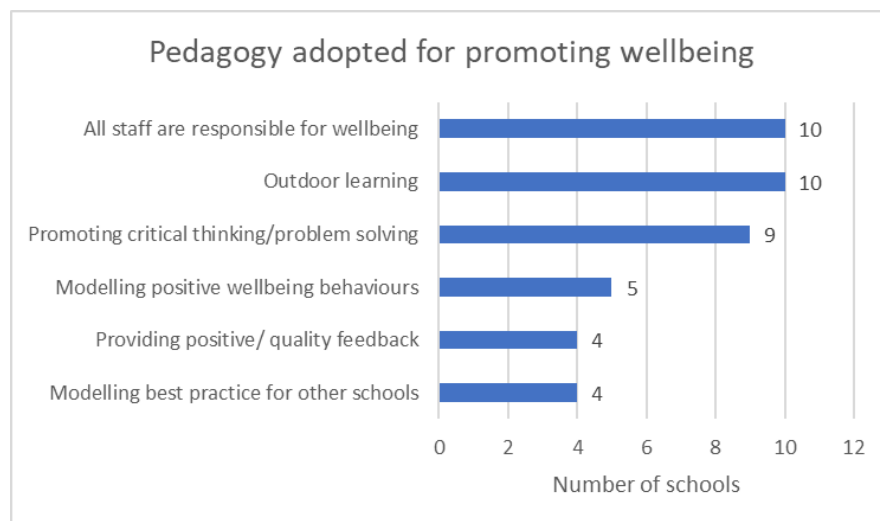
Figure 5-11 Pedagogic strategies adopted by schools to promote wellbeing

5.3.2.2   Qualitative findings

Two themes were developed using the Braun and Clarke's (2019) RTA framework (page 48 and appendix E.6) and the audit trail from coding to generated themes is found in appendix D.5.2. Themes were: 1) pupil voice and 2) external partnerships (Figure 5-12).
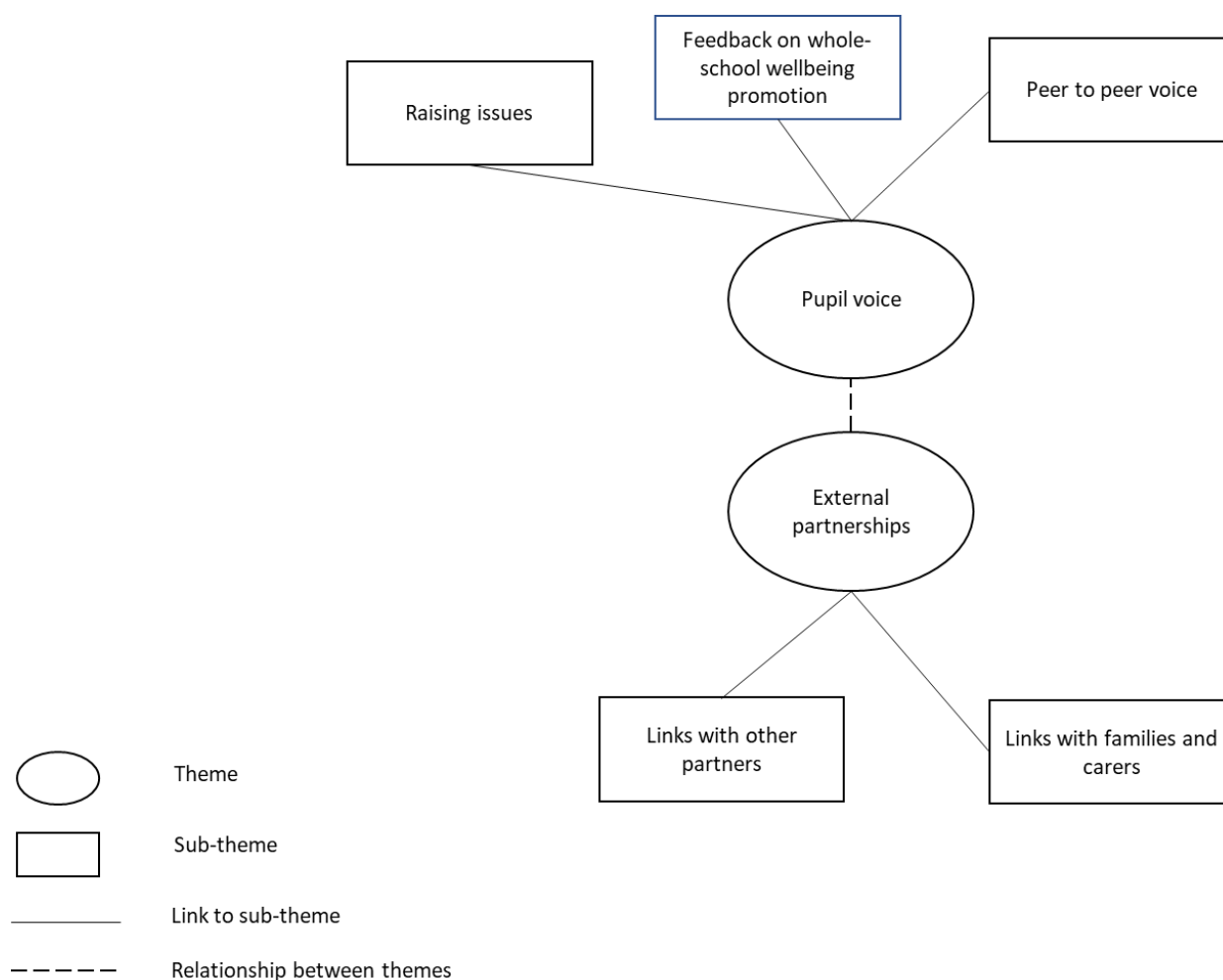
Figure 5-12 Thematic map for qualitative findings relating to implementation

Pupil voice

All schools identified the importance of encouraging pupil voice, with strategies for facilitation embedded in curricula, policies and activities. It appeared its purpose was two-fold; firstly, in allowing pupils to raise worries and concerns and feel listened to and secondly, in encouraging pupils to provide feedback and make suggestions for school change.

All schools focussed on the importance of creating a school community which provided safe opportunities for children to voice issues. The data showed that schools used both formal and informal opportunities for pupils to feel heard:

'Providing a forum for listening and talking, e.g. using circle time as a tool for personal, social and health education and citizenship' (School AO)

'You can talk to your parents, someone in your family or an adult in school at any time. If you want more time to chat, Staff Wellbeing Champions will be in Mrs xxxxxx room every Thursday straight after lunch' (School BX)

Additionally, 'voice' was facilitated through other means. Four schools evidenced incorporating activities that enabled children to communicate non-verbally, through the provision of worry boxes. This gave children who were reluctant to vocalise issues an alternative means for communication.

The second form of voice, enabling feedback, was evidenced in all twelve schools selected for qualitative analysis. Schools perceived the value of regular meetings of pupil councils as an important way for pupils to share ideas. Councils' members were predominantly elected by peers and, in most cases, involved participants across all school years. Additionally, schools used other activities to collect and consider pupils' views. Most schools used annual pupil questionnaires and feedback boxes for ad hoc comments. One school used '*learning walks'* where the school environment was used to prompt pupils' responses about things they liked or wished to change. A further school engaged pupils in '*parliament assemblies'* where all pupils debated topics including wellbeing.

Schools also demonstrated that listening to children's voices was not just an activity of adults, and perceived benefits in engaging pupils in listening to their peers:

'Peer mentors listen to children and facilitate activities within the playground in response to what children have asked for.' (School AW)

The quote implies that once the system of peer mentoring was introduced by staff, it enabled pupils to transfer skills and knowledge they had already developed into building relationships, team-working and problem-solving themselves, highlighting how the school facilitated social agency amongst its pupils.

Despite this evidence of wide provision of opportunities for pupil voice, only two schools reported making changes based on children's feedback:

'a Peaceful School … involving pupils in meaningful thinking and action around this. The pupils' action plan for a peaceful school has been enacted.' (School AO)

and,

> *'The School Council also came up with the idea of a daily morning "Wake Up Shake Up"*
> *which involves all staff and children completing a five minute exercise programme to*
> *music to invigorate them before lessons start'* (School S).

Both quotes identify a collaborative process to involving pupil voice in school change, where school leadership used pupil feedback to drive modifications and embed them into the school's systems. The first quote illustrates how pupils' wellbeing was supported both through the process and the outcome. The school encouraged mindful reflection in developing the plan, enabling pupils to practice skills associated with flourishing as well as benefitting from its results through a peaceful school environment with characteristics that sustainably support wellbeing.

In all, the findings suggest that extensive use of pupil voice has been adopted by schools to provide a continuum from paternalistically supporting pupils by listening to their wellbeing needs to empowering pupils as social agents of school change. With few exemplifications of how pupils are empowered in this phase, it is anticipated that the case study in phase three may elicit more insights.

External partnerships

Links with external partners were recognised through the theoretical lens as a key domain of whole-school wellbeing promotion. These fell into two categories: 1) links with pupils' families and carers and 2) links with other partners (see appendix D.5.2).

Several schools adopted activities to meet the aim of building strong home-school partnerships and support family wellbeing. These schools offered an open-door policy for families to talk about concerns, some by way of weekly drop-in sessions. The format of these sessions varied between schools, comprising either individual or group sessions. It might be implied that schools recognised differing, supportive benefits of being heard in confidence with providing peer-support in a group setting. In most schools these activities involved the headteacher or members of the wellbeing team, although in one school parent mental health champions provided a similar resource for families. Whilst most schools had a narrower remit, one school supported parents to address some of the drivers of poor wellbeing including:

> *'housing, financial, drug and alcohol, domestic violence/abuse and health including*
> *mental health issues'* (School BX)

Through the theoretical lens, it can be understood that these issues may not directly impact pupils but, nevertheless, impact their experiences of wellbeing. Thus, by schools addressing factors at

meso and macro levels of the environment such as parents' mental health concerns or advocating for families in housing matters, this seeks to mitigate the negative interrelationships between these factors and pupils' wellbeing development.

In relation to links with other partners, it appeared that most schools had established a range of community partnerships. These included links with places of worship, local businesses, and charities as well as a range of individuals in both professional and volunteering capacities. The data showed that whilst the purpose of most links was to enhance pupils' experiences, skills and knowledge, there was also evidence that activities had the potential to promote wellbeing of the partners as well. To illustrate the differing ways in which schools used partnerships, the example of gardening will be used in this section.

Gardening was an activity commonly used by schools outside formal learning to develop both learning and wellbeing skills. A small number of schools developed external partnerships in associating with gardening. One school established links with other gardeners at the allotment they leased offsite:

> '*The [name] Allotment Society supports the school with this aim with many allotment holders keen to share the variety of produce on their plots*.' (School AW)

Another paid a gardener to come to the school:

> '*We employ a school gardener who delivers outside learning lessons to children and runs a twice weekly gardening club after school.*' (School S)

In school AW the quote emphasises how pupils had the opportunity to engage with a large network of gardeners in the allotment compared with the single gardener who attended school S. It also implied a sense of shared activity with other allotment holders, implying a sense of social cohesion with members of the local community. This involvement with local people was further developed through pupils selling produce:

> '*In the autumn term, produce donated by allotment holders is sold by children in a farmers' market held in the school playground.*' (School AW)

In these examples, the strategy of developing partnerships was designed to enable pupils to flourish by promoting their social wellbeing, sense of connection and building social skills. In contrast, one school extended the activity of gardening to also benefit local community members:

'Recently we have welcomed the help and advice of [gardening charity] in helping us to make this amazing community garden. Our children designed it and … we now have this wonderful garden for our neighbours to enjoy!' (School AY)

In using this approach, not only did pupils benefit from the link with the gardening charity but the school enabled pupils the opportunity to use the values of kindness and giving, which were earlier identified as conducive to flourishing (page 95).

5.3.3 Stage three: review
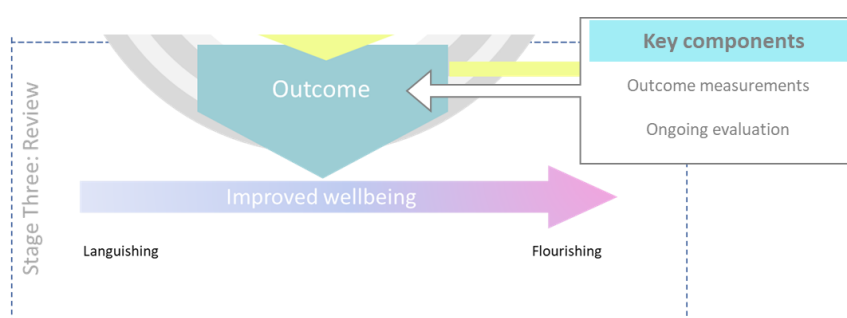
Phase one of the study, the SLR, identified the importance of outcome measures and ongoing evaluation when reviewing whole-school wellbeing promotion.

5.3.3.1 Quantitative findings

Outcome measurements

Outcome measurements are a means by which schools establish the extent to which they have met what they set out to achieve (Smith *et al.* 2021). Twenty-one schools reported that they regularly assessed pupil wellbeing, although other schools may have made similar assessments but did not publish this information on the website.

Schools used both formal and informal outcome measures for pupils, and the findings demonstrated these were predominantly informal. Evaluations were provided by pupils, teachers

and parents (see Figure 5-13).

Types of outcome measures used by schools

Total number of schools using outcome…
Parent feedback about children's wellbeing
Wellbeing champions/ambassadors
Standardised assessment screening
Open door/ drop in sessions
Opportunities for reflection
Worry boxes/monsters
Parent questionnaires
Pupil questionnaires
Traffic lights/mood cards
Online wellbeing assessments
Observations during life skills opportunities

Number of schools

Figure 5-13 Frequency of outcome measure usage by schools

The most used method was informal parental feedback on how they perceived pupils' wellbeing (n=15). Formal parent questionnaires gathered information on a range of wellbeing outcomes. Fewer schools demonstrated how pupils were consulted. Nine schools encouraged pupil feedback through facilitating an open-door policy or drop-in sessions. Other evidence schools included interactions with wellbeing champions and ambassadors (n=6), pupil questionnaires (n=5), feedback from the provision of reflection times (n= 6), the use of worry boxes/monsters (n=6) and traffic light or mood cards to capture a snapshot of children's feelings (n= 3). Teachers made use of life skills learning as opportunities to observe pupils' skills development (n=2). Although observation was not highlighted by schools as an important outcome measure, it might be implied that this is informally, and perhaps unconsciously, used by teachers to assess changes in wellbeing levels amongst pupils on a continual basis.

It appeared that seven schools carried out formal wellbeing assessments periodically. Of these, five schools used standardised wellbeing assessments, which, where mentioned, included Boxhall Profiling, the Happiness Scale and the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. Furthermore, two online measurements were adopted by single schools; external providers Wellbeing Compass and Thrive Online provided survey instruments to capture wellbeing levels for individual pupils. It was not clear whether these instruments were completed by pupils or teachers.

Ongoing implementation and effectiveness evaluation

Twenty schools reported ongoing evaluation of wellbeing initiatives in their schools (see Figure 5-14). This was predominantly achieved through capturing feedback from stakeholders within the school community including pupils, staff, parents and governors. Despite this, there were scant details about how evaluation was achieved. Where mentioned, schools typically used internal policy or strategy documents to evaluate progress (n=4), usually annually although one school reported reviews were carried out every three years at a minimum. Two further schools monitored progress against local authority frameworks designed by multidisciplinary teams. Where schools had achieved or sought the Wellbeing for Schools award or the Carnegie School Mental Health award, reviews were made in the light of required criteria. It appeared from the data that in these cases (n=3) reviews were more frequently undertaken; in one case this was monthly. Additionally, as pupils and parents formed part of the teams associated with the rewards, this implied a range of views from different voices was taken into consideration. Furthermore, three schools used parent questionnaires as a method of evaluation, again enabling triangulation of stakeholder views.
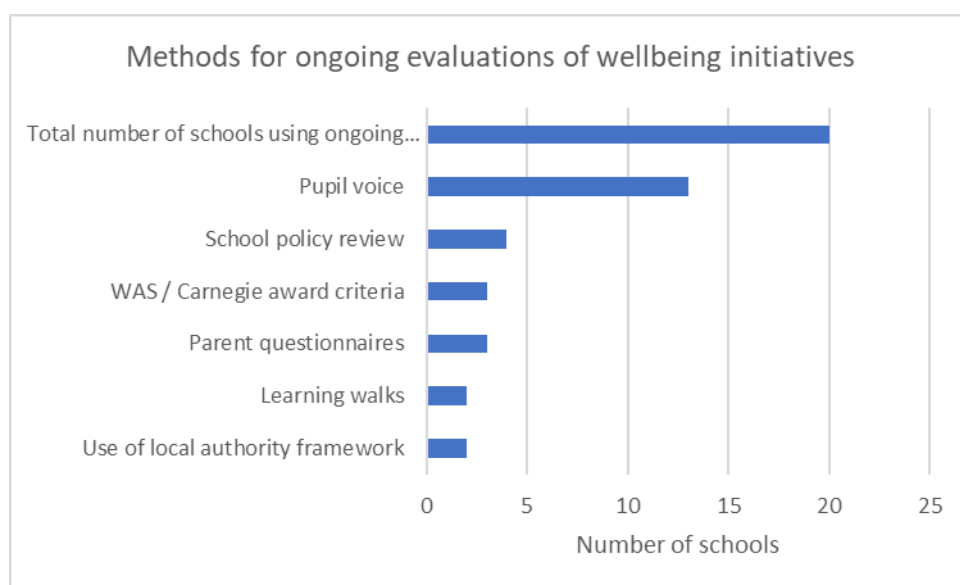
Figure 5-14 Methods for ongoing evaluations of wellbeing initiatives

Pupil voice was reported as the most used method of capturing children's feedback on their experiences of whole-school wellbeing promotion (n=13). Additional evaluation was minimal, including learning walks (n=2) and whole-school assemblies (n=1). As the value of pupil voice in driving school change has been highlighted previously (page 116), it might be suggested that schools are missing out on valuable feedback for evolving practice.

5.3.3.2 Qualitative findings

Three themes were developed using the Braun and Clarke's (2019) RTA framework (page 48 and appendix E.6) and the audit trail from coding to generated themes is found in appendix D.5.3. Themes were: 1) external assessment by third parties, 2) pupils' internal assessment of their wellbeing and 3) the role of technology (Figure 5-15).
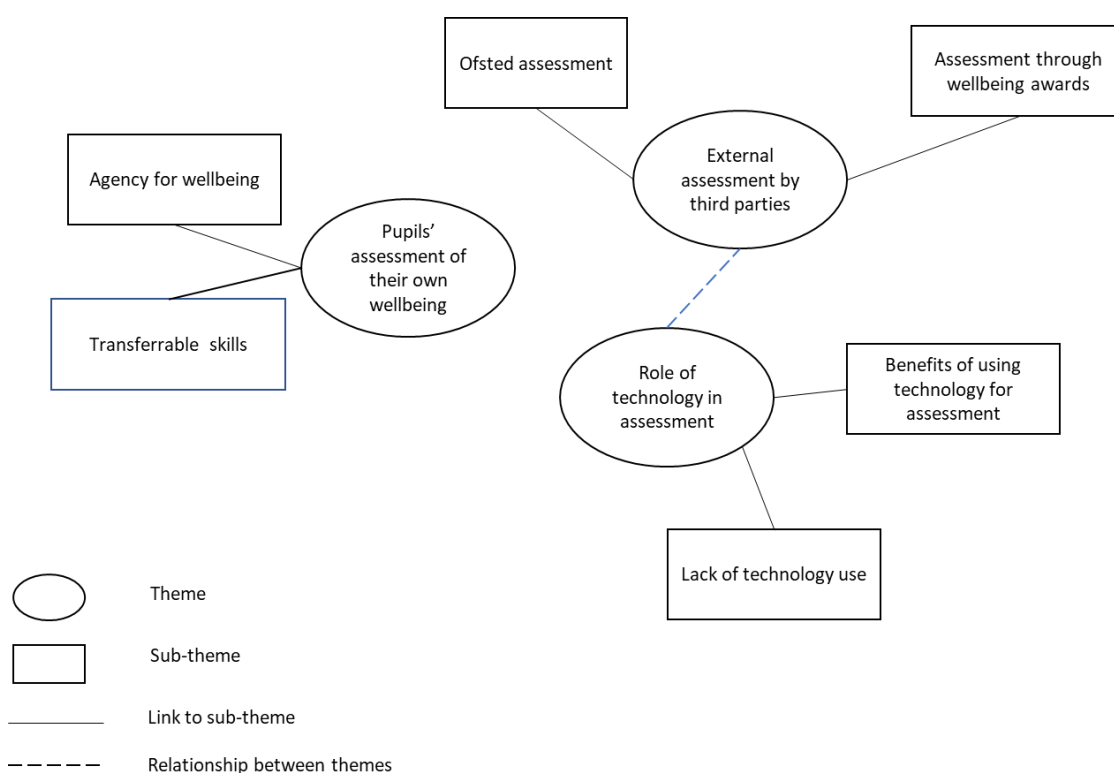
Figure 5-15 Thematic map for qualitative findings related to review

External assessment by third parties

Ofsted, the schools' inspectorate, provides external assessment of schools' performance. Whilst the new inspection framework now assesses how schools promote pupils' personal development, this was only introduced in 2019. Due to its recent adoption and the termination of Ofsted inspections during the Covid-19 pandemic, these findings were unable to capture Ofsted reports using this framework. However, even under the previous inspection guidelines, inspectors recognised the importance of school's promoting wellbeing, as exemplified using school N:

> *'The school's work to provide care and support to enable pupils to flourish is exemplary'* (School N)

Other institutions that assessed schools' whole-school wellbeing promotion were awarding institutions. In addition to the Wellbeing for Schools award and Carnegie School Mental Health award, other bodies included Values-Based Education, Peaceful Schools, the Inclusion Quality Mark as well as one-off awards such as the DfE Character Award, the 'Happiest Primary School' (in the National Happiness Awards) and TES (Times Educational Supplement) school awards. It may be implied that although these bodies require schools to fulfil a range of criteria, but do not have the same objectivity as Ofsted inspections. It still appeared that feedback from awarding bodies may be useful to schools to highlight particular strengths:

> '[Name] school is blessed with a principal and leaders who encourage both staff and pupils to flourish through inclusive outstanding practice' IQM assessor (School V)

Pupils' assessments of their own wellbeing

Whilst measurements of pupils' wellbeing that use assessments from teachers, parents and other organisations are important, one school highlighted the importance of facilitating pupils to self-evaluate wellbeing. This was illustrated on their website by directing quoting from pupils, of which two examples are used here:

> 'I like thinking of activities that could make me feel better if I was sad because there are lots' (Year 4, school BV)

> 'I use finger and shape breathing all the time when I feel angry and it stops me' (Year 2, school BV)

These examples demonstrate how pupils across ages recognised challenging feelings and implemented strategies to overcome them, having recognised that they were agents of their own wellbeing. The implication of this insightfulness is that pupils' have learned a range of skills and knowledge promoted by the school. It also suggests that pupils understood how skills could be transferred between situations. Whilst these findings related to only one school, they provided positive evidence that the aims, strategies and curricula outlined in this chapter have enabled these pupils to flourish. To better understand the extent to which pupils can self-evaluate, this topic will be returned to in relation to year six pupils in phase three..

The role of technology for assessment

There was scant evidence that technology was used as an assessment tool for amongst sample schools. Only two schools used IT-based solutions for measuring pupils' wellbeing. School DI

recognised the benefit to *'ensure a systematic approach with measurable outcomes'*, with school AY suggesting it allowed *'low level needs'* to be identified. A further school acknowledged it would like to make better use of an IT platform to promote and monitor pupils' wellbeing in the future. It is perhaps surprising that so little use is made of technology when schools extensively used technological solutions for learning and assessment across other subject curricula.

5.3.4 The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on whole-school wellbeing promotion

The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in English schools being closed from 20th March to June 2020 which was during the period of data collection for phase two (Gov.UK, 2020). Most pupils learnt from home except for those deemed vulnerable or from keyworker families. Families could be outside in private gardens, but those living in flats without outside space where mainly restricted to being indoors. Mixing outside the group of people within a home was forbidden. Shops, apart from food and medical supplies, were closed. Fines were issued for non-compliance with these regulations.

As communication between staff and families was made via technology, textual and audio-visual data were collected from headteacher letters, newsletters, social media links and videos. Qualitative data only were collected for this section to enable a rich thematic analysis in the available wordcount. Findings highlighted schools made rapid adaptations that affected the planning, implementation, and review and refinement of wellbeing practice (see Figure 5-16). Analysis used the analysis process in section 3.3.1 and an audit trail is included in appendix D.5.4.
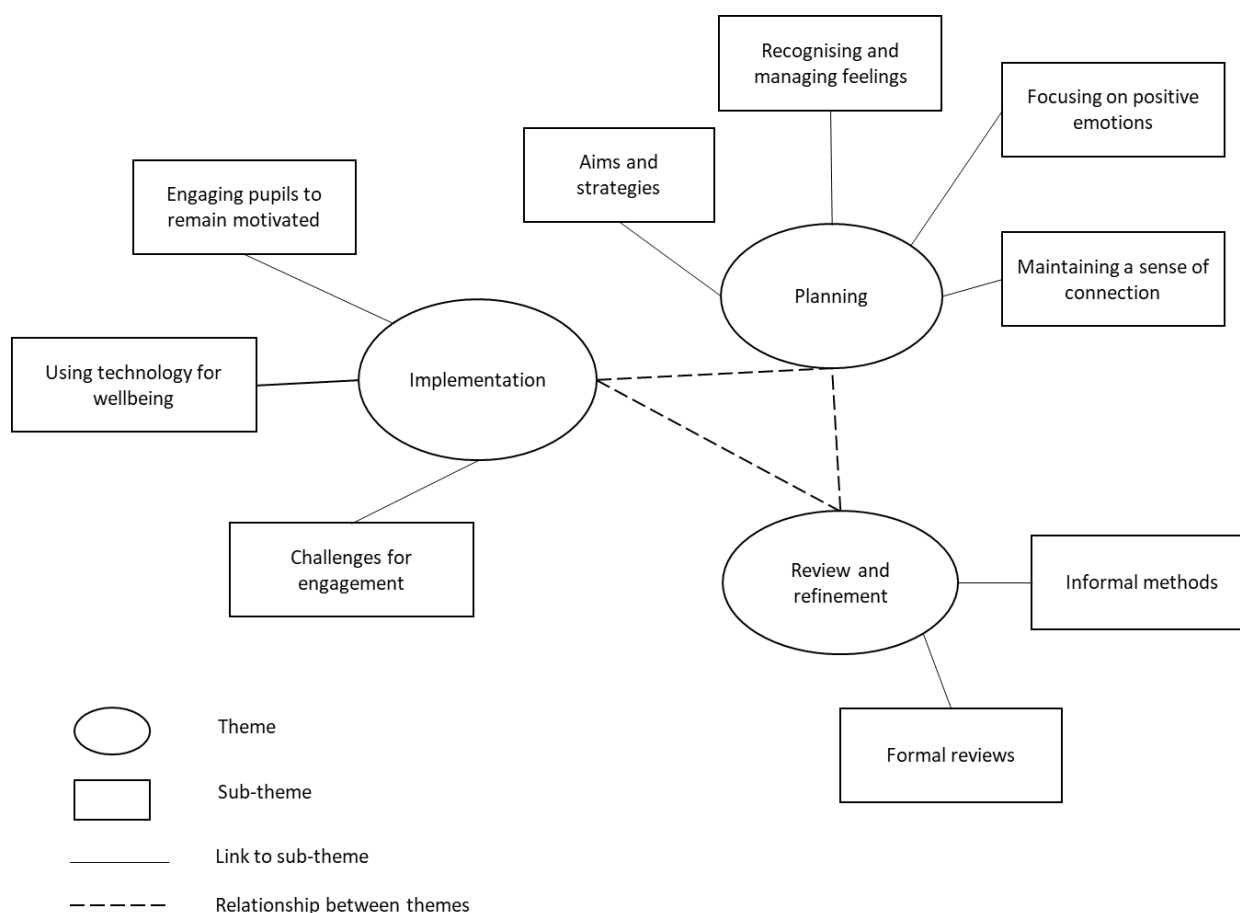
Figure 5-16 Themes related to wellbeing practice during the Covid-19 pandemic

5.3.4.1   Planning: aims and strategies

Evidence demonstrated that schools' overall aims and strategies used to promote wellbeing remained consistent. The most significant change involved sharing resources with families at home and all schools showed evidence of using PDFs and online links to external websites. Resources focused on recognising and managing emotions, maintaining social networks, seeking positive relationships, engaging in activities associated with wellbeing, and enjoying life and feeling happy. Nearly half of schools also continued to encourage pupils to use a values-based approach to daily activities adopting courage, resilience, growth mindset, perseverance, being brave and showing respect.

Whilst promoting wellbeing had been a lesser or equal key goal with learning previously (page 102), it became a priority in the first school closure:

‘*wellbeing is a priority for all our families*’ (School K)

'mental health and wellbeing needs to be our priority for our children and for all of us'
(School DK)

School K exemplified schools' rationales for prioritising wellbeing in the light of uncertainty:

'taking care of our mental health and wellbeing will allow us to be in a better position to support ourselves and others to cope with the challenges we face' (School K)

The adapted role of schools was to encourage families to prioritise wellbeing at home:

'Your children's mental health will be more important than their academic skills' (School BH)

'A key message for all our families is not to worry if you aren't able to keep up with the learning provided by teachers or if you need to break from it – you're doing a great job. The very best thing you can do is to keep well-being a main priority.' (School CQ)

Schools understood maintaining wellbeing as supporting pupils and families to stay healthy, look after each other, develop self-kindness and engage in activities to improve mental and physical wellbeing. Schools encouraged families to facilitate children to take part in a wide variety of activities, in the light of reduced learning. These included cooking, arts and crafts, singing and dancing, gardening, nature walks, dinnertime conversations, imaginative play, den-building and other outdoor play, walking, letter-writing, and completing Joe Wicks' morning exercise sessions. School DK emphasised that parents *'see 'learning' in its widest sense'*. Schools also focussed on three further strategies: 1) recognising and managing feelings, 2) focussing on positive emotions, and 3) maintaining a sense of community to promote wellbeing.

Recognising and managing feelings

The sample schools were well-placed to adapt their practices in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic. As all schools had sustained whole-school wellbeing practices, staff already shared a wealth of relevant skills and knowledge. Staff sought to reassure pupils and families that exhibiting a range of emotions was situationally appropriate and normal, a strategy they already used in school:

'Some of us have responded well to the changes and some of us, at times, will have found it overwhelming. These are all very normal responses to change' (School BF)

'You might show your worry in different ways to each other – so, if one of you is not feeling worried right now, that's fine too' (School K)

There was also recognition that it was normal for emotions to be dynamic:

> '*If you have found it harder this week, you are not alone. The six week barrier seems to have hit a lot of us, staff included, so please be kind look after yourself and your families*' (School X)

Additionally, schools supported parents to understand how their children's behaviour might be manifesting emotions about the significant change in their lives:

> '*Often conflicts happen with children because they are feeling anxious or worried about something, but don't quite have the skills or maturity to express this. 'You'll possibly see more meltdowns, tantrums and oppositional behaviour...this is normal and only to be expected under these circumstances*' (School X)

This highlighted how staff and parents had to make significant changes in relation to the roles they played in promoting pupils' wellbeing. The amount of pupil-teacher contact was minimal, particularly in the earliest weeks of school closure, and parent-teacher contact was increased. The role of teachers was, therefore, to facilitate parent learning through passing on their skills and knowledge, as the quotes above illustrate. In turn, parents became the primary wellbeing promoters for their children. Schools recommended strategies for parents including minimising stress in the home, using humour to cope with challenges, recognising that trying your best is enough:

> '*Share your calm, be strong, have fun and laugh*' (School N)

Focussing on positive emotions

Half of schools emphasised the importance of focussing on positive emotions, recommending that families use this period to recognise '*the value of happiness*' (School AO) and '*focus on the 'wins'*' (School DK). Several schools recognised positive emotions to include gratitude, love, kindness, optimism and hope. Staff facilitated parents to support their children through equipping them with resources. These included suggested questions '*What makes you smile?', 'What makes you happy?*' to enable children to practise reflection skills (School DK) and savouring positive experiences '*to really maximise our experiences*' (School F). Several schools recommended pupils wrote letters of gratitude, kept gratitude journals and painted stones. As well as reflection, schools asked parents to support children's sense of hope:

'Support your child to imagine themselves in an imaginary future, where everything has worked out in a positive way' (School X)

The theoretical lens identifies positive emotions as a key dimension of wellbeing, implying the value in schools adopting these strategies.

Maintaining a sense of connection

Schools placed importance on pupils, staff and families maintaining a sense of connection to the school community:

'the school will also run a weekly wellbeing check…with both parents and pupils…to still feel part of the [name] community' (School DC)

'If we have not heard from you this week, some staff will be making calls as it is important that children feel connected and hear a friendly voice.' (School CQ)

One school recognised the potential of school closure to enable stronger home-school relationships:

'We do really appreciate everything you have done to support the children - communication has been brilliant with you all and hopefully we have strengthened further our relationship with you as parents which is definitely a positive.' (School BF)

Most schools highlighted how staff were '*missing*' their pupils and the importance of connection was two-way:

This is valuable to our wellbeing as well as yours. It helps stay connected at this time' *(School K)*

'keep sending the teachers pictures or putting things on twitter as it is so lovely to see the children. We miss them so much!' (School X)

Schools understood maintaining connections as a mechanism for sharing enjoyable moments, achievements, and humour. Additionally, most schools perceived connection supported the safeguarding of pupils, enabled pupils and families to raise concerns and issues, requests to be made for additional support and avoiding feelings of isolation.

Schools also recognised the importance for pupils to maintain peer friendships:

> '*keep in touch with friends and family using technology…reconnecting is crucial for our happiness*' (School DH)

> '*peer support is a very important part of learning so…encourage contact with friends*' (School DK)

One school reflected a common perception shared by several schools that connection was also promoted through cultivating a sense that staff and parents were '*in it together*'.

The findings also demonstrated that connection became more intimate during the period of school closure. Staff used a more emotional vocabulary in their communications with families. Headteachers and teachers signed off communications '*lots of love*' (School BF), '*much love always*' (School DA) and '*love to you all*' (School DK). The headteacher of school DK also relayed '*I wept every night this week tears of joy and pride*'. Intimacy was also increased through teachers sharing more about their personal lives. Some schools made videos whereby staff showed their homes, gardens, children, pets and other family members. Several schools used 'A day in the life of…' format whereby teachers shared detailed accounts of how they spent time with their families and the struggles and conflicts they encountered:

> '*We all appreciate how hard it is to work from home! Right now I have [daughter] wanting me to play snakes and ladders with her, [son] wondering why I'm not building a den with him and baby [daughter] looking up at me and smiling with her massive baby eyes! And I'm trying to update the website at the same time!*' (School BX)

In turn, pupils were encouraged to upload write-ups, photos and videos via social media platforms that showed a more intimate and rich perspective of their family lives than schools were exposed to prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. It appeared that school closure drove heightened schools' perceptions of the need to maintain belonging when physical closeness was interrupted. This, again, can be explained through the theoretical lens whereby positive relationships enable social connection which supports pupils, families and staff as well as the school community to flourish during challenging times.

5.3.4.2   Implementation

Encouraging pupils to remain motivated

Schools recognised the importance of motivating children remotely to take part in activities that would promote their wellbeing. One method adopted by many schools was to focus on the wellbeing benefits that engagement brought:

'when we experience positive emotions…it strengthens our physical being, we function much better and are more likely to notice opportunities' (School F)

'Doing more of the that make you feel good actually gives you more energy' (School DH)

'It has been proved that people who volunteer feel better about themselves' (School DK).

Schools also modelled behaviours associated with higher levels of wellbeing. School staff consistently communicated their gratitude to pupils, families, staff and keyworkers.

'Today, I asked the question, 'What are you thankful for?' and I set the challenge to list as many things as you can to be thankful for. How many can you think of?' (School AJ)

'It has been such a blessing to have such lovely weather… I am really enjoying going for walks around my village with my dogs. The dogs can't believe their luck right now!' (School BF)

Schools also used celebration as a way of encouragement by sharing the results of pupils' learning, crafting, cooking, lego-building, physical challenges and many other activities with peers, other families and staff.

'There have been so many acts of kindness that have been shared on Teams this week' (School CQ)

'Each Friday, we will celebrate pupils' efforts and work' (School AY)

To broaden the benefits of celebration, parents were encouraged to adopt this strategy as well:

Decide with your child what you are going to do to "celebrate" their achievements … Get them to design and decorate this so they own it. Put it up somewhere visible' (School DK)

Schools recognised that pupils were motivated to take part in activities that were shared by peers. Half of schools encouraged pupils and families to take part in Joe Wicks' workouts which were televised every morning. Most schools set regular craft, cookery, writing, physical and other challenges for pupils to complete.

Schools understood the importance of routine for supporting pupils to feel secure and ready to engage in activities:

'We know that children thrive on routine so at school we aim to do the same things each day at a similar time.' (School DB)

> *'We know that what children…need most in these unsettling times is a sense of security
> and certainty… routines can really help children to feel settled'* (School K).

Half of schools provided families with resources for building and maintaining routine, and
timetables to structure the days, emphasising the wellbeing benefits of regular mealtimes,
exercise and sleep routines. Several schools enabled daily and weekly school rhythms to be
maintained through online learning and assemblies and virtual storytelling. One school developed
'*Wellbeing Wednesdays'* pupils were supported to engage in enrichment activities. Schools also
encouraged parents to engage with normal school breaks and to suspend learning during the
Easter school holiday dates and half term. Pupils and families were also supported to engage in
celebrations that would have taken place at school, including preparations for Easter and the VE
day celebrations.

Using technology for wellbeing

Whilst engagement with technology for wellbeing was minimal prior to school closure (page 97),
schools used a variety of online programmes to connect with pupils and families including Zoom,
Teams, Tapestry, Seesaw, Twitter, school websites and email to promote wellbeing:

> *'it's been great to see some year three children using the Zoom app to connect with each
> other'* (School AY)

Videos were used to promote wellbeing in a variety of ways. School BF provided links to regular
headteacher videos supporting parents in their new role, sharing the prioritising of wellbeing,
strategies to build positive memories at home, explaining school expectations and discussing
parent feedback. Three other schools produced videos for enjoyment, including a teacher
undertaking a humorous Easter egg hunt around the school building. Whilst fun, this video
enabled children to engage with the 'normal' school environment, enabling connection and a
sense of school belonging. Other videos presented teachers and peers at school in an array of
activities, put to music.

Challenges for engagement

Schools recognised that not all pupils had access to online platforms, which isolated them from
many of the activities that have, so far, been presented. Most schools provided alternative
learning packs for pupils without internet access. Whilst it appears that this had the ability to

meet some pupil needs, the importance of connection outlined earlier was missing for these children.

Viewing the data through the theoretical lens highlighted further challenges in the environment surrounding pupils. Schools recognised that both parents and staff had roles which conflicted during school closure. Many staff were also parents or carers placing time and energy constraints on teaching capacity. Likewise, parents were employees with children of multiple ages to support.

5.3.4.3   Review and refinement

Data collection occurred within the first two months of school closure. The focus of schools was supporting pupils' and families' wellbeing. Informal methods for measuring wellbeing were through virtual pupil-teacher or parent-teacher sessions, phone calls and emails correspondence. To support staff wellbeing, a few schools emphasised the need for patience during these communications and recognise delays may occur whilst the school community adjusted its practices. As the requirement for technology increased, schools sought to ensure families without devices and internet connection could engage as fully as other by providing wellbeing resources via physical learning packs.

Most schools did not have formal review procedures in place, although school CQ had sought feedback from families about the potential wellbeing concerns for some year groups to return to school:

> *'We have conducted an initial survey for parents of R, Y1 and Y6 to ascertain initial feedback about returning and receive parent views to inform planning.'*

Schools valued feedback from families about balancing learning with wellbeing:

> '*We are trying to find the best balance to make sure that children are completing learning that will help them to go back over previous learning and not to put too much pressure on families. We always welcome your feedback.*' (School CQ)

> *'We appreciate that there are different demands on our families. We welcome constructive feedback from parents but this should always be done in the spirit of cooperation'* (School DK)

There was evidence that wellbeing practice evolved organically during this period. One school expanded the practice of connecting class peers to other year groups:

> *'I heard that one class at [School name] had set up a zoom meeting for the children at the end of every school day, what a fantastic idea! Families please work together on this' (School DK)*

> *'We have conducted an initial survey for parents of R, Y1 and Y6 to ascertain initial feedback about returning and receive parent views to inform planning. Thank you to all those parents who responded so quickly '*(School CQ).

5.4   Conclusion and refinement of the conceptual model

This chapter has made an initial exploration of how English primary schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish, using a representative sample of twenty-six schools. It responded to three research sub-questions: Q1) What are the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion? Q2) How is wellbeing practice implemented and sustained? and Q5 How has the disruption of Covid-19 reshaped practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing?

The findings established that schools commonly used a two-fold approach where the skills and knowledge associated with flourishing were developed alongside developing a culture which supported pupils' wellbeing at personal and school community levels. Similarities across schools included using a whole-school approach and developing salutogenic aims. Schools also used a common process of planning, implementing and reviewing, frequently sharing common conceptualisations of key components for whole-school wellbeing promotion. Many schools recognised the symbiotic relationship between learning and wellbeing, resulting in some schools adopting strategies which benefitted both simultaneously. In reviewing wellbeing practice, schools used similar types of formal and informal outcome measures for pupils' wellbeing, capturing perceptions mainly from staff and parents, but not children. Most schools also provided evidence of ongoing evaluation of their wellbeing initiatives. During school closure in the Covid-19 pandemic, the findings demonstrated the strategies schools used to promote wellbeing remained unchanged, although teachers' roles changed from being wellbeing promoters to supporting parents to undertake the role. Schools also became reliant on technology to support wellbeing promotion, in maintaining connections as well as engaging pupils in meaningful and wellbeing-supporting activities.

However, many differences existed. Schools used a myriad of evidence-based strategies and resources from external providers, resulting in a diverse range of curricula, activities and personnel involved in promoting wellbeing. Additionally, despite a commonality of concepts at

face-value, detailed analysis revealed that differing intentions behind concepts influenced the scope and breadth of an activity, with mixed potential benefits for pupils. A further difference was the timeframe in which schools considered pupils' wellbeing, and the findings highlighted how schools with pupils from more disadvantaged backgrounds gave greater focus to promoting life skills and experiences through offering additional opportunities, to build basic foundations for potential wellbeing in adulthood.

Benefits of this phase of the research study has been its focus on a comparison of English primary schools, whereby the comparative findings have enabled shared key components and common implementation practices to be derived. It has also, identified areas in which an amplification of these initial findings would enable further valuable, nuanced knowledge. It anticipated that these could be captured through the in-depth case study in the final phase data collection.

The updated conceptual model highlighted factors which might be prudent for schools to consider in the whole-school wellbeing promotion process (see Figure 5-17). Supplementary information in appendix D.6 provides 1) a pre planning checklist to consider an overarching vision prior to detailed planning and 2) a series of questions which may guide the design and implementation of key components which schools adopt to promote wellbeing.
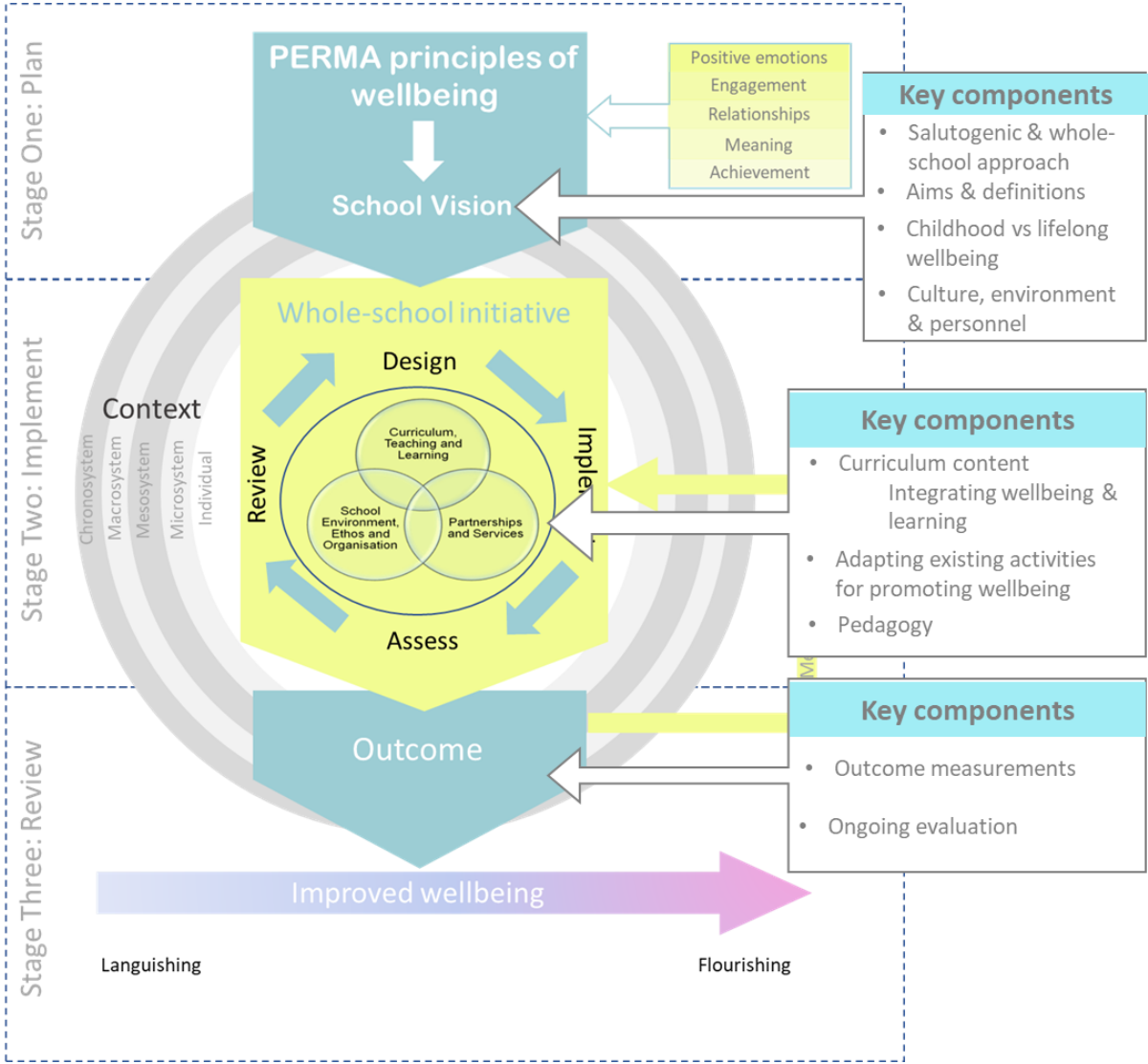
Figure 5-17 The revised conceptual model after refinements emerging from phase two of the study, the secondary data analysis of English primary schools

Chapter 6   Findings from Phase Three: A case study of an English primary school

6.1   Introduction

This chapter presents the findings from phase three, further exploring areas already identified in chapter five. In addition, it considers data that is, so far, missing by focussing on how context influences wellbeing practice in English primary schools and engaging with pupils' lived experiences of wellbeing in school. This chapter is structured in three parts. Part one outlines the characteristics of the case study school.. Part two presents the findings as three themes: 1) a whole school vision and design for promoting wellbeing, 2) the process of implementing and sustaining wellbeing promotion and 3) the influence of context on wellbeing promotion. A full description of the data collection and analysis methods is available in 3.3.4. An audit trail from coding to theme development is available in appendix E.7 for transparency. Part three draws a conclusion and presents the updated conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing in primary schools.

By undertaking a detailed case study of wellbeing practice in a single English primary school, it seeks to address the overarching research question: **How do schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish?** by addressing all five sub-questions:

1)   What are the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion?

2)   How is wellbeing practice implemented and sustained?

3)   What are the contextual factors which influence whole-school wellbeing promotion?

4)   How do pupils experience whole-school wellbeing promotion?

5)   How has the disruption of Covid-19 reshaped practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing?

Multiple research methods were used to capture the voices of Jane* the head teacher, Tom* the wellbeing lead and year six pupils, shown in Figure 6-1 (* denotes pseudonym).

Narrative analysis informed semi-structured interview

Narrative Interview with headteacher, Jane*

Duration one hour in head teacher's office

Semi-structed interview with wellbeing lead, Tom*

Duration one hour in school staff room

Creative mapping drawing with year six pupils

Duration 1 ¼ hours in a classroom

Field notes based on researcher's observations

Written up after each school session

Content analysis of relevant documentation

Figure 6-1 Research methods used in the case study design

An inductive approach was undertaken to explore data from each of the five collection methods, resulting in five separate thematic analyses. Subsequently, the individual analyses were synthesised into an integrated analysis which forms the findings within this chapter (see **Error! Reference source not found.**).
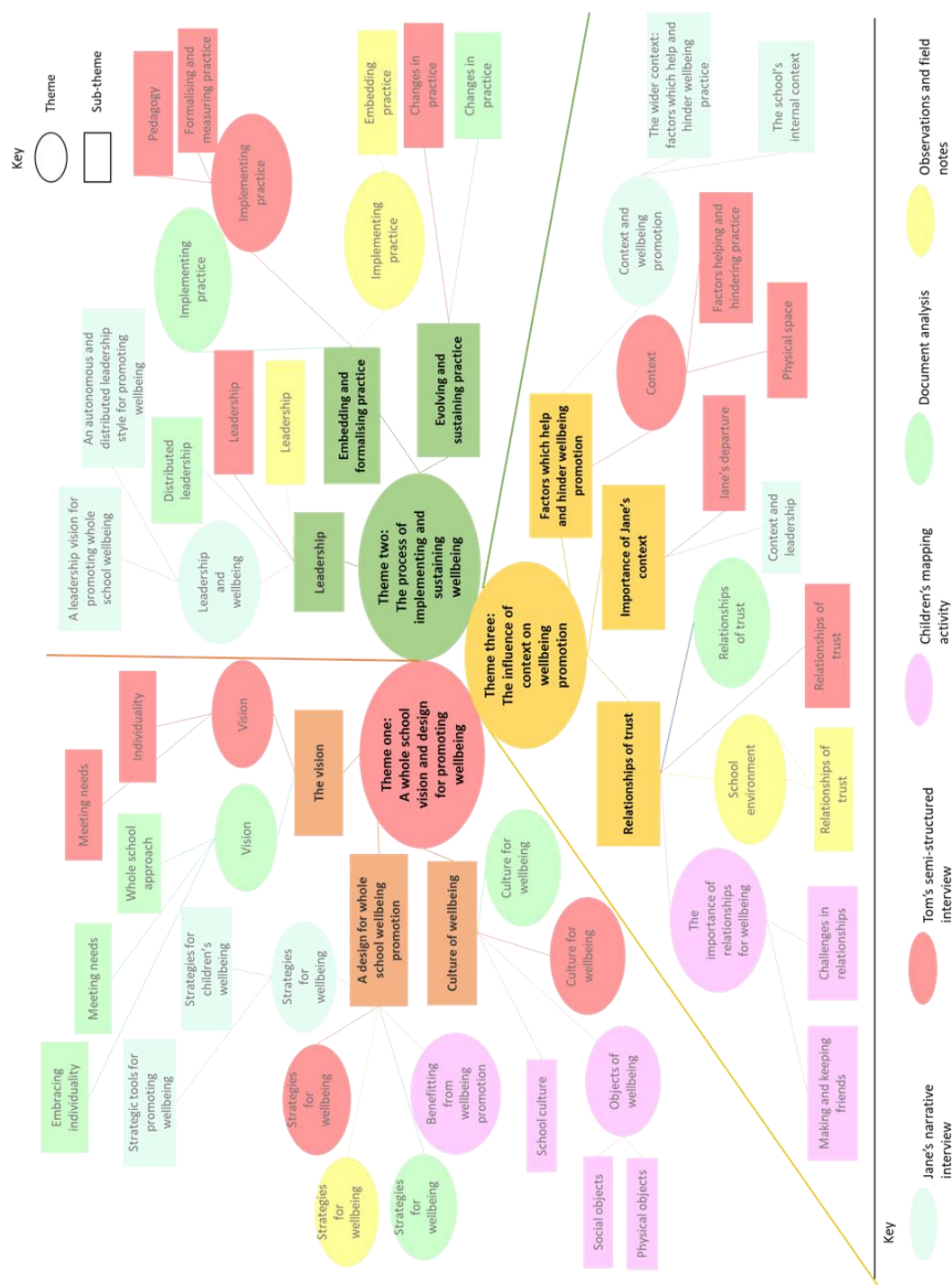
Figure 6-2 A depiction of how the final case study themes were generated from the original thematic analyses of individual data sources: the narrative interview, semi-structured interview, mapping activity, field notes and documentation.

A process of constant comparison between codes and themes generated from the different data sources yielded a series of iterations before a final set of themes were developed (see Figure 6-3).
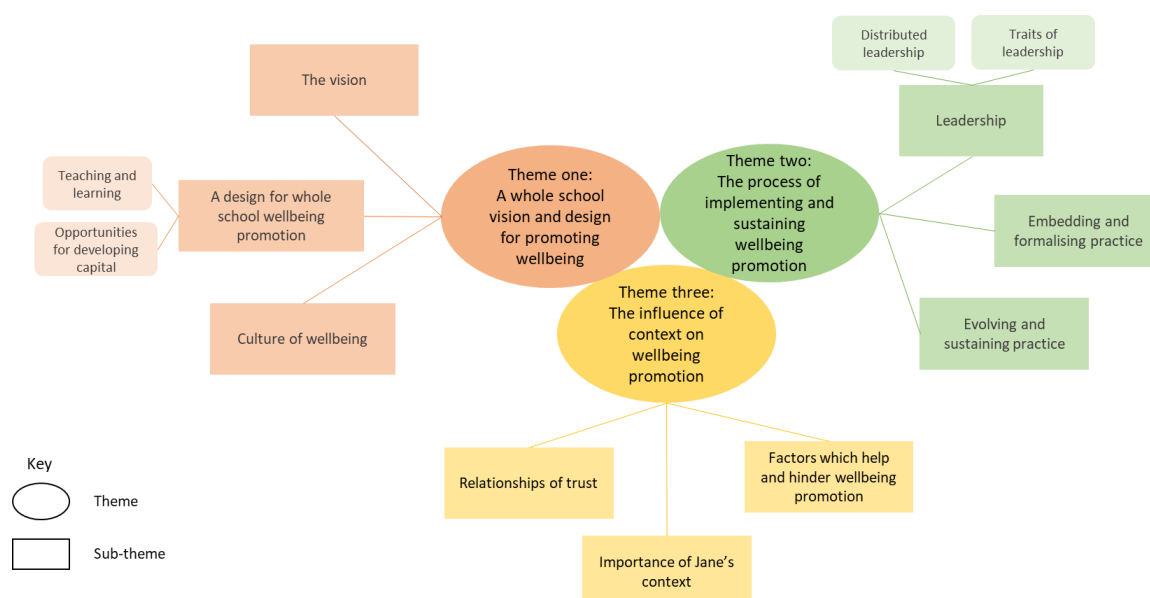
Figure 6-3 A thematic map of the integrated analysis

Three major themes were developed using Braun and Clarke's (2019) RTA framework (page 48): 1) a whole school vision and design for promoting wellbeing, 2) the process of implementing and sustaining wellbeing promotion and 3) the influence of context on wellbeing promotion (See appendix E.7 for an audit trail and E.6 for a worked example). In depicting the three themes touching each other, the map highlights the importance of the relationships between the themes as well as the themes themselves. For example, the analysis will demonstrate how *relationships of trust* in theme three and *culture of wellbeing* in theme one interrelated to support pupils and staff to take risks and make mistakes which, in turn, developed personal agency and self-growth.

6.2 Part one: The characteristics of the case study

6.2.1 The case study school

The school lies within the outskirts of a large city. It comprises approximately four hundred pupils between the ages of four to eleven reflecting on years. Families have higher than average disadvantage with the number of pupils on free school meals in the last six reflecting on years being roughly 40% higher than the national mean. Pupils where English is an additional language is about a third lower than the national average although the school's families are culturally, ethnically and religiously diverse. The school's location is within a built-up residential area close to a secondary school and sixth form college. Whole school wellbeing promotion was introduced to the school by the current headteacher over two decades ago. As a result, the case is an example of sustained, long-term wellbeing promotion which has been recognised to significantly benefit its pupils by the local authority, Ofsted, parents, governors and other external organisations. The

case has been explored at a turning point where the long-term headteacher is leaving after over two decades of school leadership and will be replaced from September 2021. Whilst it was unintentional to capture the cusp of this change, it has enabled the analysis to explore Jane and Tom's reflections on how wellbeing promotion may evolve as a result.

6.3 Part two: The findings

6.3.1 A whole school vision and design for promoting wellbeing

The theoretical lens was used to organise and make sense of the data, developing three sub-themes in the overall theme of a whole-school vision and design for promoting wellbeing. The sub-themes were: 1) the vision for promoting wellbeing, 2) the design for whole school wellbeing promotion and 3) the school's culture of wellbeing (see Figure 6-4). The data demonstrated how the school brought energy and commitment to ensuring the promotion of wellbeing was a central tenet of daily life. There was evidence of both a clear vision and multi-faceted strategy for improving the wellbeing of children, staff and families.

Theme one: A design for whole school wellbeing promotion
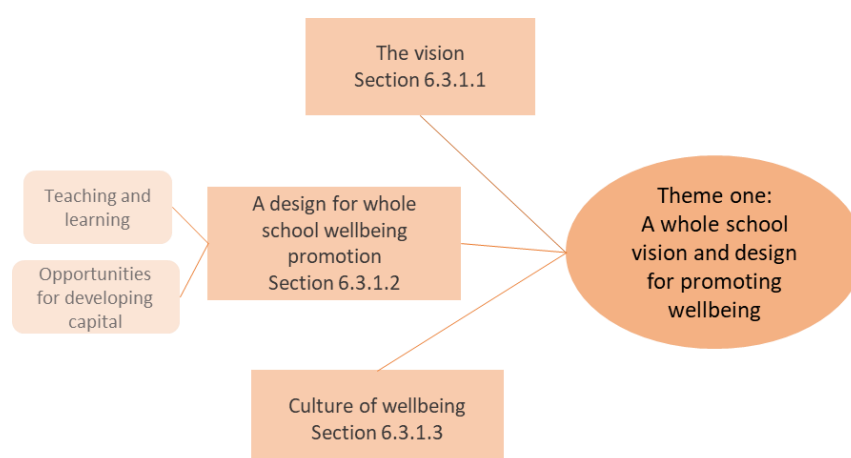
Figure 6-4 Theme one: A design for whole school wellbeing promotion

6.3.1.1 The vision

Wellbeing promotion appeared to be driven by strong motivation and enthusiasm from Jane, the head teacher:

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'It [promoting wellbeing] is a passion, I'm passionate about it' (Jane, J87)

Furthermore, evidence for the positive benefits of Jane's commitment was demonstrated by the most recent Ofsted inspection letter:

> *the school's leadership brings a clear vision and energy. A parent recognised the care of the school in supporting their children, enabling them to be happy and thrive.* (To maintain anonymity this has been paraphrased from the Ofsted Inspection letter, 2018, O2)

Ofsted recognised the strong leadership which exists within the school, implying its fundamental nature as an aspect of wellbeing practice. Not only was wellbeing important to the school, but the extract highlights how parents also evaluated their children's happiness as important.

Jane expanded on her wellbeing vision:

> *'… my own philosophy … and vision is building on a … really strong sense of equality, a really strong commitment to offset disadvantage'* (Jane, J7)

The repetition of '*really strong*' emphasises Jane's commitment to her vision. She highlights the importance she places on creating equal chances for all pupils, implying an ethos of inclusivity. Additionally, Jane understands that to successfully promote wellbeing the school has an obligation to recognise what '*disadvantage*' means for its pupils and to provide opportunities to address this. Moreover, in '*offsetting disadvantage'* Jane's meaning of '*equality*' appears to encompass how her pupils' chances compare with children of greater privilege. A fuller discussion on this topic appears in section 6.3.1.2. In all, the vision highlights how the school seeks to meet the unique needs of its own cohort of pupils through its bespoke approach, as opposed to using a more generic method to promoting wellbeing.

Tom echoes Jane's vision of addressing children's needs, corroborating that this is where the focus lies:

> *'…their wellbeing as a person…happy and healthy as much as they can be'* (Tom, T3)

Tom provides a personal definition of wellbeing as a person who is '*happy and healthy'*. He suggests that the school seeks to maximise pupils' wellbeing, emphasising how the school seeks to meet the parental desire for their children's happiness which was identified earlier. Yet, Tom's words imply an awareness that children are individuals with differing needs and circumstances. Indeed, Tom further emphasises how a child's context is directly impactful on both their wellbeing and learning:

'What happens at home affects what happens at school, and they're not going to be in the right place to learn if they come in having, you know, not had breakfast or having witnessed issues at home or all sorts of things. It's all a part of their wellbeing' (Tom, T2)

Tom's explanation can be understood through the theoretical lens of Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological theory suggesting that children's personal development is most highly influenced by their interrelationships with their immediate environment, including the impact of home and family relationships.

As well as identifying the school's vision, the analysis also sought to explore how this was experienced by children through the mapping activity with year six pupils. Figure 6-5 and Figure 6-6 present examples that demonstrate the reflective, honest accounts provided by children in undertaking this task, demonstrating two highly personal enactments of children's lived experiences of the school's vision for wellbeing promotion.
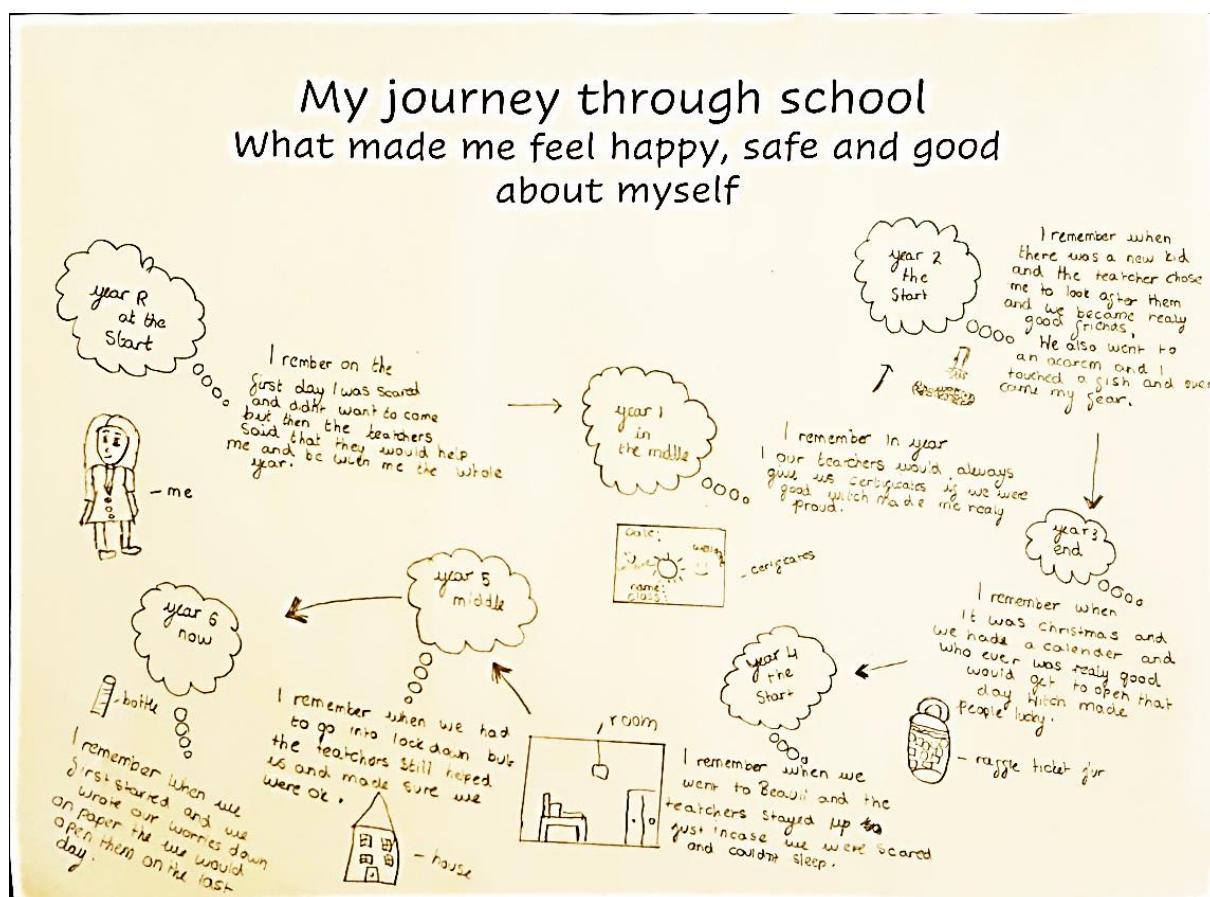
Figure 6-5 Child 14's wellbeing map
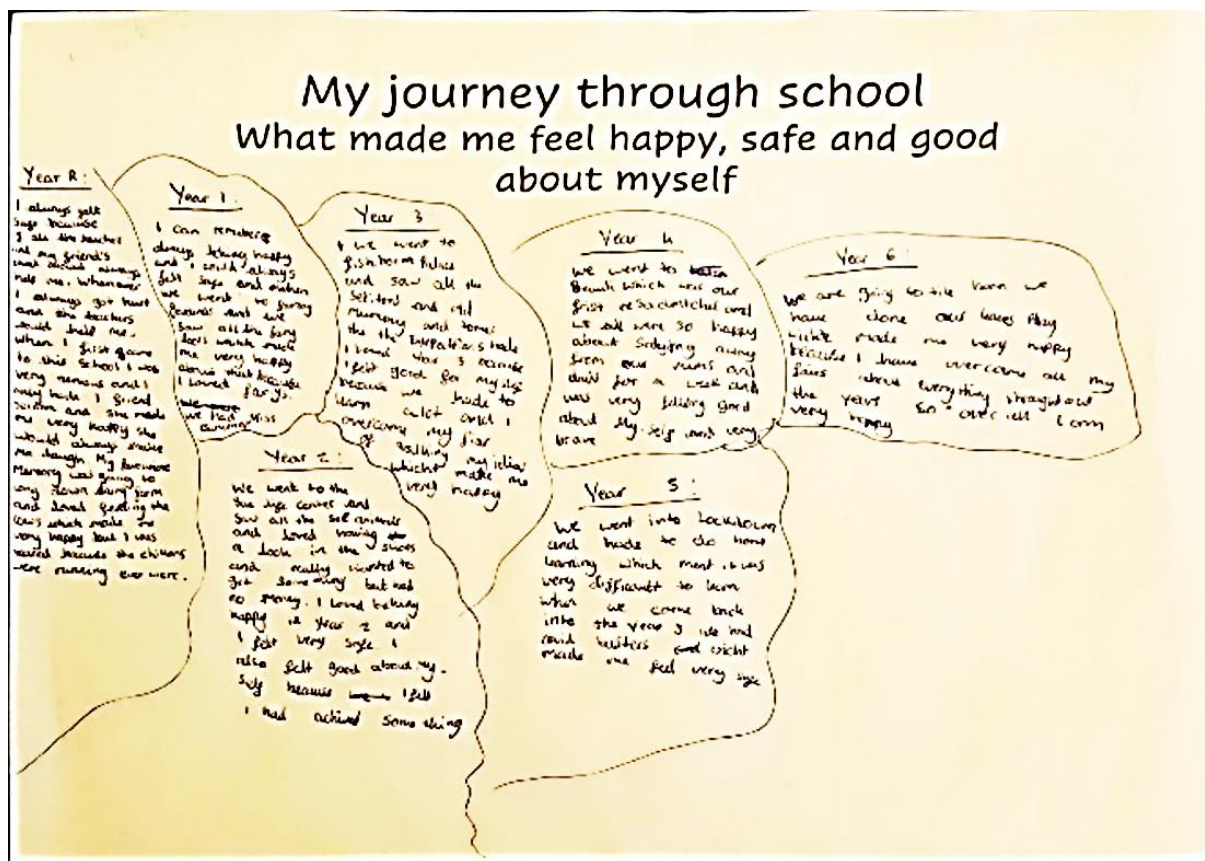
Figure 6-6 Child 15's wellbeing map

These maps illustrate how both pupils considered they had benefitted from the school's vision to provide a range of additional opportunities through school trips. Additionally, both children felt the school had enabled them to overcome '*fears*' and '*worries*' and provided the support they needed for learning. However, whilst child 14 reflected on the importance of reward systems, child 15 suggested feeling supported to talk through ideas was more beneficial. As well as reflecting differing personal needs, the maps highlighted how the children uniquely experienced their contexts. Whilst child 15 had found it difficult to learn from home during the Covid-19 pandemic, this had not concerned child 14.

Furthermore, the maps highlighted the skills associated with wellbeing which pupils had developed during their time at school. Both children talked about being '*happy*', '*safe*', '*good*', having '*fear*' and '*worry*', demonstrating self-awareness and a vocabulary of feelings. Similarly, they presented a coherent account of experiences recounting personal issues and solutions, implying the learning and development of good reflection and problem-solving skills. Lastly, the maps demonstrated that the children were comfortable and confident to be honest about their school experiences, a value promoted by the school (page 165).

Moreover, as well as meeting the needs of pupils in the present moment, Jane's vision extended beyond the immediate:

> *'[promoting wellbeing] it's … longer term. We're looking at these children being able to be good learners and healthy learners, you know, throughout their lives. We're just not doing short termism'* (Jane, J78)

This extract echoes Jane's argument for '*offsetting disadvantage'*, whereby experiences provided by the school have longer-term benefits. By contrasting this with meeting short term, immediate wellbeing needs such as friendship disputes, there is a sense the school uses a process of zooming out and zooming in. In zooming out, staff take a broad perspective of offering children a universal set of experiences to develop skills and human, social and cultural capital for life (discussed in section 7.3.1.3). However, in zooming in there appears to be a sensitivity in recognising how the school can address an individual child's changing, and sometimes fragile, wellbeing needs over time.

Furthermore, as well as considering **what** the vision seeks to include, the findings highlight a vision of **who** will be involved in wellbeing promotion. Jane stated that the school uses a '*whole school approach'* which appears to be two-fold in its approach. It relates to whose wellbeing is of concern. The positive mental health policy reports the school's aim:

> *'to promote positive mental health for every member of our staff and pupil body'*
> (Positive mental health policy, reviewed 2020)

Whilst the focus on children's wellbeing has already been highlighted, the presence of a staff wellbeing policy indicated the importance of employees' wellbeing:

> *'The biggest asset our school has is its staff; the biggest asset they have is their health and wellbeing…to enhance individual wellbeing, through personal fulfilment and professional identity. This in turn will benefit our pupils and our community'* (Wellbeing Policy, reviewed 2020, W1)

Tom corroborated that staff wellbeing was of concern, reflecting on how staff feel valued by the school:

> '…*the staff tend to trust the school…to accept that this is somewhere that cares about wellbeing. And they trust that there are people on management who are always sympathetic if they have something that they need to talk to and they need to address*.'
> (Tom, T28)

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This extract introduces the concept of *'trust'*, an important theme of the analysis which was repeatedly referred to across different data sources (pages 145 and 174). Here, Tom uses *'trust'* to convey a mechanism for creating meaningful dialogue between *'management'* and staff. By enabling staff to feel safe and respected, trust allows them to share vulnerabilities with another person who *'cares'* about them. Tom sees this relationship of trust as allowing staff to be active agents in their own wellbeing.

Moreover, this wellbeing policy identifies the relationship between high staff wellbeing and the ensuing positive effect on children's wellbeing. From their maps, children corroborated this interdependence. In their own words, children described that where staff *were seen as* '*kind*', '*supportive*', '*caring*', '*cheerful*' and '*had a good sense of humour'* this made the pupils feel '*safe*' and '*happy*'. It, therefore, appears that trust is a key driver for wellbeing in the school.

The school also understood a *'whole* school' approach as relating to which people were involved in wellbeing promotion. Jane reported:

> *'I suppose things like that [the school's central principles for promoting wellbeing] are understood by everybody in the school*.' (Jane, J32)

The analysis identified that it was not only about staff understanding the principles of wellbeing promotion, there was also evidence of collegiality in delivering wellbeing practice. Collegiality may be defined as staff benefitting from the mutual support they gain in sharing the responsibility for promoting pupils' wellbeing (Acton and Glasgow, 2015). As such, policy states:

> *'all staff should be mental health champions'* (Positive mental health policy for pupils)

Involvement was broader than teaching staff, the document analysis identified that other staff were involved in delivering the reward system, a strategy of wellbeing promotion:

> **'***lunchtime supervisors give out one certificate per day (this works towards their [class] Golden Certificate***)'** (Behaviour policy, B9)

Furthermore, Tom reported that families not only supported the school's wellbeing strategies but were also involved more creatively:

> *'Lots of families are really positive about the things we are doing [in promoting wellbeing] and working with us, and bring their own perspectives which works really, really well'* (Tom, T66)

Moreover, recognition that the school used a whole school approach is given in the school's latest Ofsted inspection:

Leadership, teachers and support staff display strong teamwork. All demonstrate the passion they share in their ethos of inclusion. (To maintain anonymity this has been paraphrased from the Ofsted Inspection letter, 2018, O3).

These findings provide strong evidence for the whole school nature of wellbeing promotion in the case study school. This is important as findings from the systematic literature review in phase one found that initiatives were more beneficial and sustainable where a whole school approach was undertaken.

6.3.1.2   A design for whole school wellbeing promotion

This section seeks to identify how the school translates its vision into wellbeing practice. Whilst the analysis has already recognised that staff and family wellbeing are important to the school, this section concentrates solely on wellbeing promotion for its pupils, the major focus of the research study. The central document related to wellbeing promotion is the relatively new personal development learning (PDL) curriculum, which echoes the school vision of '*equality*', stating:

> *'Our whole school curriculum is built upon fairness, equality of opportunity, enjoyment and purpose.'* (PDL curriculum 2020, P1)

Replacing the previous PHSE policy, the new document outlines a series of intentions. The intentions have been analysed using the domains of the Healthy Promoting Schools framework to categorise and make sense of the strategies used by the school, see Figure 6-7.

Curriculum

Teaching and learning

- Encourage creativity, physical activity and be challenged academically
- To value and learn from mistakes
- Encourage resilience for overcoming challenges and barriers
- Encourage an emotional lexicon to enhance experiences

Additional opportunities

- Widen children's experiences – trips, visitors, opportunities to learn outside the classroom. Preparing children for the next stage of education
- Develop cultural capital
- Highlight the awe and wonder of being human in our world

School culture: organisation, ethos and environment

- Develop the whole child
- Promote understanding of the rights of the child
- Value of forming positive relationships
- Value inclusivity and accessibility
- Foster curiosity, fun and laughter

Figure 6-7 The school's personal development learning (PDL) intentions categorised using the Health Promoting Schools framework

The intentions fell into two of the framework's domains: 1) curriculum, teaching and learning and 2) the school culture: organisation, ethos and environment. It appeared that within the first domain there were two sub-categories of intentions. Firstly, some intentions such as '*overcoming challenges*' related to teaching and learning. Secondly, other intentions including '*widen[ing] children's experiences*' appeared to use a 'zoomed out' approach to focus on skills and opportunities associated with '*offset[ting] disadvantage*'. In all, the intentions were wide in scope, using a holistic focus to consider the dimensions of children's wellbeing. Intentions included the development of a range of skills associated with wellbeing such as taking risks and making mistakes, developing social skills, using a wellbeing vocabulary, promoting curiosity and taking a

light-hearted approach to life. The analysis will now explore each of these identified categories (teaching and learning, additional opportunities and culture of wellbeing) to gain a fuller understanding of wellbeing promotion in the case study school.

Teaching and learning

Alongside the policy documents, Jane, Tom and the year six children all referred to how teaching and learning was used to promote wellbeing in the school. Five aspects of practice were particularly apparent, as outlined in Figure 6-8:
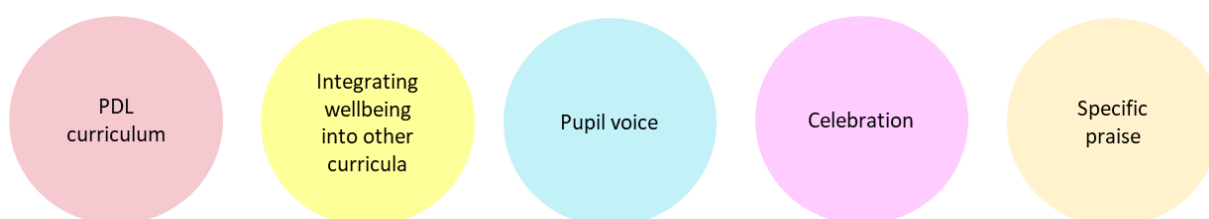
Figure 6-8 Teaching and learning: aspects of practice

The PDL curriculum was driven by two policy documents: 1) the PDL curriculum policy and 2) the PDL long-term map. These outlined a programme of PDL lessons covering diverse such as building positive relationships, protecting mental health and understanding economic wellbeing. In addition, Tom reported that circle times and assemblies formed part of PDL curriculum and enabled children to share *'achievements'* and *'concerns'*.

Alongside a focus on content, the policy also highlights the importance of pedagogic style in delivering lessons for wellbeing. Teachers are asked to use:

'responsive strategies *…[which]* should be varied and chosen based on the needs of the class' *(PDL curriculum. P3)*

Tom describes the technique of *'blocking'* whereby lessons are taught intensively during a single week. He concluded that this is particularly beneficial for some sensitive aspects of the curriculum such as sex education to *'keep it fresh'*.

As well as stand-alone PDL sessions, wellbeing was integrated into the teaching and learning of other curricula. Tom exemplified this by describing a recent history lesson:

> *'…Shackeleton exploring the Antarctic. I am looking at the advert where he said we want men for this. And that turned into quite a long discussion about gender and…would that be acceptable today? How do you respond to that?'* (Tom, T20)

This extract highlights how group discussions enabled pupils to apply wellbeing knowledge outside the PDL lessons. The *'long discussion'* suggests that Tom's choice of this pedagogic style allowed children to engage deeply with the topic. His open-ended questioning implies that children were encouraged to practice reasoning and decision-making skills, associated with promoting self-confidence and improving wellbeing. The analysis suggests that content and pedagogy are equally important components in the design of strategies for promoting wellbeing.

As well as teaching and learning, Jane also identified three other strategies which were more generally used in daily school life. These included 1) enabling pupil voice, 2) using celebration and 3) giving specific praise. Jane placed considerable importance on enabling pupil voice, returning to the topic periodically during her narrative interview. However, she was critical of school councils whereby a small number of pupils represented the views of their class:

> '*I often feel you end up with the SAME (her emphasis) children on the school council and … you often end up with… a popularity contest … with the most articulate children rather than trying to give opportunities to, you know, more children who may be able to make a contribution'* (Jane, J62)

Jane perceived this strategy as limiting opportunities to a homogeneous group of children, at odds with the inclusive vision of her own school. In contrast, Jane described a long-term approach she has adopted. The '*issue of the month'* strategy encouraged all pupils to discuss issues of personal importance:

> '*…through this, you know, a child will bring the views of the class to, then, a meeting relating to a particular issue, and that issue changes through time… and often those issues do relate to wellbeing…'* (Jane, J62)

Jane advocated this strategy as a more inclusive process of allowing more children's voices to be heard, empowering children through being autonomous decision-makers in choosing topics and giving them agency to engage in personally meaningful topics. Moreover, Jane highlights the curiosity and importance children themselves place on the topic. Such focus may be due to the centrality of wellbeing promotion in the school.

Jane also emphasised how celebration was used within the school to enhance pupil wellbeing:

'So, lots of celebration - I think that's really important… ways hopefully that are, that are empowering and helpful and we do quite a lot around, you know what does encouragement look like, to enable children to build their self-esteem.' (Jane, J45)

Jane perceived a positive relationship between celebration and wellbeing. Incorporating '*lots of celebration'* emphasised how widely this strategy is used within the school. Yet, Jane is careful in considering how the benefits of celebration can be maximised. She focuses on '*empowering*' pupils by encouraging them to be agents of their own wellbeing. In this example, Jane sees '*encouragement*' by staff as a tool for actively engaging pupils in developing their own internal mechanisms for recognising and building '*self-esteem'.*

Children recognised the benefits of celebration, reporting that the school's reward systems were both enjoyable and satisfying:
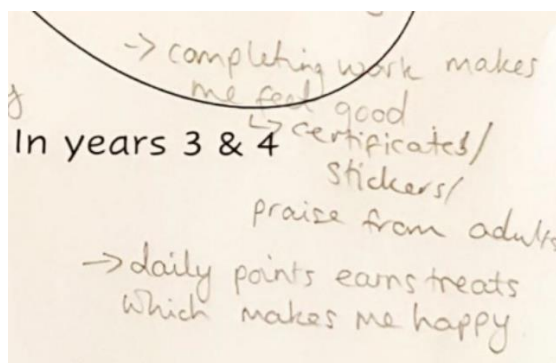
'Completing work makes me feel good - certificates/ stickers/praise from adults… daily points earns treats which makes me happy' (Child 16, reflecting on year 3 scribed by LSA, C70)
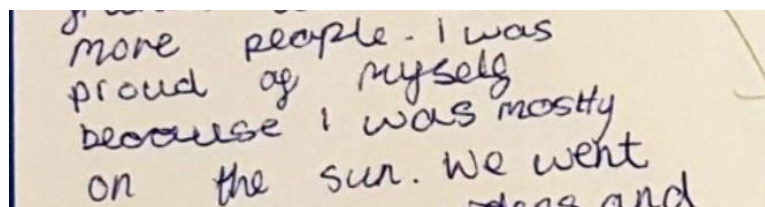
'I was proud of myself because I was mostly on the sun [reward system].' (Child 10, reflecting on year 1, C34)

Another strategy used celebration to embrace the uniqueness of children, supporting individuality. 'P*eople like us'* celebrated the individual child and their place within humanity:

'… *really thinking about what do our, sort of, personal communities look like… So,*
enabling the children to think about - people like me go to mosque, people like me, have
a birthmark, people like me, you know, have two dads … And then starting to think about
well who else might belong in that tribe… and it's surprising for children that they could
see there are others… who are like them.' (Jane, J36)

Jane used this strategy to promote agency by '*enabling children to think'* about themselves. It
exemplifies the way in which the school promotes its vision of '*equality*' through normalising
differences. Moreover, Jane highlighted the importance she sees of connection with others for
wellbeing, emphasising the benefits of knowing your '*tribe*'. She believes:

'*Children can feel very isolated… I remember a really powerful assembly - a child who*
had not really talked about it before … said people like me have one hand … smaller than
the other… we talked about… that although you're the only child in the school with that
condition, actually… there will be other children… so you know a tribe … across the
world' (Jane, J36)

Jane conveyed that this strategy enabled children to avoid feeling '*isolated*' by finding their '*tribe*',
recognising its benefits for looked-after pupils. She argued that '*people like us'* enabled children to
widen their perspective beyond home and school. By implication, it appears this strategy enables
children to challenge existing, unhelpful thoughts, instead facilitating them to reframe their
viewpoint more positively.

 Jane, additionally, placed importance on the strategy of specific praise:

'*I really like the way you spoke to me just then' so the children actually can latch on to*
what it is that was good, and then to build on more of that… to make long term
improvements in their self-esteem rather than quick fixes ....' (Jane, J46)

Jane highlighted how specific praise is a mechanism which enables children to actively engage in
the process of promoting their own wellbeing. Being specific enabled children detailed knowledge
about how their thoughts or actions were evaluated as '*good*'. Agency is then passed to the pupil
through empowering them with the knowledge of how they can '*build*' their skills. This is a further
example of Jane's belief in the importance in transferring validation from the teacher to the child.
This implies encouraging children to be autonomous agents who engage with wellbeing
promotion, rather than passive receivers of the initiative.

The children's maps highlighted how wellbeing strategies related to teaching and learning were experienced. Nearly half of the pupils described how challenging learning had boosted their self-confidence, illustrated by this child's comments:
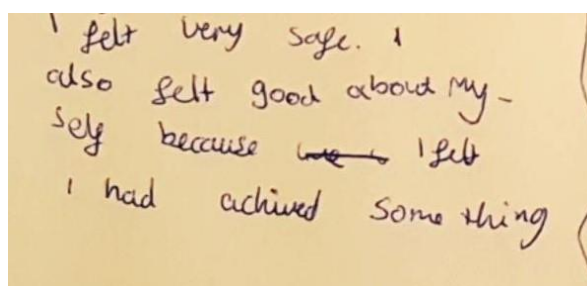
'*I also felt good about myself because I felt I had achieved something*' (child 15, reflecting on year 2, C53)

Additionally, child 8 identified that in Year 1 it was not the achievement but rather support and encouragement that had enabled them to bounce back from making mistakes that enhanced wellbeing:
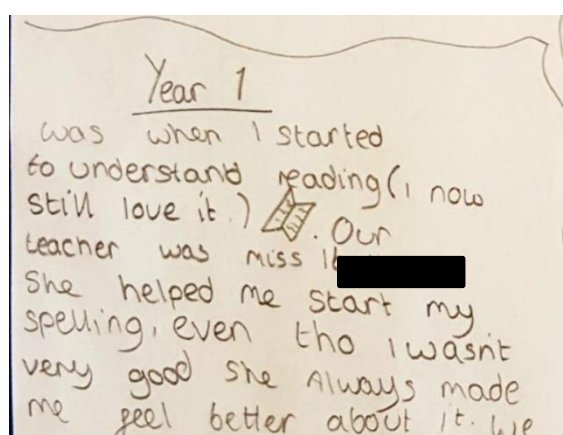
'*Our teacher …helped me start my spelling, even tho I wasn't very good she always made me feel better about it.*' (child 8, reflecting on year 1, C30)

Furthermore, a third child highlighted that social recognition and meaningful connection was important to them:

This year
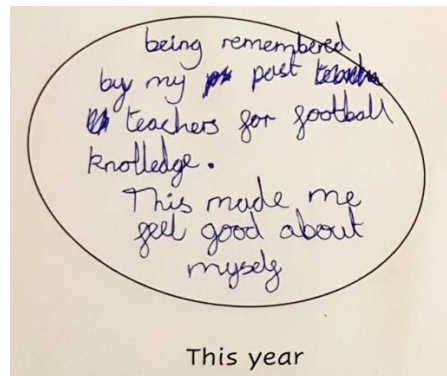
'Being remembered by my past teachers for football knolledge [sic]. This made me feel
good about myself' (child 1, reflecting on year 6, C115)

These extracts reinforce the unique needs of children, suggesting that individuals benefit from a
range of approaches in their learning. As a result, it appears that the school has the potential to
meet these differing needs through the range of strategies they have adopted in promoting
wellbeing.

Additional opportunities

The analysis has already identified Jane's vision of '*offsetting disadvantage'* through the intention
of '*widen[ing] children's experiences – trips, visitors, opportunities to learn outside the classroom'*
(PDL curriculum). Additionally, it has suggested that these opportunities facilitate pupils to
develop the traits associated with human, social and cultural capital. The school provides regular
opportunities for children to engage with art, music and drama, including a week dedicated to the
arts held each summer term and held an art exhibition at a local doctor's surgery. In addition,
children take part in annual school trips two week-long residential stays in years four and six.
Other activities include Forest school and various extracurricular clubs. This focus on additional
opportunities reflects the findings from the secondary data analysis, where several schools
engaged in similar activities to broaden pupils' experiences.

Tom reported on the importance placed on art and music, describing the link he sees between
opportunities for creativity and wellbeing:

'*This is a school that actually takes the arts seriously…it's encouraging that creativity…giving the children cultural capital… [Art and music]* really are a part of developing wellbeing' (Tom, T60)

In terms of music, the researcher's field notes also evidenced the prevalence of music within the school:

'*On the tour a well-resourced music room was observed. During repeated visits there was evidence of music lessons taking place and children were heard singing. There were large numbers of certain instruments, such as ukuleles, which appeared to be available for whole class music sessions. Jane explained that all children had the opportunity to experience playing five instruments during their time at the school. '*(Field notes, F2)

As well as universal experiences, Tom described how the school addressed greater needs where staff '*invite children*' to attend lessons with the peripatetic music teacher in circumstances where they '*might really benefit*'.

Field notes also convey the prevalence of visual arts in the school:

'*Many examples of pupils' art were visible in the common spaces of the school. Additionally, several large, highly coloured and patterned animal sculptures were observed around the school. This evoked a sense that not only was creative expression celebrated but there was a focus on fun. Reflecting on the literature, both creativity and light-heartedness are components of wellbeing.*' (Field notes, *F3*)

Furthermore, the school website exemplified the school's focus on the links between art and wellbeing. A project involving pupils from infant classes was used as a fun learning activity to consider personal wellbeing at school. A large size zebra statue was decorated and now sits in a communal space in the school:

'*The vibrant and varied colours in the zebras coat reflect the inclusive ethos of the school and the children's creativity, excitement and enthusiasm for learning…The zips reveal the zebra's true colours underneath- reminding us that we can still stay true to ourselves while taking occasional risks and expressing different side of our personality*' (School website, *F4*)

The zebra was used as a metaphor for children to consider how the school supports aspects of their wellbeing. For younger children, the concrete visibility of the fur, zips and colours may have enabled them to understand the concept of being our authentic selves, which would otherwise have been too abstract for their developmental stage. Instead, the statue reflects the values of

the school in embracing individuality, encouraging learning and meeting children's needs. It also conveys how the school seeks to sustain a culture encouraging authenticity and supporting vulnerability. This reinforces the school's strategy of promoting agency and encouraging self-responsibility for wellbeing which has been evident throughout this section.

The school uses Forest school as a mechanism for promoting wellbeing:

> *'so its interesting seeing them 'Oh yes, I remember all of these things that we do'. And knowing what to do in the woods and…how they communicate with each other, how they solve disputes…it's very free and open in terms of choosing activities. It's very lightly guided' (Tom, T54)*

The benefits of this unstructured activity in woodland spaces are seen by Tom as providing the opportunity for children to build and practice a range of skills associated with developing social capital and autonomy. He also suggests reflective and self-awareness skills enable children to re-engage quickly with this environment, *'Oh yes, I remember…'.*

Children recognised the benefits of residential trips on their wellbeing. Pupils expressed a range of emotions, in their own words feeling *'scared', 'happy', 'excited', 'nervous', 'fun' and 'safe'.* *M*ost children who described negative emotions perceived their year four trip as a period of self-growth. Children conveyed that these experiences enabled them to internally validate the positive effect of overcoming negative emotions:
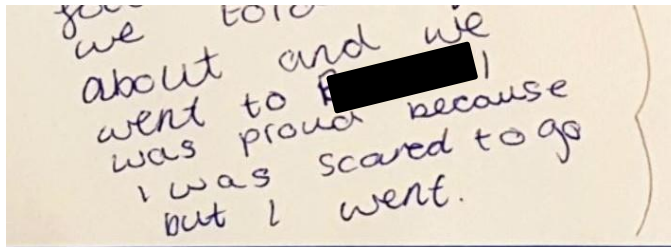
'*we went to [name of residential trip] I was proud because I was scared to go but I went'*
(child 10, reflecting on year 4, C81**)**
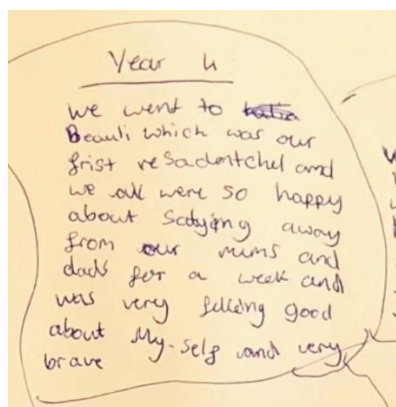
'*staying away from our mums and dads for a week and was very feeling about myself and very brave'* (Child 15, reflecting on year 4, C85)

Such reflections highlight a range of benefits children experienced through taking part in the additional opportunities the school offered to '*offset disadvantage'* as well as providing evidence of the agency children developed to overcome challenges.

6.3.1.3   Culture of wellbeing

The success of the school in sustaining a culture which supports wellbeing is recognised by Ofsted:

The school displays an especially nurturing and inclusive culture. (To maintain anonymity this has been paraphrased from the Ofsted Inspection letter, 2018, O1).

Jane recognised this culture was, in part, driven by a common language of wellbeing:

'*I can set that tone… in the wording that I use, the language that I use.... And that's really important in… the cohesion around wellbeing as well.'* (Jane, J64)

This gives a sense of the responsibility Jane feels as leader, seeing the decisions she makes as fundamental to the success of the whole school approach, '*the cohesion around wellbeing'*.

As well as language, Jane described other important aspects of the school culture:

'*consistent traits of, of kindness, of compassion, of listening, of, of recognising when you don't get it right'* (Jane, J16)

This reflects Jane's earlier perceptions that wellbeing promotion was long-term in nature, requiring a sustained approach. As well necessitating positive traits, she recognised the school

culture encouraged honesty and mistake making, acknowledging times where people '*don't get it right'*.

The values and traits the school associated with a culture for wellbeing have been embedded into school processes through the Golden Rules where a focus on the traits of kindness, listening and honesty is clearly demonstrated:

> '*The Golden Rules are: Do be gentle and thoughtful Do be kind and helpful Do work hard Do look after property Do listen to people Do be honest Do not hurt anybody Do not hurt people's feelings Do not waste yours or other people's time Do not interrupt Do not cover up the truth'* (Behaviour policy, B6)

The way in which this culture impacted on the children's own lived experiences was evident through their maps. Presenting a broadly positive experience, pupils captured the ways in which the school's culture had supported them through their school journey, reporting '*loving'*, '*enjoying'* or having '*favourite'* or '*best'* times at school. However, the school's culture was experienced uniquely with children describing different periods as being personally beneficial. Describing the same class teacher in their maps, one pupil recalled their teacher as '*kind'*, whilst another described them as '*loud'*. This insight highlights the subjectivity with which each child experiences the same events. The implication being pupils' lived experiences are valuable in assessing how and to what extent the school's culture for wellbeing meets its aims.

Furthermore, several children described the benefits of the learning culture, suggesting it enabled them to develop confidence and self-esteem, particularly when they faced challenges. Others benefitted from the support and enjoyment the culture of the school instilled:
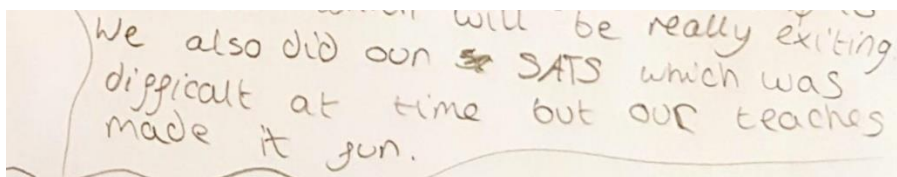
> '*We also did our SAT's which was a difficult time but the teacher made it fun'* (Child 8, reflecting on year 5, C127)
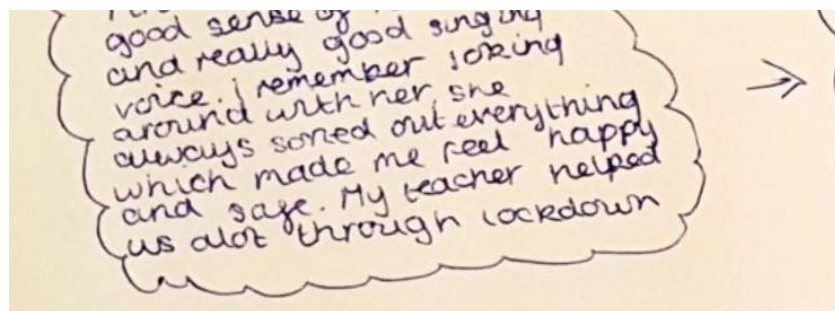
'I remember joking around with her [the class teacher] she always sorted out everything

which made me feel happy and safe. My teacher helped us a lot through lockdown'

(Child 11, yr 5, C106)

Alongside the pupils, Tom recognised how the culture of wellbeing benefitted children. Tom demonstrated how the ethos of equality and inclusivity within the classroom generated open-mindedness and respect between pupils through including pupils with diverse additional needs in mainstream lessons. He reports:

'what everyone needs is reflected by the children… it is fantastic…I've been consistently

impressed with how it [provision for children with additional needs] teaches …other

children in the school about the fact that different children need different things and

that's ok…not everyone can have the same expectations…I think it makes them generally

more compassionate, understanding young people…and that's the ethos of the school.'

(Tom, T25)

It appears that Tom sees the values and traits of the school leadership and staff to be reflected through the thoughts and actions of their pupils, being *'clearly impressed'*. He identifies how this inclusive culture provides all children with an opportunity to develop a variety of skills, such as compassion, empathy, respect and managing expectations. This suggests a further method by which the school facilitates children in developing skills associated with social capital and emotional intelligence.

It appeared the culture of wellbeing enabled pupils to develop a sense of belonging, particularly to their class. Whilst the analysis has already identified the importance Jane placed on connection with the school and wider human community through strategies such as *'people like us'*, pupils also appeared to enjoy a sense of belonging with their peers. Several pupils referenced a class joke that was shared with the teacher:
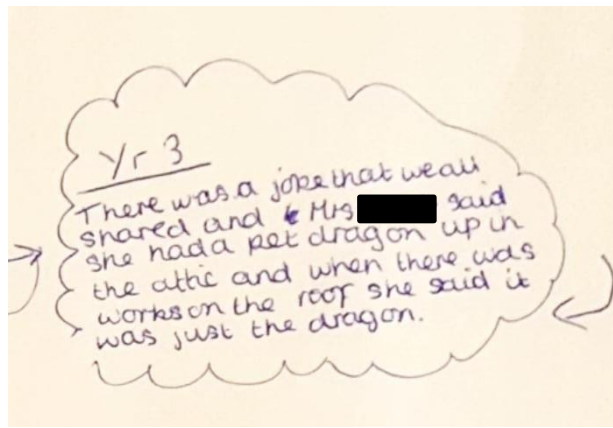
'There was a joke that we all shared and [name of teacher] said she had a pet dragon up in the attic' (child 11, reflecting on year 3, C62).

In contrast, clear enjoyment was expressed in belonging to a class group who shared a secret from their teacher. In this second example, several children reported that their enjoyment resulted from the collective experience of belonging to a group that tried to '*see*' their teacher's '*secret food stash*', using words like '*we*' and '*us*'. The implication being that a shared experience had greater benefits for happiness levels than one pupil engaging in the same activity on their own, implying that group belonging is a driver of wellbeing.
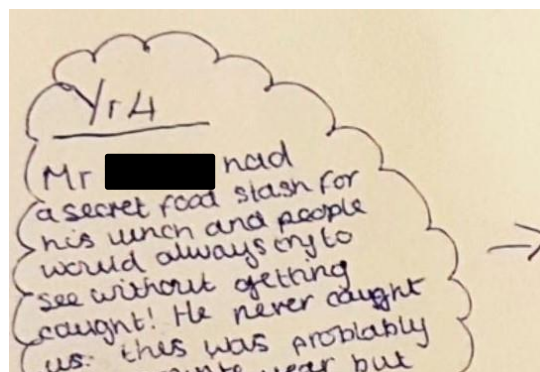
'[name of teacher] had a secret food stash for his lunch and people would always try to see without getting caught! He never caught us' (child 11, reflecting on year 4, C82).

The analysis also found that some pupils' sense of belonging was supported through methods which staff may not have recognised. A few pupils appeared to place emotional significance on certain objects and spaces as a method to support their wellbeing.

Three children referred to a castle-shaped pop-up tent in their year one classroom as a place which allowed them to feel *'safe',* giving it more importance than a simple play item. Furthermore, Child 3's abstracted portrayal shows a solid, turreted structure on which they are standing rather than its true flimsy structure.

In years 1 & 2
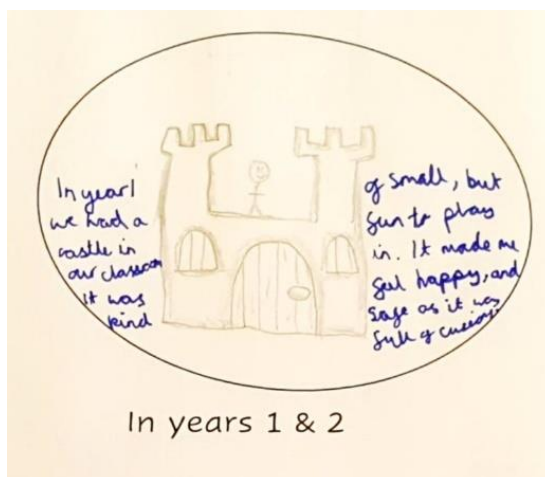
Child 3

Again, this suggests that some children's levels of wellbeing are enhanced by the significance they personally place on an object. It appears that they benefit, not from the object itself, but from what they convey it to represent. Thus, the tent provides certain children with a sense of safety not because of its solidity as a structure but because of its psychological representation in the child's mind.
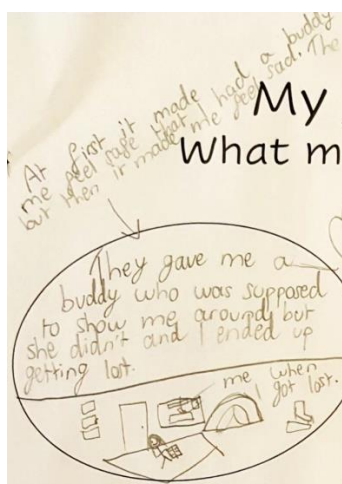
'*They gave me a buddy who was supposed to show me around but she didn't and I ended up getting lost…At first it made me feel safe that I had a buddy but then it made me feel sad*.' (Child 17, reflecting on year R, C24)

A further example was found in child 17's interpretation of the friendship bench in the school playground, whereby sitting on the bench conveyed to other pupils that children were seeking friendship during break times.
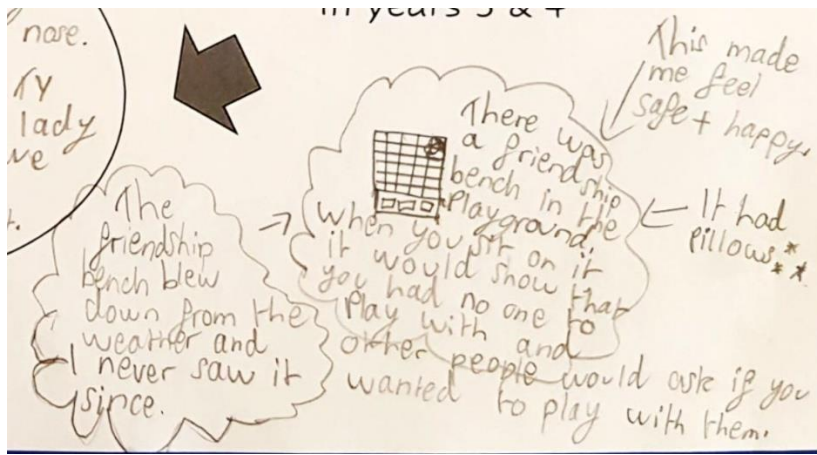
'There was a friendship bench… when you sit on it it would show that you had no one to play with and other people would ask if you wanted to play with them. The friendship bench blew down from the weather and I never saw it since.' (Child 17, reflecting on year 3, C69)

However, this example highlights the challenge of placing undue significance on an object or space. Child 17 describes the friendship bench falling apart and not being replaced. This evokes the sense of loss for that child when the object they rely on as a mechanism for generating friends fails to fulfil their expectations. In this example, it appears that the bench was seen by this pupil as an alternative to developing their own skills for approaching and making friends with other children. These examples emphasise the potential for children's personal interpretations of factors which support their wellbeing to be invisible to adults within the school, implying that the significance of objects may be overlooked as well as the effect of losing these objects for certain pupils.

6.3.2 Theme two: The process of implementing and sustaining practice

A second theme considers how wellbeing promotion is implemented and sustained, focussing on three sub-themes: 1) leadership, 2) embedding and formalising practice and 3) evolving and sustaining practice (see Figure 6-9, section 3.3.1 and appendix E.7).
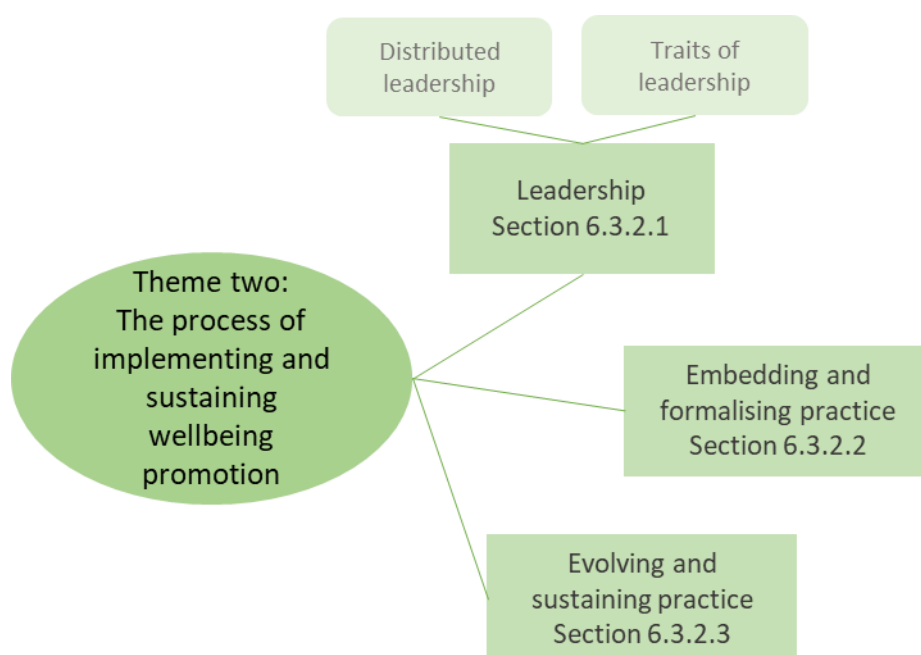
Figure 6-9 Theme two: the process of implementing and sustaining wellbeing promotion

6.3.2.1   Leadership

Leadership was a theme repeatedly referred to by both Jane and Tom. Jane considers her role to be attributable to the school's success in promoting wellbeing, perceiving her style as '*strong*' and '*confident*'. However, she makes several references to not taking a prescriptive approach:

> '*I'm not somebody who just says right we're all doing this now or we all do this*.' (Jane, J9)

Jane illustrated this point through discussing her arrival at the case study school:

> '*I was like … what would you like to do? how would you like to do this? how do you think we should do this? what do you feel would work? and very much a sort of developmental approach…*' (Jane, J13)

Jane presents an example of listening to others, already highlighted as an important component of the school's culture of wellbeing. Additionally, Jane's concept of a '*developmental approach'* appears to facilitate staff to engage in an organic, collaborative process of implementing wellbeing promotion. The effect of Jane's style has resulted in a sense of distributed leadership across the school.

Distributed leadership

The notion of sharing leadership with others, distributed leadership, was evident in Tom's responses:

> *'We are trusted in our professional judgement about what helps the children the best.'*
> (Tom, T35)

Here Tom returns to the concept of '*trust*', supporting Jane's perceptions that she listens to other 'professionals', empowering them to use their professional skills as well as recognising their close relationships with their own pupils. Additionally, Tom implies that teachers' autonomous roles are continually evolving as children's needs change and new cohorts come into their classrooms.

Traits of leadership

Another dimension of leadership which Jane focussed on was the traits she perceived as essential for successfully promoting wellbeing.

Jane illustrated '*walking the talk'* through the example of the Rights Respecting School Award. Initially finding the award provided a framework for developing wellbeing promotion practice, she later changed her mind:

> *'… in my view, it [gaining the award] became … [a] tick box [exercise] and we just didn't*
> *continue that, because for me it's the process not the product. It's about living it. It's*
> *about walking the talk'* (Jane, J24)

This is pertinent in capturing the essence of how the school implements practice. Jane emphasises the importance she perceives in '*process*' versus the '*product*'. Rather than reaching a predetermined end-point (the product) Jane recognises the living process of promoting wellbeing. In Jane's view walking the talk, therefore, appears to be a mechanism to drive a dynamic process, where strategies are continually evaluated, and decisive changes made to promote sustainability.

Additionally, at several points Jane referred to the power she held as leader:

> *'I don't delude myself that I [have power] - I mean like Spiderman with great power*
> *comes great responsibility'* (Jane, J11)

Whilst her words convey a sense of humour, the seriousness with which she takes this responsibility also appears evident. It appears that Jane considers her own role as a key component in wellbeing promotion.

Jane also alludes to the wider power of all staff:

> *'… [thinking about] that responsibility. We are powerful people so we can get people to talk, but we shouldn't unless we are genuinely able to help them. I'm not a therapist'*
> (Jane, J85)

Jane recognises the power imbalance between educational professionals and families. She highlights how boundaries need to be established over the extent to which the school can support family wellbeing, implying that some needs are better met through external partnerships with other services including '*therapists*'. Instead, Jane recognises the importance of:

> *'…knowing that you can't do it on your own… it's knowing when to go to others as well'*
> (Jane, J5)

Jane's narrative suggests that power may sometimes be better focused on developing successful partnerships with external agencies, '*knowing when to go to others*'. Jane refers to school's relationships with CAMHs, a play therapist, children's services and other external agencies.

Furthermore, there is an honesty to Jane's account of her leadership role, acknowledging how wellbeing promotion has not always gone as planned. Her solution is:

> *'…being reflective. [Being a] reflective practitioner is massively important to that [promoting wellbeing]'* (Jane, J19)

Jane shared an example when she attempted to address the wellbeing needs of a parent during a meeting:

> *'I did it [attend the meeting] from trying to be supportive … I wasn't respectful … I didn't make the right approach given [the individual's mental health needs which were exacerbated by an additional person in the meeting'* (Jane, J17)

Jane's choice to include this event conveys her commitment to the school's golden rules of '*honesty*' and not '*cover[ing] up the truth*' cited in section 6.3.1.3. The extract appears to make a distinction between intention, '*trying to be supportive*', and how well it is translated into practice, '*I didn't make the right approach*'. She implies that however well-intentioned an individual is, it is their actions which directly help or hinder other's wellbeing. The finding also emphasises the complex nature of supporting wellbeing in the uniqueness of each social interaction.

6.3.2.2   Embedding and formalising practice

Adopting frameworks

One way the school sought to embed practice was by adopting relevant evidence-based models on which to formalise practice into policy. Jane used the analogy of building as an over-arching framework to describe the fundamental components of wellbeing promotion:

> '*You know these [principles for promoting wellbeing] are your planks if you like… the joists in the ceiling, aren't they? The bits that you can't do without.*' (Jane, J31)

Jane highlights the requirement for a solid structure to underpin changing strategies, practices and activities. Jane presents the '*planks*' and '*joists*' as constants which support the school vision, fixing the requirement to meet needs, embrace individuality, and maximise pupils' wellbeing across time.

As well as her own analogy, Jane's narrative referred to three evidence-based frameworks she used to underpin wellbeing promotion in the school. Firstly, Jane and Tom discussed the use the Response to Intervention model whereby children's wellbeing is addressed through a three-tiered model offering universal, targeted and specialist provision (see Figure 6-10).
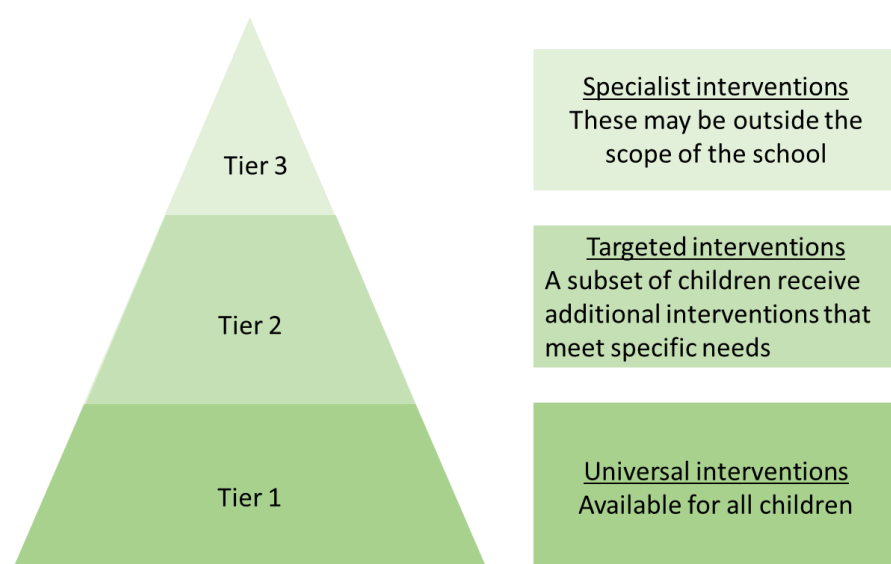
Figure 6-10 The Response to Intervention model (Fuchs and Fuchs, 2007)

Jane described how the model was applied to drive the type of wellbeing promotion on offer in the school:

> *'… we certainly have a whole raft of provision in what we would call our sort of universally available provision for wellbeing … then we also have that next bit which is, you know, I need a little bit of help here… So that's just where children are starting to ((sigh)) to give signs and signals that… their wellbeing isn't as healthy as it might be.'*
> (Jane, J42)

This extract highlights how the school uses this model to identify the scope of their responsibility in the wellbeing promotion, with Jane referring to the school providing suitable solutions for tiers one and two. It conveys how the model is used to assess pupils' needs and provide a pathway for addressing wellbeing. Moreover, Jane appears proud of the '*whole raft of provision'* which is available for all children within the school, implying the school enables children to develop a wide range of skills and knowledge. Jane's sigh about concerning behavioural signals appears to convey her empathy for the experiences these children are having as well as the sense of responsibility she feels to meet pupils' needs.

A second framework adopted by the school is the principles of the Rights Respecting School (see Figure 6-11). The framework proposes a collaboration between children and staff to 'develop and maintain a school community based on equality, dignity, respect, non-discrimination and participation' to promote wellbeing. (UNICEF, 2022). The analysis has identified how the model's four areas of impact have influenced wellbeing promotion in the school. The centrality of wellbeing to daily school life, the school's inclusive vision of meeting needs to ensure all children are able to fully participate, placing importance on the building of positive relationships and using strategies to develop personal self-esteem have all been recognised by the analysis so far.

Four key areas of impact for children at a Rights Respecting school

Wellbeing   Participation   Relationships   Self-esteem
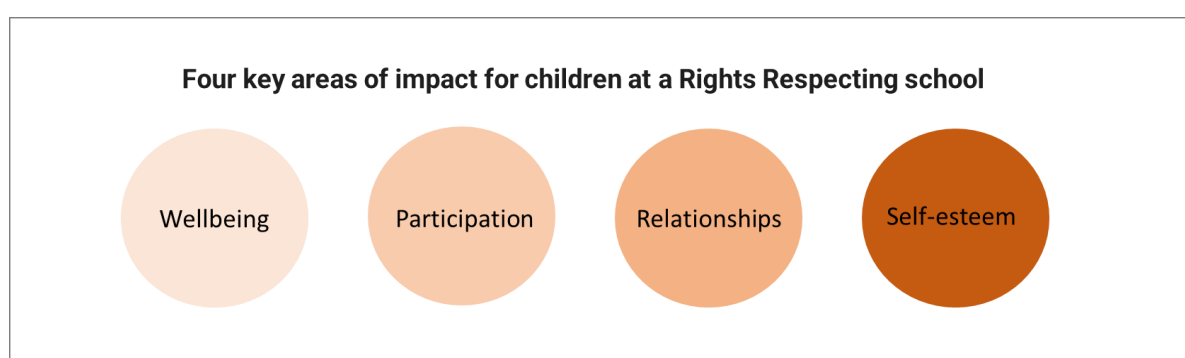
Figure 6-11 Rights Respecting School impact areas

Furthermore, in discussing this model, Jane alludes to the challenges of addressing differing needs:

> '…*recognis[ing] that rights conflict … rights of the, the one child… and how you [balance that] with the rights of all children… being honest about that rights conflict...*' (Jane, J32)

Here, Jane presents an honesty about using evidence-based models in real-world settings. She indicates that their implementation is influenced by the context in which they are delivered. Jane is making visible the contextual complexity that affects how well the vision and design for wellbeing provision can support children in the way in which it is intended.

Finally, Jane advocated the adoption of the 'Five steps to mental health and wellbeing' as '*a really good place for schools to start'* (Anna Freud Centre, 2020) (see Figure 6-12).

Figure 6-12 Five steps to mental health and wellbeing

The model proposes a series of components to successful schools-based wellbeing promotion, reflecting many of the school practices already highlighted in the analysis. Evidence of its application was apparent in the importance Jane has placed on leadership amongst herself and her staff, the reported sense of collegiality and autonomy amongst staff, the school's focus on meeting need and the way in which staff feel personally and professionally supported (pages 142 and 145).

Outcome measures

As well as designing and implementing practice, Jane and Tom highlighted the importance of measuring perceived levels of wellbeing:

'…how do you measure [wellbeing promotion]? … we do have an annual survey… with the staff and for children … this reflecting on year we've gone with the questions that the Anna Freud centre … I also asked a couple of questions around Covid' (Jane, J67)

Jane has recognised the benefit of using an existing survey, which she has modified for her own purpose. She also established her belief that measurements are only useful if feedback is respected and acted upon. In relation to the staff survey she states:

'it's trusting staff, that they would trust you with that information as well. and also being open to the fact that… they may not think the school is as… full of wellbeing as I would like to think… it's no good asking people if you're not going to validate what they give you back' (Jane, J68)

This conveys Jane's belief in the importance of building relationships based on trust by listening and responding to others' views. Additionally, Tom brings a different perspective by focusing on the usefulness of formal and informal feedback systems:

'we do a pupil impact survey each reflecting on year…[questions like] being optimistic for the future… anxieties and hope, things like that…where are you at really?' (Tom)

'…our behaviour system… So we keep track of who's maybe not earning their golden time and if there's a pattern. If someone is clearly having a difficult time that would be something that we could look into' (Tom, T64)

Tom highlights how the impact survey periodically collects data about overall wellbeing indicators amongst pupils as a whole. In contrast, he suggests that the existing golden time reward system is used informally to identify children whose wellbeing may be fragile, resulting in undesirable behaviour. The implication of the different outcome measures used in the school is the provision of different data types. Whilst survey data facilitates long-term strategic planning, more frequently used informal methods makes visible immediate needs. Additionally, it enables schools to zoom in to pupils' immediate wellbeing needs and zoom out to develop skills and knowledge over the longer-term.

6.3.2.3   Evolving practice and sustaining practice

A range of data highlighted the evolving nature of wellbeing practice. Jane described change as speeding up and slowing down. Her description of her arrival as head teacher conveyed a tipping point where:

> '… *you could see that staff wanted change. They really did want change'* (Jane, J15)

As a result, rapid staff turnover resulted from a *'completely divided staff,'* with those remaining being committed to Jane's philosophy for promoting wellbeing. Yet, her narrative contrasts this with the slowness during other phases of implementation, stating that some changes related to children's wellbeing *'didn't happen overnight'*.

Despite the speed of the process, Jane is adamant that wellbeing promotion is a continual process:

> *'for me there's no end point. You have to keep doing it [wellbeing promotion]'* (Jane, J86)

Additionally, the analysis identified Jane's and Tom's visions for sustain wellbeing practice. The findings suggested that they used different terms to describe this process. Jane refers to the process of 'embedding' practice into policy as a method of ensuring sustainability:

> *'…I've always felt that policies should be written to embed the practice and not to dictate practice. So, you make your practice good and then have your policy that reflects that, and enables people to stay within a, a framework'* (Jane, J7)

Jane prescribes a bottom-up approach to embedding wellbeing promotion, believing that policies can act as frameworks for staff to sustain '*good*' practice. The word '*good*' suggests a culmination of many of the strategies described throughout the analysis. For Jane, sustainability requires having a mechanism to evaluate practice as well as a clear set of policies to encourage staff buy-in.

In contrast, Tom refers to '*keeping it on the agenda'* in relation to sustaining wellbeing promotion. Whereas Jane had a top-level focus on school policies, Tom considered sustainability in terms of daily interactions and activities:

> *'I'm changing displays…There's plenty of things around in terms of the environment… you need to have to change them regularly, otherwise they become background. That's always a thing in terms of keeping the agenda'* (Tom, T44)

Tom believed that visual cues, such as noticeboards, were a mechanism for reminding the school community to focus on their wellbeing. Yet he also understood the challenges of using the physical environment whereby displays became unseen over time. He, therefore, understood part of his role as wellbeing lead was to continually update these cues to maintain awareness of positive messaging.

The field notes corroborated this process of continual change in displays:

> **'***Displays about wellbeing were prevalent around the school, being found in the reception area, hallways, classrooms and the staff room. Content has been changed between the initial and final visits'*

> *'There is a prominent banner in the reception area of school asking 'Are you ok?' Its situation makes it visible to children, staff, families and other visitors. Additionally, a small table next to the seating in this area is resourced with leaflets related to wellbeing which may be taken away by pupils and families.'* (Field notes, F6)

Additionally, Tom emphasised the importance of discussions between staff and children:

> *'I think that… trust. An ability to have a conversation about it and a part of that is keeping it on the agenda. Keeping it, you know, something that they're always thinking about - referring to … mental health support. What they need, how you're making sure that that's there… for them to come and to talk to us'* (Tom, T9)

Here, Tom uses '*keeping it on the agenda'* to mean continually using staff-pupil social interactions to deliver the message of the importance of wellbeing. Moreover, Tom identifies the requirement he sees to have both a culture of trust and a strategy to remind children what is available to assist their wellbeing. It is the interrelationship between two components of wellbeing practice 1) a strategy of clear messaging and 2) the school's culture of wellbeing which maximises the potential for high levels of wellbeing amongst pupils.

A further aspect finding related to evolving wellbeing promotion identified how the environment shaped changes to practice. Some changes appeared to result from factors outside the school. Macro-level governmental policy change and the new Ofsted inspection framework focussing more closely on pupils' personal development, caused the school to respond by replacing the PHSE curriculum with a new PDL curriculum. Additionally, legislative change influenced the development of the wellbeing lead role:

> *'I'm wellbeing champion but now it's more formalised and that was done in expectation of the government bringing in the mental health and wellbeing lead role – and, you know, by sort of getting ahead of the game'* (Tom, T5)

Tom identifies the proactivity of the school in designing this role in '*expectation of*' rather than because of mandatory change. Anticipating future change, implies the school had time to develop a considered approach to the role. Jane corroborates the importance she placed on getting '*ahead of the game'*, reporting her '*leadership style is about innovation'.*

Furthermore, both Jane and Tom recognise that their desire for innovative practice is facilitated through their links with the Anna Freud Centre, a child mental health research and treatment organisation. Whilst Jane has developed this relationship over a long period, Tom's more recent association includes his role as a member of the pioneering schools' network:

> *'We meet every half term or so to discuss what we've been doing and how it's working'*
>
> (Tom, T46)

Tom describes this relationship as a platform for regular reflection and review with like-minded professionals. As well providing an evaluative function, there also appears to be an assumption that pioneering schools will be continually changing their practice, whereby they bring new ideas for practice, '*what we've been doing*' twice termly. It appears this relationship maintains the momentum for constantly adapting practice within the school.

However, the analysis also identifies that changing wellbeing practice is not only in response to the school's relationship with external organisations but is additionally shaped by the adaptation of existing internal practices. Returning to the wellbeing lead role, Tom commented:

> *'initially the idea of a wellbeing [lead came from saying] we're sorted for staff mental health and wellbeing…to saying let's take responsibility…for pupil mental health and wellbeing as well.'* (Tom, T6)

Tom highlights how the use of an existing wellbeing component, the wellbeing champion was expanded to benefit more members of the school community. By recognising that staff and pupils have similar wellbeing needs, it was demonstrated that the school already had a mechanism in place that could better benefit pupils. Thus, the school could have confidence in the likely success of developing the newer wellbeing lead role.

6.3.3 Theme three: The influence of context on wellbeing promotion

The findings explored how the school's internal and external context influenced wellbeing promotion. This resulted in the development of three sub-themes: 1) relationships of trust, 2) the importance of the head teacher's own context and 3) external factors which help and hinder wellbeing promotion (see Figure 6-13).
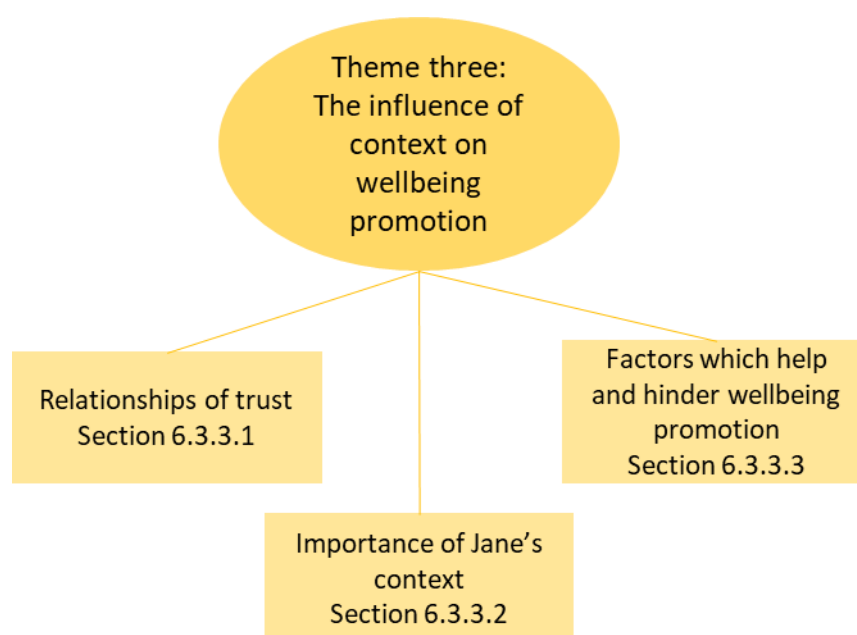
Figure 6-13 Theme three: the influence of context on wellbeing promotion

6.3.3.1   Relationships of trust

The analysis has already established the importance of relationships and social interactions in meeting individual wellbeing needs and the section begins by returning to the concept of trust within relationships.

Jane identified relationships as a driver of wellbeing:

'…*another common thread is that around relationships … so relationships between the children … between staff and children … between staff, and of course between your families, and your staff and families and children.*' (Jane, J33)

Additionally, the latest Ofsted inspection report recognised the benefits of these relationships of trust:

Pupils' attitudes to lessons and engagement with staff are very positive. Pupils work hard. Trust and teamworking are created through very positive relationships. (To maintain anonymity this has been paraphrased from the Ofsted Inspection letter, 2018, O4).

By focussing on the quality of these relationships, Jane believed this had enabled the school to remain open during the pandemic, with good pupil attendance and low staff absenteeism:

Chapter 6

'we have such trust, there's such a bank of goodwill and trust' (Jane, J74)

The findings also indicate the specific ways in which children, staff and families appeared to benefit from these relationships.

Children highlighted the importance they placed on peer and adult relationships. Most children referred to friendships multiple times when reflecting on their wellbeing journeys. Children commonly described the process of making and maintaining these friendships and how these changed over time. Pupils reflecting back on their years in reception class and year 1 spoke of having a single friend whose purpose appeared to be making the child feel *'happy'* or being someone *'to play with'*. A typical comment being:
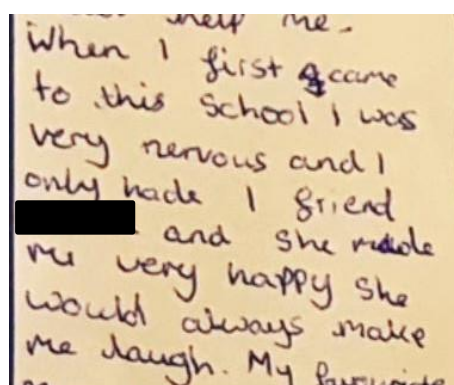
'I was very nervous and I only made 1 friend ...she made me very happy she would always make me laugh' (child 15, reflecting on year R, C23).

Drawings too, indicated single or best friends:
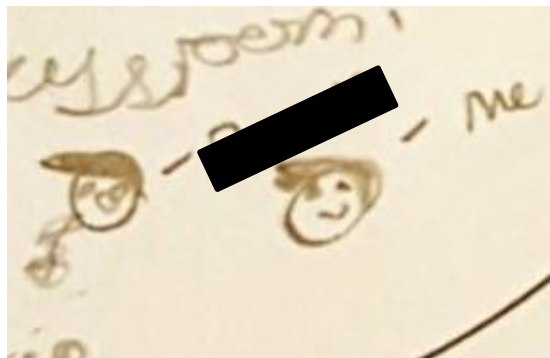
Child 5   Child 6

As children progressed through school, they presented a more sophisticated understanding of friendship, focussing on other functions these relationships fulfilled. These friendships appeared to be trusting and personally fulfilling:

This year
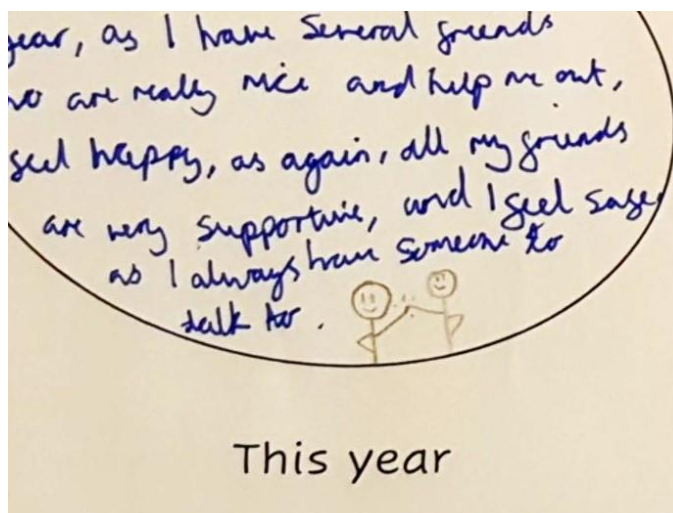
'I have several friends who are really nice and help me out…all my friends are very supportive, and I feel safe as I always have someone to talk to' (child 3, reflecting on year 6, C117)
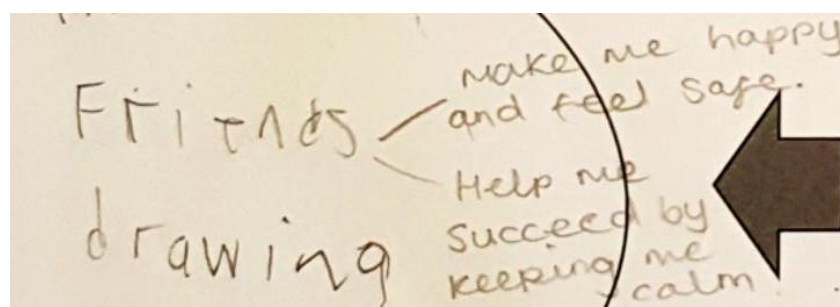
'Friends help me succeed by keeping me calm' (child 16, reflecting on year 6, scribed by LSA, C113)

At this stage, children also depicted friendships group, rather than a single friend:
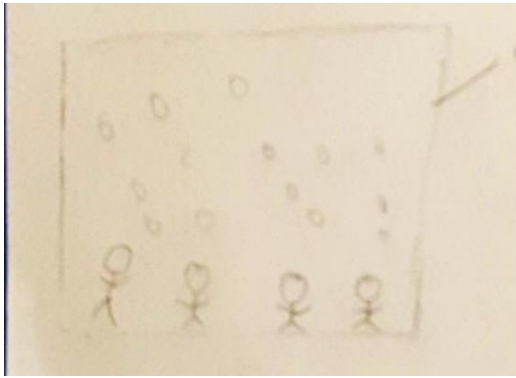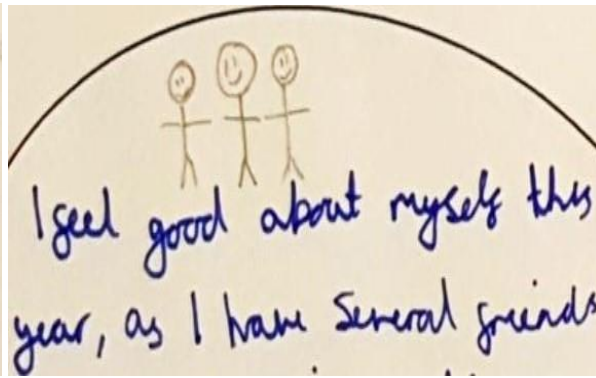
Child 4   Child 3

The transition from single friends to friendship groups implies maturity, with friends recognising the benefits of supportive, positive relationships within a wider group. This may be indicative of the emphasis placed on relationship skills in the school's wellbeing curricula. Moreover, it suggests that children have developed networks with each other and with staff, understood through the theoretical lens as a key dimension for flourishing.

However, a few children also highlighted challenges in maintaining friendships. One child described how they benefitted from the teacher's intervention in helping them to build relationship skills:
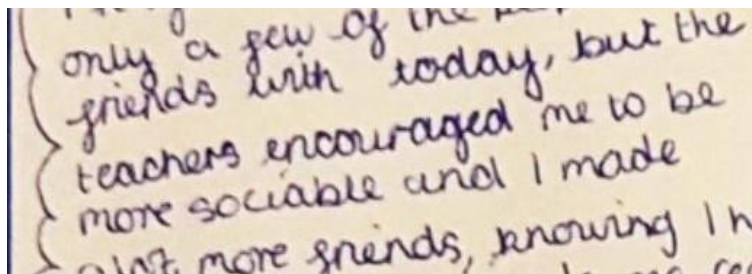
'the teachers encouraged me to be more sociable and I made a lot more friends' (child 11, reflecting on year R, C16).

Another child described the challenges and feelings that arose from friendships of different qualities. This extract highlights the limitations of a child's ability to evaluate friendship choices at this developmental stage:
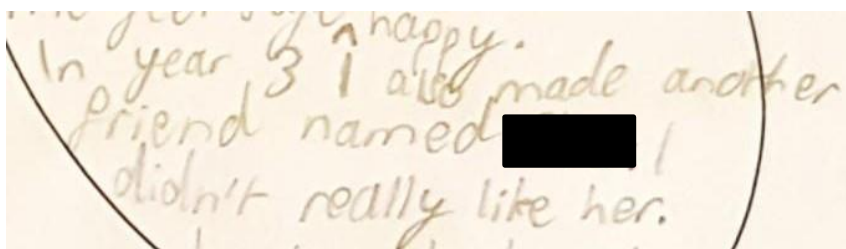
'In reflecting on year 3 I also made another friend named Olivia*. I didn't really like her' (child 17, reflecting on year 3, C68).

Furthermore, this child highlighted the complex range of emotions they experienced about friendships:
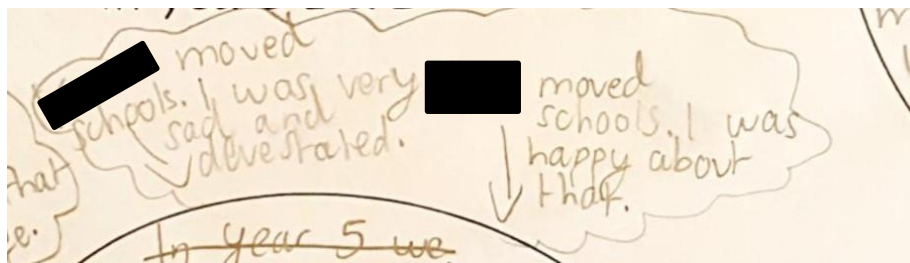
'Emma* moved schools. I was sad and devastated. Olivia moved schools. I was happy about that' (child 17**,** C111)

The implication of challenging relationships appears to suggest that some children had the potential to benefit greatly from the strategies for wellbeing used by the school. The findings showed that learning about the *'value of forming positive relationships' (PDL curriculum)* as well as taking part in the targeted friendship intervention were appropriate solutions being offered to meet these needs.

Children also placed considerable importance on their relationships with adults, demonstrating considerable trust in their relationships with school staff. Similarly, Tom reported that staff closely focussed on these relationships as well:

'I think it is something that we promote… that all the children will be able to point to a few safe adults that they are confident talking to… if they had an issue that they needed help with. So … I think that that trust.' (Tom, T8)

Some staff had specialist wellbeing roles including the Emotional Literacy Support Assistant where *'the main focus of her job is talking to children - helping children with their feelings and promoting their wellbeing'* (Tom, T68).

A further way that pupils were encouraged to explore ways of developing trust was through modelling by staff. Jane's account of her leadership experiences and the school's golden rules have already evidenced the importance of honesty, one component of building trust. The PDL curriculum also highlights how children can see this modelled within lessons:

> *'If the member of staff doesn't have an answer or doesn't know, they will say so. There is no shame in not knowing the answer but the member of staff should make an effort to help the child to find the answer later'* (PDL RSHE policy, PR2)

The effect of developing trusting staff-pupil relationships was observed on my visits:

> *'I witnessed many informal social interactions between adults and children. Children were seen freely engaging with Jane and other staff when informal opportunities arose moving around the school. Encounters appeared positive and often light-hearted involving laughter. Both pupils and staff were involved in initiating and maintaining conversations. There was a sense of genuine warmth during many interactions.'* (Field notes, F1)

It appeared that staff also recognised and benefitted from relationships of trust.

> *'…I think that idea of management being open and trusted to have that dialogue is reflected in the scores on the wellbeing chart.'* (Tom, T30)

Tom acknowledged the positive effect of the staffs' relationships with the management team. His use of *'open and trusted'* suggests it is the quality of this relationship which enables staff to feel empowered to be honest about personally meaningful issues. Further evidence of the investment in the management-staff relationship was demonstrated through Jane's introduction of a supervisor for teachers:

> *'for staff to have some time for professional supervision …as a form of coaching, for dealing with stress and workload. It's been…quite fluid…I think everyone has taken something different from it'* (Tom, T31)

Tom sees this as a useful way of addressing factors which hinder wellbeing such as *'stress and 'workload'*. He also recognises its flexibility for meeting differing needs. Furthermore, Tom demonstrates the evolving nature of supervision as a wellbeing tool, describing its ability to be *'fluid'*. Moreover, Tom later states that group supervision sessions will be trialled in the autumn term where staff across year groups attend *'as a way of supporting each other'*. This implies that a further role of supervision may be to enhance the sense of collegiality between staff, providing a further mechanism of support at both individual and group levels.

There was evidence that relationships with families were an important aspect of school life:

'…trust in the school from pupils and parents. And the trust to engage in dialogue with us to recognise that we are here to support them… Or if there were issues that we notice for them then for them to trust us to help them to engage with them on those issues' (Tom, T7)

Here Tom describes a two-way process where pupils and families may choose to '*engage in dialogue with us*' or the school may open a discussion '*if there were issues that we notice for them*'. In both cases Tom sees '*trust*' as the mechanism which facilitates successful conversations.

The school creates a range of opportunities for these social interactions to take place:

'*there's always management available and visible at collection and drop off times. And, you know, anytime to come in and have a meeting with management, or teachers and management.'* (Tom, T14)

With those that Tom labels '*hard to reach'* families he highlights the perseverance of the school to develop trusting relationships despite the length of time this takes:

'*Often… members of management will develop those relationships with families as they go through school.'* (Tom, T15)

This reflects Jane's notions of avoiding '*short-termism'* and '*quick-fixes'*. Instead, the school recognises that children and family members benefit more from a consistent, long-term approach. Furthermore, Jane highlights the importance she places on respect in relationships with families:

'*if a parent is, is anxious about their child going out … we don't just say 'Oh, ok well that child will sit in the corridor for the day' - it's about 'ok so what can we do to reduce your anxieties around this?' How can we support and help...respecting parents views is really important'* (Jane, J51)

Jane indicates that respect can arise from taking an empathic approach to a parent, highlighting the importance of recognising parent's lived realities. She considers that when a parent feels understood and is offered support, this has the potential to give them agency in reducing their anxiety which benefits the child in this example, being able to attend the school trip. More broadly building trust between school and families might be a driver for children's personal levels of wellbeing.

6.3.3.2   Importance of Jane's context

Jane's previous experiences were highly influential in the way wellbeing promotion had been developed in the case study school:

> '... I started teaching in ILEA and ... I feel really privileged to have taught in a school in
> [area of the city] ... when the inner London education authority was so... empowering, so
> committed to training new [teachers] ... both their skills but also helping to support their
> identity as well... maybe I was just lucky that the schools that I went to, that it was very
> much around I guess a sense of equality through the staff as well. And that everybody,
> you know, had a voice. And I think that was ... really ENABLING for me...' (Jane, J2)

This extract focuses on the '*empowering*' nature of the education authority, facilitating skills development, encouraging a personal '*identity*', finding '*a sense of equality'* and enabling everyone to have '*a voice.*' It appears that Jane wants to pass on her own positive experiences through for the pupils in this school. Thus, within this school, '*equality'* forms a major aspect of the school vision. Children, staff and families are empowered through encouraging agency and self-responsibility for their own wellbeing within a supportive culture. Teachers' professional and personal identities appear to be supported through the respect they are given to collaborate and use their skills. Children's identities are valued by embracing individuality and encouraging connection with peers, the school community and their wider human tribes, as outlined in 0. Moreover, the analysis has identified many opportunities for listening, whereby children and adults feel their voices can be heard and respected.

Another influence from Jane's past is her experience with families of similar backgrounds to those in the case study school:

> '... [I] took on a deputy headship at a very small inner-city school with really high
> deprivation ... we really were key to making the difference for lots of those children and
> for lots of the families.' (Jane, J5)

Jane described her development of partnerships with external agencies to offset the effects of '*really high deprivation',* which echoes her current vision to '*offset disadvantage'*. Here she realised the positive impact of promoting wellbeing, '*making the difference'*. Furthermore, her narrative suggests she was challenged to conceptualise her definitions of who formed the school community and what wellbeing looked like for those individuals. Her understanding that the school was '*key'* in making improvements for these children and families appears to have given Jane confidence in introducing this template for promoting wellbeing to her current school.

In recognising the significant influence that Jane's own context has had on wellbeing practice, it is uncertain how practice will continue once she leaves after this term. In her own mind, Jane envisages little change over the short term:

> '*I think it [wellbeing promotion] is embedded – whoever takes over, I think it will be hard to breakdown for a while. I mean, everything can change, can't it?... but I know the governors were really KEEN – in terms of sustainability. That they did appoint a head who has similar values*' (Jane, J81)

The reveals Jane's desire for practice to be retained and highlights her belief that the whole school approach to wellbeing is firmly embedded. This appears to contrast with earlier observations when Jane perceived school practices driven by the previous head teacher broke down quickly. However, this discrepancy may be attributed to the difference between a '*divided staff*' in the first case and a trusted, supported staff in the latter.

However, Tom is less certain:

> '*I haven't met the new head yet…so I don't know … how things are going to go in terms of continuity, in terms of what's going to change…And the children are really aware of that as well. They will pick up on how passionate Jane is about arts and music. So they've been asking about what's the new head interested in…It's going to be interesting to see how it changes things really. So I'm going to be continuing my role for a reflecting on year at least so we'll see*' (Tom, T72)

Tom perceives that changes are likely, highlighting that a head teacher's own preferences are highly influential on the direction of the school. He illustrates this through Jane's personal interest in culture which has driven the focus on arts and music. He, therefore, implies that a new head teacher may change the attention of wellbeing practice. However, he alludes to some consistency of approach where his own role will continue. Furthermore, Tom highlights how pupils also recognise this uncertainty, '*being really aware'.* This might imply that whatever the outcome of any changes, just living through that period of change may affect some pupils' wellbeing.

6.3.3.3   Factors which help and hinder wellbeing promotion

Jane and Tom both shared personal perceptions about the factors within the context of the school which they felt had both helped and hindered the practice of wellbeing promotion. Whilst Jane considered the wider context outside the school, Tom was focused on the context of the school community itself. Several factors appeared to be beneficial including the influence of

political change, the school's link with the Anna Freud centre and the trust which had been developed across the school.

Jane perceived that new legislation developed in the light of the '*Transforming children and young people's mental health provision*' green paper had been positive for schools in general:

> '*now Ofsted have got really clearly passages that say this [promoting wellbeing] should be happening, and that wasn't there... And the green paper made a big difference, or did it make a big difference? It made a big difference to Ofsted*' (Jane, J78)

Jane's comments reveal previous frustrations, perceiving Ofsted to have not valued an aspect of school practice which Jane feels so passionate about. Moreover, she pondered the extent of change this paper brought, it '*made a big difference, or did it make a big difference?*' Overall, its biggest benefit from Jane's perspective was Ofsted's new inspection framework shifting focus to the importance of children's personal development, and their wellbeing.

Secondly, Jane recognised the benefits of her link with the Anna Freud centre enabling the school to be innovative in its approach to promoting wellbeing. Jane's involvement in testing and shaping resources for schools, including the Mentally Healthy Schools website, enabled the school to have early insights into the centre's latest research as well as accessibility to resources. Moreover, she regards having an insight into the Covid-19 risk assessment used at the centre was '*really, really helpful*', particularly ideas about '*addressing the anxieties of staff and our families*'.

Tom also considered that '*trust in the school from the pupils and parents*' was fundamental to the success of wellbeing practice delivered by the school. His argued that without trust families would be reticent to engage with the support that the school offered. Tom's perspective gives further weight to the notion that the interrelationships between components of the school's wellbeing promotion cannot be overlooked in establishing what makes practice successful; without trust, engagement with strategies may be reduced.

The findings also identified factors which Jane and Tom perceived as hindering wellbeing practice. These included the perceptions education stakeholders in external organisations, the challenge of promoting the spiritual domain of children's wellbeing against a decline in family engagement with religion, the effects of media and the lack of school resources for wellbeing.

Firstly, Jane highlighted the perceptions of other education stakeholders:

> '*I suppose what can hinder… with others coming in and not really understanding the bigger importance of it [promoting wellbeing]. People do understand that now, but they didn't when we were doing it.*' (Jane, J78)

In this extract, Jane used '*people*' to refer to Ofsted and the local authority. The passage conveys the sense of struggle she had found as an innovative practitioner in promoting wellbeing, doing 'it *against'* others. However, this appears to relate to a historical lack of understanding and despite these frustrations, Jane recognised that the current context of the education sector has seen a shift towards a wider appreciation of the positive effect of promoting wellbeing.

In recognising falling numbers of families actively engaging in religious practice, Jane described the importance of developing the spiritual domain of children's wellbeing:

> '*we enable children … to have a connection with their humanity. To have a connection …
> roots to spirituality as well… But I think it's important to mention that [spiritualty] in
> relation to wellbeing … you do have to be very careful that you don't you don't end up
> with imposing, you know, the religion of wellbeing*.' (Jane, J38)

Jane makes a distinction between '*spirituality'*, believing in something greater than the self and *'religion'*, a specific set of beliefs. She perceives that it is easy to become overly dogmatic in promoting wellbeing. To avoid this, Jane proposed that adopting the general principles which underlie many of the world's religions '*not as a religious hypothesis but … a practical philosophical one'.*

Furthermore, whilst the analysis has already demonstrated the importance Jane places on using evidence-based frameworks to underpin practice, she cautions on being overly rigid and prescriptive in their use:

> '*…there's a real danger that some of the mantras, some of the 'how-to's become – there
> is a religiosity about it [promoting wellbeing] sometimes'* (Jane, J41)

Jane also sees media to be highly influential in the way wellbeing practice is perceived by the public. In the context of the pandemic and falling levels of wellbeing amongst children in England, Jane says:

> '*… the media is both a hindrance and also a help… again you've got this sort of big push
> at the moment, haven't you, on mental health. But it could easily twist with the Prince
> Harry – you know that slight wobbling about what people are feeling about that [the
> importance of promoting wellbeing].'* (Jane, J83)

Jane's notion of the '*big push'* conveys her perception of how media can focus a spotlight on wellbeing. However, it also presents her belief of the fragility of this support, '*it could easily twist'.* At the time of the interview, Prince Harry's personal revelations about the causes of his mental health issues were being received increasingly less sympathetically by the media and public.

Additionally, Tom understood that the availability of resources for promoting pupils' wellbeing hindered school practice, reflecting a wider political and economic context:

'… is almost a waiting list within school [for ELSA support]. It would be ideal to have more funding and more space to be able to do that for more children in an ideal world' (Tom, T67)

6.3.4   The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on whole-school wellbeing promotion

Analysis followed the process in section 3.3.1 and findings emphasised the importance the school placed on continuing to promote pupils' wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic (see appendix E.7 for the audit trail).
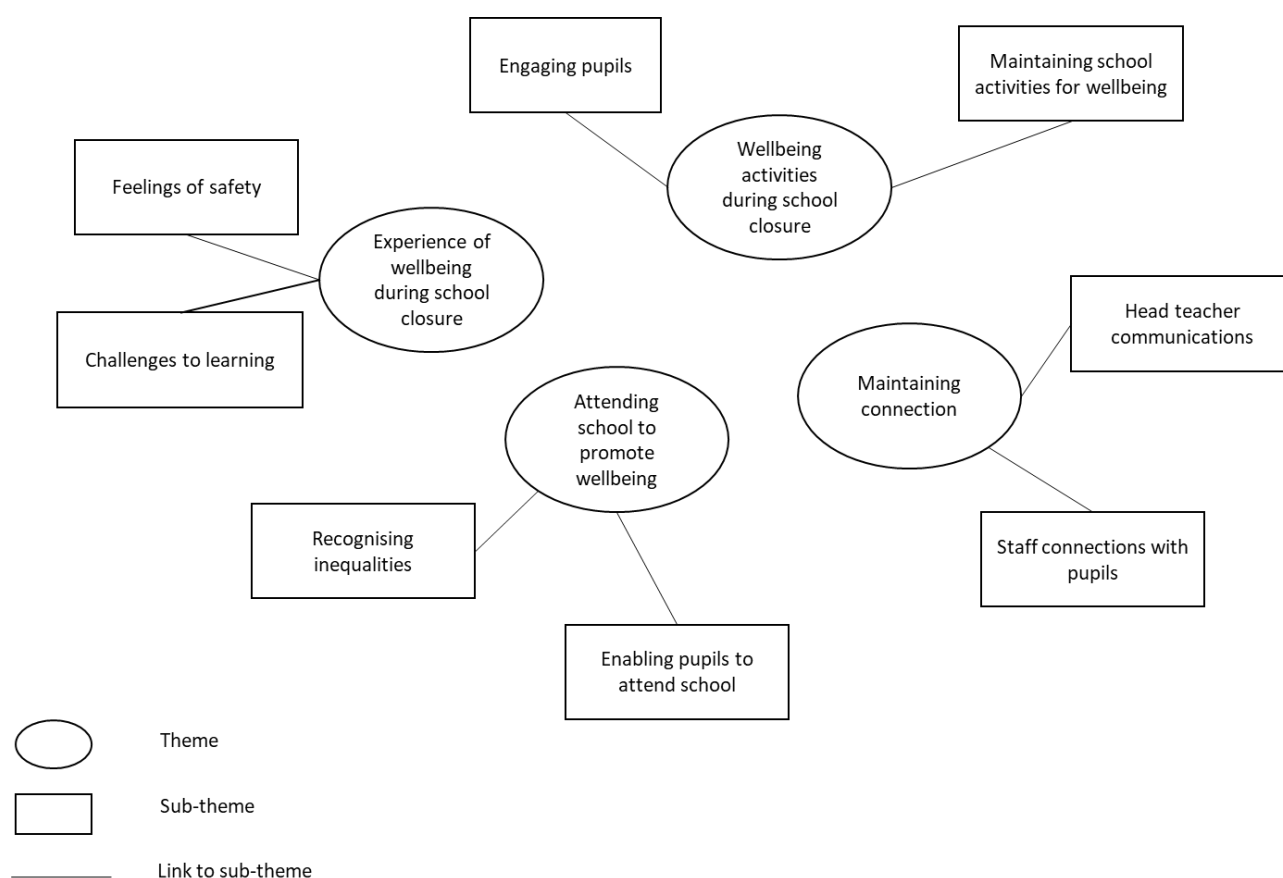
Figure 6-14 Themes relating to promoting wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic

To encourage engagement amongst pupils the school adapted a broad range of activities, alongside online learning:

'some of [the pupils] who were struggling to engage so much with some of the learning, if they were able to get some of those video calls still going to have music lessons' (T59)

Additionally, Jane highlighted how '*issue of the month'* was continued online to engage pupils on pastoral topics. To maintain a sense of belonging, Jane continued to lead the school through writing online letters to pupils and recognised '*the staff were brilliant online… responding to children*'.

The school also sought to maximise the number of pupils attending school, providing its inherent culture for wellbeing:

> '*We were open to many more children than, you know, most schools were doing at that time'* (J71).

However, Tom acknowledged that the effect of this disrupted period affected pupils' wellbeing:

> *The main thing I think about it in terms of learning and it's the same for wellbeing, is its heightened all the divisions that existed already.* (T70).

He also recognised that pupils' experiences were subjective:

> '*some children who did benefit from more time with families over lockdown. And, you know, there were those [pupils] with anxiety who felt some sort of control and calm*' (T71)

This finding was echoed through pupils' maps, where they expressed varying experiences of school closure. Whilst some children found school closure challenging '*it was very difficult to learn'* (Child 15, yr 5), others found benefits in spending time with family and satisfaction in achievement:

> '*the thing that made me feel safe was online learning with my mum. I felt good when I did work too'.* (Child 6, yr 5)

One child who continued to attend school identified how the changed structure improved their wellbeing, recounting how a '*modified timetable meant I could succeed in class*' (Child 16, yr 4).

Jane and Tom also understood the reopening of school to all pupils as a period for greater focus on promoting wellbeing. This was encapsulated in the School improvement plan (2020/2021:

> '*Ensure the wellbeing and mental health of pupils is supported including the sharing of Wellbeing for Education Return training and resources*' (I1)

and implemented through strategies for rebuilding the school community through renewed belonging and reconnection:

> *'re-forging those community links and getting those people involved. But I think it has widened some divisions'* (T71)

> '*I think [pupils] will need some help remembering how to do that'*. (T38)

Where pupils had previously sought a sense of psychological safety, one pupil highlighted how the school promoted physical safety on their return:

> '*When we came back into the year 5 we had covid busters which made me feel very safe*.' (Child 15, yr 5)

Jane also emphasised physical safety as a priority, highlighting the existing strategies the school adapted for the pandemic:

> *'we do mitigate risk of infection all the time. That's our job'* (J71)

In all, the different voices echo similar findings about the importance of the school focussing on promoting pupils' wellbeing during this period and pupils emphasised how they had benefitted from school strategies.

6.4   Conclusion and refinement of the conceptual model

The purpose of this chapter has been to provide rich, thick description about how one English primary school used whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish. It has sought to triangulate data from a range of research methods and voices to study this phenomenon. The findings have responded to all five research sub-questions to address the four gaps in knowledge which have formed the project's research problem (see Figure 3-1).

The chapter has provided a detailed exploration of key components and implementation practices in whole-school wellbeing promotion. It has amplified the use of providing additional opportunities to '*offset disadvantage'* and provided practical strategies for zooming in to meet immediate individual wellbeing needs and zooming out to build the skills of all pupils' for longer-term flourishing. The findings have highlighted the importance of trust for promoting relationships within the school community and developing a culture for wellbeing, and that supporting everyone's wellbeing has an ultimate benefit for pupils. It has demonstrated that whole-school wellbeing promotion is a process of continual change and that leadership drives high-quality, sustainable practice. The chapter has explored how context is perceived to influence

wellbeing practice within this setting and recognises how pupils' embeddedness within their environments mediates their subjective sense of wellbeing. It also adds new knowledge about how the Covid-19 pandemic reshaped whole-school wellbeing promotion. A strength of this chapter has been the capture of children's perspectives and lived experiences of wellbeing associated with school.   The use of a creative research method has enabled pupils to provide valuable, mature insights that would have otherwise remained invisible in an adult-oriented study. Section 7.2.4 in the following chapter provides a detailed discussion of pupils' responses in the light of wider literature.

The conceptual model has been updated in the light of the findings from this chapter. The key components of planning, implementing and reviewing whole-school wellbeing promotion have been updated (see Figure 6-15). It has also introduced key contextual influences highlighted in this chapter.
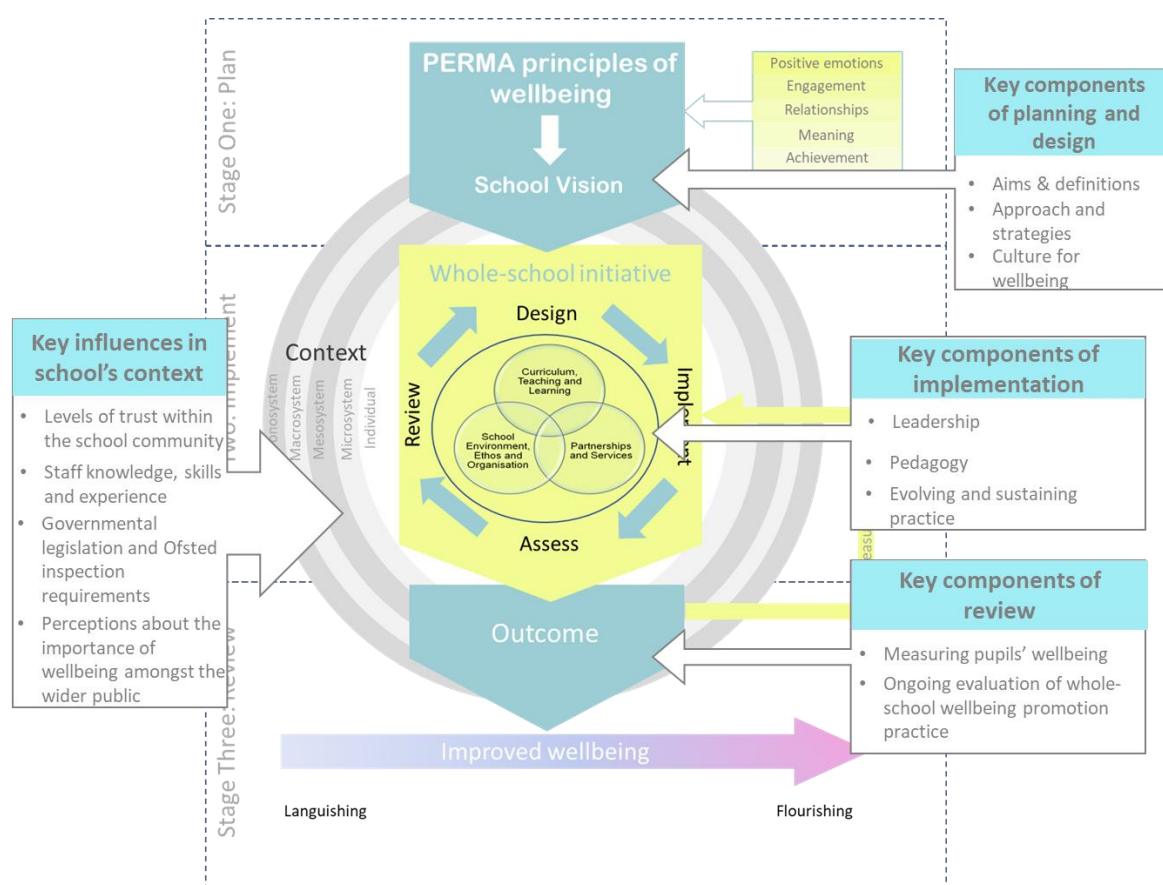
Figure 6-15 The updated conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools after phase three

Chapter 7   Discussion

7.1   Introduction

The purpose of this PhD study has been to address the knowledge gaps highlighted within existing literature, as outlined in section 1.6. Figure 7-1 demonstrates how they were addressed using the theoretical framework across the three phases of data collection. This chapter presents an integrated thematic analysis of the findings to answer the research questions, as part of the mixed methods methodology. The analysis is guided by Braun and Clarke's (2019) RTA framework (page 48). Discussion is considered in the light of the literature review in Chapter 1 and draws on additional empirical and theoretical publications.

Part one addresses each of the sub-questions in turn:

1) What are the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion?
2) How are initiatives implemented and sustained?
3) What are the contextual factors which promote or impede the perceived success of initiatives?
4) How do pupils experience these initiatives and how do they perceive this affects their wellbeing?

and in recognition school closure due to the Covid-19 pandemic asks:

5) How has the disruption of Covid-19 reshaped practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing?

Part two considers the overarching research question, **How do schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish?,** in the form of a series of broad principles. Part three closes the chapter by presenting the final version of the conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools based on this comprehensive analysis.
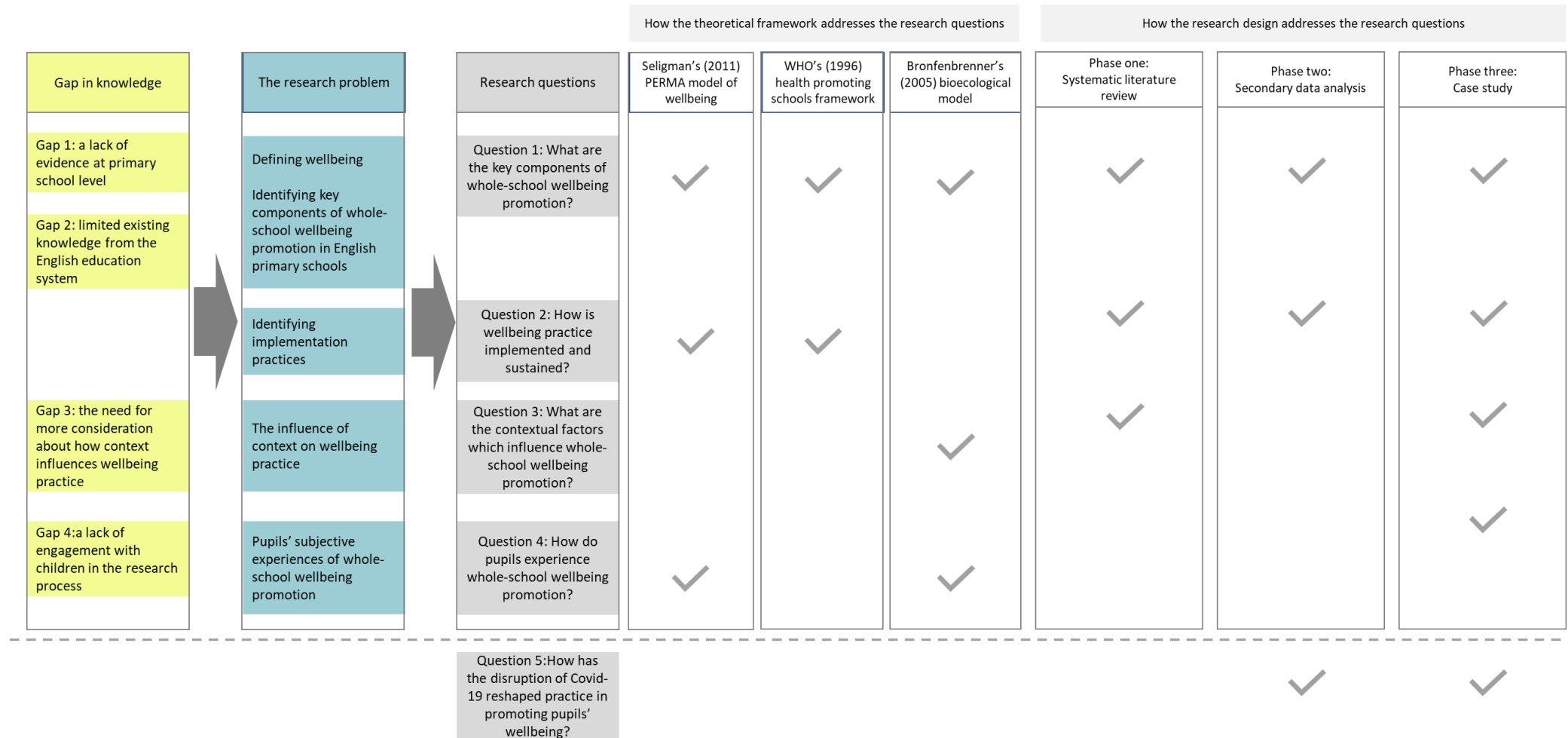
Figure 7-1 How the study answers the research problem and addresses knowledge gaps

7.2 Part one: Answering the five research sub-questions

Using Braun and Clarke's (2013) RTA framework (page 48), the questions have been considered through synthesising findings from all three phases of the study, and the way in which these have been subsumed is presented for transparency.

7.2.1 Sub-question one: What are the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion?

Figure 7-2 presents five key components: 1) vision and aims, 2) approach, 3) design and content, 4) additional opportunities and 5) culture for wellbeing.

What are the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion?

Vision and aims

Systematic literature review (SLR)
• Aims & ambiguities

Secondary data analysis (SDA)
• Aims & definitions
• Types of aims

Case study
• Vision

Approach

Systematic literature review (SLR)
• Approaches: top-down & bottom up

Secondary data analysis (SDA)
• Strategic approaches
• Scope & timeframes

Case study
• Whole school approach

Design and content

Systematic literature review (SLR)
• Content

Secondary data analysis (SDA)
• Curriculum content
• Curriculum diversity
• Pupil voice

Case study
• Design for teaching & learning

Additional opportunities

Secondary data analysis (SDA)
• Other activities

Case study
• Additional opportunities

Culture for wellbeing

Systematic literature review (SLR)
• School cultural environment and Personnel

Secondary data analysis (SDA)
• Caring

Case study
• Culture of wellbeing

Figure 7-2 Subsuming of original themes into five final themes

Findings demonstrated schools developed key components in a sequence (Figure 7-3), whereby identifying a broad approach informed the vision and aims for promoting pupils' wellbeing. Then, three further components were developed: 1) strategies and design, 2) a culture of wellbeing and 3) additional opportunities.

7.2.1.1   Approach
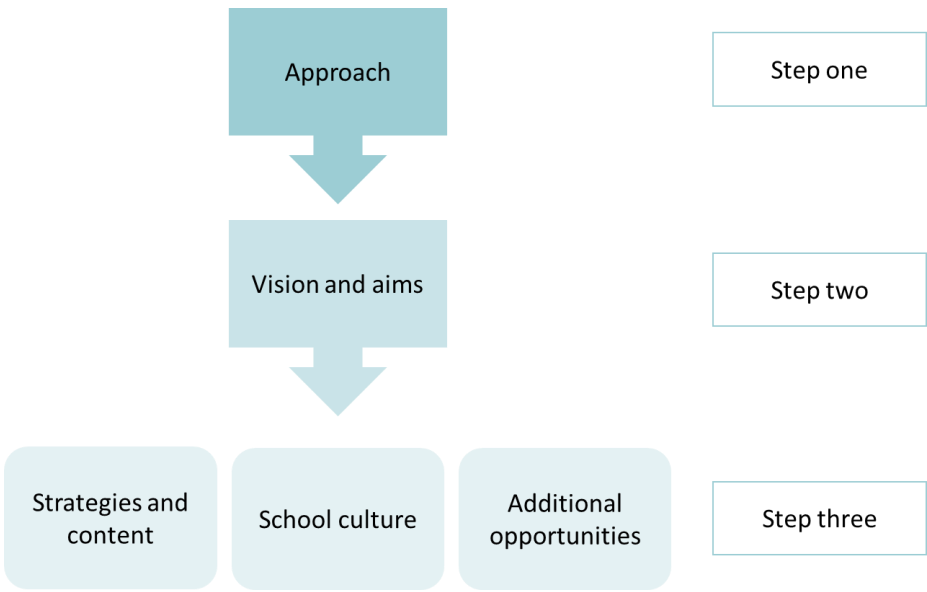
Figure 7-3 Sequence of developing the key components of whole-school wellbeing promotion

WHO (1986, p. 1) proposes that schools are important settings to promote individuals' '*state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing'.* It is beneficial to understand how schools achieve this in real-world settings. Findings highlighted schools adopted what Antonovsky (1996) defined as a salutogenic approach, focussing on positive attributes. Across all twenty-seven English primary schools including the case study, the use of multiple salutogenic aims was found (pages 91 and 142). Two large-scale reviews identified benefits as building skills and knowledge conducive to psychological, emotional and social wellbeing (Weare and Nind, 2011; Durlak *et al*., 2011) (page 75). In wider literature, scholars recognise where high levels of wellbeing are promoted, this is associated with the traits of flourishing and being happy (Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff, 2002; Huta and Ryan, 2010). Many schools recognised this potential with 77% of schools in the SDA aiming for pupils to '*flourish*' and '*be happy'*. Likewise, in the case study Tom conveyed a

desire for pupils to be '*happy and healthy*'. Finding widespread consensus of a salutogenic approach implies its usefulness as a tool to guide practice.

All schools in phases two and three understood the benefits of taking a whole-school approach. This reflects existing evidence that involving all people, processes and structures within schools is most beneficial in promoting pupils' wellbeing (Nutbeam, 1998b; Denman *et al.,* 2002). Yet it was also acknowledged that schools fall short of this comprehensive approach (Durlak *et al*., 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011; Waters, 2011). It was only initiatives described as mental health promotion (MHP) or positive psychology initatives (PPI) which sought whole-school change (page 75). This recognition informed phases two and three of the study, enabling detailed exploration of whole-school wellbeing practice in English primary schools.

A whole-school approach was complex, involving multiple strategies, evidenced in formal lesson content and informal staff-pupil social interactions (pages 106 and 147). Schools also sought long-term change to their social, physical and virtual environments alongside building positive home-school partnerships. Evidence supports Rosa and Knight's (2019) argument that health promotion is inherently complex. The findings also identified a whole-school approach had potential to improve wellbeing at multiple levels (page 145). In the case study, staff wellbeing led not only to '*personal fulfilment'* but also '*benefit[ted] our pupils'*, reflecting existing evidence that raising levels of staff wellbeing improves pupils' wellbeing (Roffey, 2012; Anderson, 2017). This finding demonstrates how the components and outcomes of a whole-school approach are interrelated, discussed further on page 233.

7.2.1.2   Vision and aims

The OECD's Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (2015, p.32) states 'Perhaps the ultimate goal of education policy makers, teachers, and parents is to help children achieve the highest level of wellbeing possible'. However, Nutbeam (2019) argued that schools have limited influence over multiple dimensions of children's wellbeing. Durlak *et al.* (2011) suggested that schools focus on psychological, social and emotional aspects of children's wellbeing. In this study, schools aimed to promote social and emotional skills, instil school values, develop a positive culture and promote wellbeing for the whole-school community (pages 76, 91 and 142). Frequently cited aims included developing confidence and self-worth, maximising flourishing and happiness, celebrating uniqueness and building positive home-school partnerships (page 91). The case study school sought to '*embrace*' individuality. Regarding WHO's (1996) health promoting school framework, the findings highlight that schools aimed to make changes across the three

domains of teaching and learning, school culture and partnerships, predominantly focussing on the first two domains.

Phase two captured that schools used terms without defining them, reflecting recognition of how wellbeing is inconsistently conceptualised (Dodge *et al.,* 2012; La Placa, McNaught and Knight, 2013). Only six of the twenty-six schools defined wellbeing, using four different definitions (page 93). Wellbeing initiatives were also conceptualised in different ways, including mental health promotion (WHO, 2021), positive education (Seligman, 2011), social and emotional learning (Greenberg *et al.,* 2017) and promoting mental health and wellbeing (Tome *et al.,* 2021) (page 75). This provides an explanation to Waters (2017, p.7) argument that *'while teachers are committed to student wellbeing, they feel unsure of themselves when it comes to knowing which practices are effective'*.

The study also identified whilst schools shared an aim to promote wellbeing, their strategic visions diverged. Most English primary schools focussed on their pupils' wellbeing during their primary school-time (page 100). Three schools including the case study school understood wellbeing over a broader timescale (pages 100 and 154). They identified the importance of building foundations to improve wellbeing in adulthood. Their initiatives were wider, including offering additional life experiences and skills development. This presents real-life application of Ben-Arieh and Frone's (2011) concept of children's 'wellbeing' now versus their 'well becoming' in adulthood. These schools had families experiencing greater than average disadvantage, with pupils having more limited opportunities. The benefits of wellbeing practice can be alternatively understood through the concept of generating social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 2010). This implies these schools recognise a relationship between high levels of personal capital and improved wellbeing. This will be further discussed on page 231. This finding has implications for practice in how schools aim to balance the short and longer-term wellbeing needs of pupils.

7.2.1.3   Strategies and design

All phases presented evidence of the strategies schools employed. In English primary schools evidence-based frameworks were the predominant strategy, used by nineteen of the twenty-six schools in the SDA as well as the case study school (page 109). In over half of schools two or more frameworks informed their wellbeing practice. External organisations, including private companies, charities and other governmental bodies were commonly used, with half of schools using more than one provider (pages 111 and 166). Several schools adopted the criteria for obtaining wellbeing awards including the Wellbeing Award for Schools and the Carnegie

Excellence in Mental Health award (page 109). This echoes Jessiman *et al.'s* (2019) study of English academy schools which highlighted that even within the same trust there was no centralised approach to promoting wellbeing. In all these findings have presented real-world examples with the potential to inform future practice.

These strategies shaped the teaching and learning content in promoting wellbeing (see Figure 7-4). All schools in phases two and three used standalone lessons, known as PDL or PSHE lessons, to promote skills and knowledge addressing SEL (pages 106 and 149). Content was also integrated into other curricula (page149). Tom evidenced how discussions related to wellbeing were incorporated into English and history lessons. At a whole-school level, assemblies were used to explore a variety of wellbeing topics and at a classroom-level circle times enabled pupils to raise issues of concern (page 151).
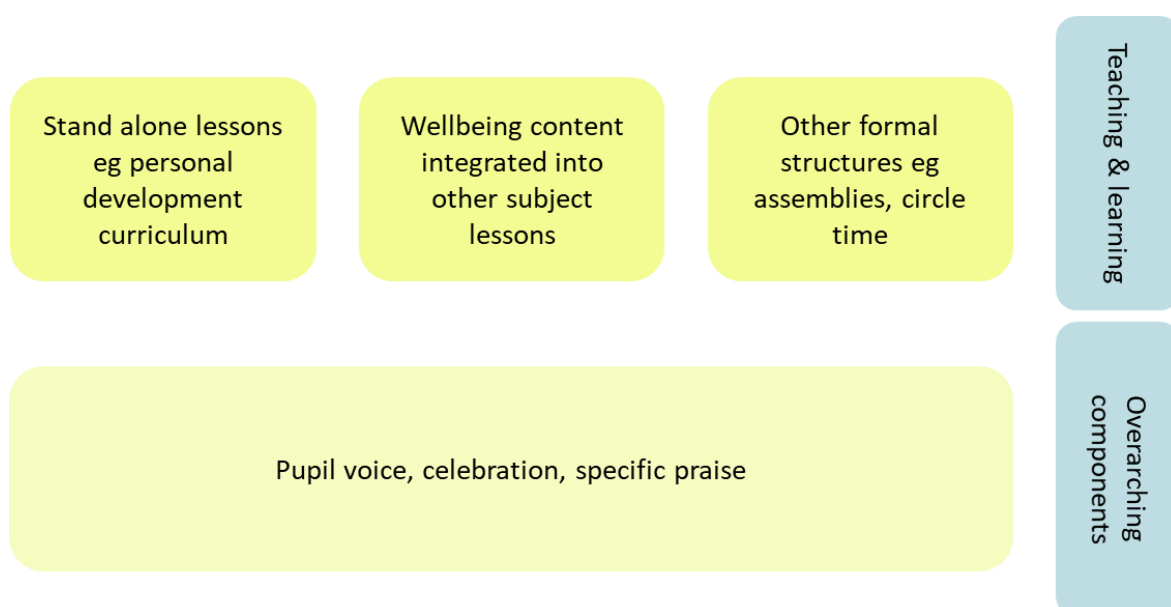
Figure 7-4 Common characteristics related to teaching and learning in whole-school wellbeing promotion

Schools also recognised general wellbeing principles. These included enabling pupil voice, using celebration and making praise specific. Pupil voice appeared in all three study phases highlighting schools' associations with improving wellbeing. There was evidence of differing methods. School councils were commonly used across schools in the SDA, whereas '*issue of the month'* was favoured in the case study school as being more inclusive. Only three out of twenty-six schools in the SDA identified pupils' involvement in school change, with pupil voice more commonly used to enable children to raise issues (page 116). These findings reflect existing literature whereby pupils benefit from '*having a say'* and feeling valued and respected (Anderson and Graham, 2015;

Weare, 2015). Furthermore, Seligman's (2011) PERMA model explains the multidimensional benefits of pupil voice as developing positive relationships with peers and adults, enabling prolonged engagement in meaningful activities and promoting a sense of accomplishment.

Schools also perceived the value of celebration. Many schools in the SDA rewarded children who displayed the schools' wellbeing values (page 95). Jane emphasised how celebration encouraged self-responsibility for wellbeing. She similarly used a second strategy of specific praise. Using precise feedback, celebration and praise were used to identify when children's thoughts and behaviours were associated with the traits of positive wellbeing. This enabled children to develop skills for internally validating their own actions by practising self-reflection and self-regulation. Jane perceived this as empowering pupils through increasing agency over their own wellbeing (see page 152). A recent meta-analysis found higher levels of self-regulation were linked to current wellbeing and future accomplishment, interpersonal skills and higher wellbeing in adulthood (Robson *et al.,* 2020).

7.2.1.4 Culture of wellbeing

WHO (1996), echoed by Nutbeam (2019) argue that a culture which supports wellbeing is essential in health promoting schools. Furthermore, Public Health England (PHE, 2015) identifies that culture change alongside SEL has the greatest benefits for 'educational performance'. The analysis demonstrated schools understood culture as values-based, typically focussing on several values to support wellbeing. Respect (54% of schools), kindness (38%), responsibility (27%), tolerance (27%) and aspiration (23%) were cited most frequently. Similarly, Jane recognised that enduring values included kindness, compassion, listening and acceptance of mistakes. In the SLR, Elfrink et al.'s (2017) study of Dutch primary schools exemplified a values-based initiative to support wellbeing. The use of values was two-fold. Values such as respect, kindness and authenticity enabled pupils to feel valued for their uniqueness. In contrast, aspiration and responsibility promoted agency over children's current learning as well as developing longer-term ambitions.

Existing evidence emphasises the importance of sustaining cultural change (Weare and Nind, 2011). In this study schools achieved sustainability through embedding these values in the school 'rules', utilised the school community (pages 76 and 157). In Elfrink *et al.'s* (2017) study, schools adopted '*life rules'* such as '*People get happy when I give them a compliment*'. Similarly, case study school values were embedded in the 'Golden rules'. Five schools used the evidence-based

Values-based Education framework and faith schools implemented religious values (page 107). Embedding values reflected existing literature. In UK and Australian schools, Lovat and Hawkes (2013) demonstrated adopting values-based policy, curricula and pedagogy resulted in greater self-awareness, social harmony and an improved learning environment.

Schools understood culture as a method to facilitate staff and pupils' agency (page 152 and 164). Bandura (2006) defines agency as exercising perceived power within a person's environment. Additionally, Rose *et al.* (2016) identified a clear link between a sense of agency and wellbeing in young people. Furthermore, promoting pupils' agency encapsulates WHO's (1998) requirement for settings to enable people to 'increase control over' their wellbeing. Hall's (2010) case study demonstrated even young children were able to work autonomously when given responsibility. Echoing Turan and Bektas' (2013) argument that school culture is highly influenced by leadership practice, Jane's own experiences of support to feel enabled and empowered appear to have shaped her vision for school culture.

Schools also understood culture for generating a sense of belonging (page 160). Belonging in social relationships reflects one of the five dimensions of Seligman's (2011) PERMA theory of wellbeing. Findings demonstrated belonging existed at multiple levels: to the school, at team level, classroom level and amongst peer groups, and was demonstrated across all phases of the study. In the case study school, pupils were encouraged to find '*their tribe'* locally, nationally and even globally to mitigate the '*isolation*' (page 152). Belonging was facilitated through school values. In the SDA, whilst only one school identified 'belonging' as a key value, most schools sought to promote 'respect', 'tolerance' and 'co-operation' (page 96). This echoes Greenwood and Kelly's (2019) systematic review which found that teachers identified valuing pupils, fairness and an inclusive approach to learning promoted belonging. Findings demonstrated the importance of caring environments (page 104), supported by Louis et al.'s (2016) exploratory study identifying caring leadership and a caring school environment promoted pupils' sense of belonging. The analysis also highlighted how belonging was facilitated by pupils as agents in building friendship groups, using shared humour to bond them as a cohort (page 159).

7.2.1.5   Additional opportunities

Schools placed value on providing additional opportunities alongside formal lessons to support pupils' wellbeing. In the SDA, common activities included extracurricular sports, gardening, periods for self-reflection, mindfulness and meditation, Forest school, eco activities and animal care (page 113). The case study also used Forest school and extracurricular clubs but placed more

emphasis on the wellbeing benefits of arts and music (page 154). It was evident that schools recognised that promoting wellbeing need not be standalone but could be incorporated into existing activities. Pupils' recognition of the benefits of these opportunities are highlighted within the answer to sub-question five on page 221.

However, the analysis also identified the way in which schools conceptualised activities influenced the potential benefits for pupils. This was exemplified in the activity of gardening (page 97). Whilst ten schools reported using gardening as a mechanism to cultivate caring, achievement and build self-confidence, one school expanded their concept of gardening to include selling produce on the school playground. This enabled the activity to generate a sense of satisfaction in pupils selling their own food alongside belonging in the local community. This reflects Ohly *et al.'s* (2016) systematic review of school gardening which identified expanding the activity to include volunteers alongside children promoted cultural understanding and wider social belonging. This finding, therefore, has implications for how schools can enhance the wellbeing benefits of engaging pupils in activities.

7.2.2 Sub-question two: How is wellbeing practice implemented and sustained?

Figure 7-5 identifies how themes from the findings chapters were synthesised into five overarching themes to organise and make sense of the answer to the second sub-question. The resultant themes are: 1) leadership and support, 2) embedding and formalising practice, 3) pedagogy for integrating wellbeing, 4) reviewing outcomes and processes and 5) sustaining and evolving practice.

How is wellbeing practice implemented and sustained?
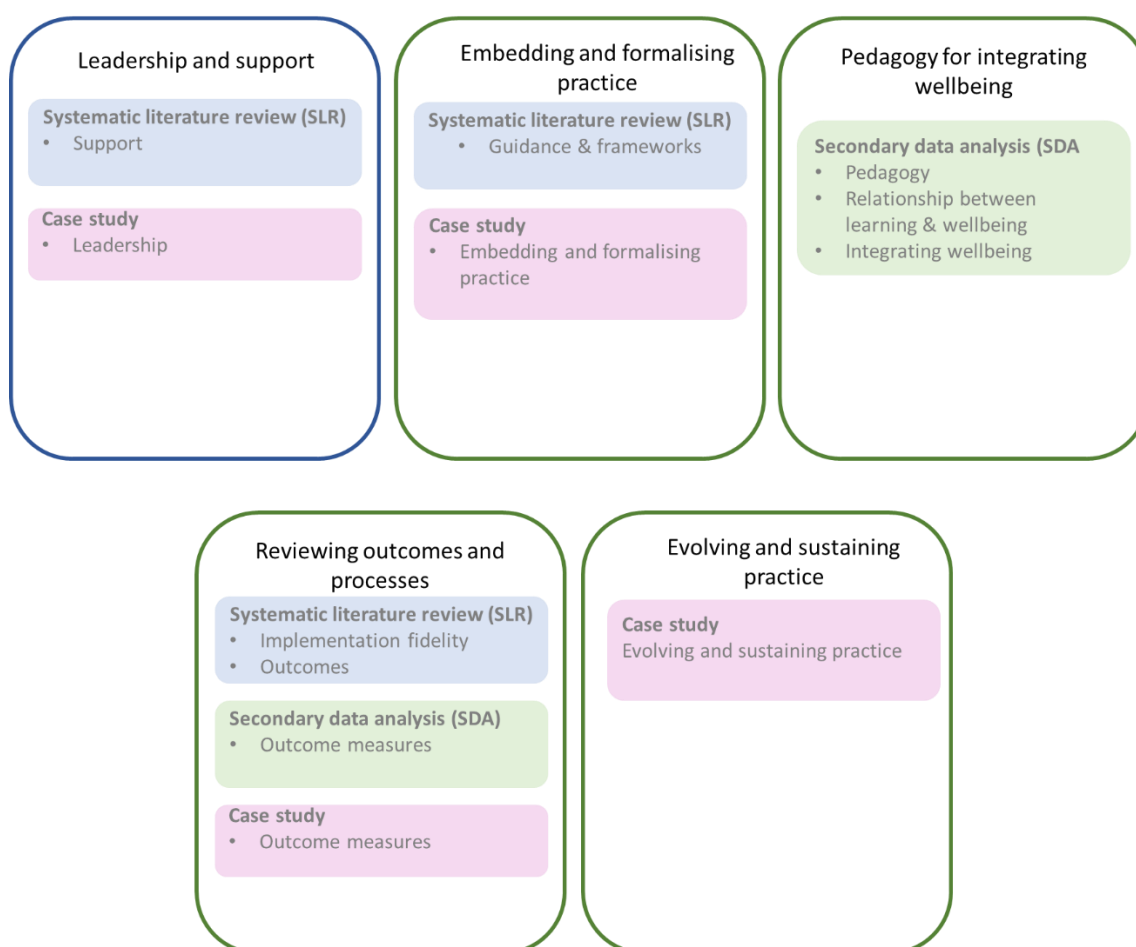
Figure 7-5 Synthesis of findings to answer sub-question two

7.2.2.1   Leadership and support

Leadership style was perceived to influence school community wellbeing. Holsen, Iversen and Smith (2009) recognised that strong leadership enabled more consistent implementation of a SEL intervention across classes. Omstead *et al*. (2009) highlighted that schools with committed, engaged leadership were more successful in developing cultures where pupils felt safe, connected and valued (page 76). Similarly, Jane perceived her '*passionate*' leadership style promoted a supportive culture to meet the wellbeing needs of pupils, staff and parents (page 164). The case study highlighted how school leaders needed a reflective and adaptive approach to promoting wellbeing (page 165). In existing literature, Anderson (2017) refers to this style as '*transformational*' whereby leaders inspire staff, work as a team and present a clear vision to identify needs and make changes. Bingham and Bubb (2021) argue that transformational leadership promotes wellbeing. The case study exemplified how Jane, as school leader, sought to

promote staff wellbeing by giving agency to teachers through a process of distributed leadership (discussed in the following paragraph), introduced supervision to support staff and developed a culture which encouraged risks to be taken and where mistakes could be made in a supportive environment. Jane also emphasised the importance of leaders '*walking the talk'*, which Bingham and Bubb (2017) argue enables school leaders to act as role models in behaviours associated with wellbeing, such as maintaining a work-life balance. The benefit of this leadership style in schools is recognised by Cherkowski (2018, p. 63) 'as an opportunity to build collective capacity for growing wellbeing' benefitting staff and pupils.

The case study demonstrated that leadership power was broadly shared amongst staff. Tom identified that teachers used '*our professional judgement*' to make curriculum and pedagogic choices at classroom level as we know our children best (page 164). This reflects the practice of distributed leadership where the role is shared within the school (Harris, 2012). Harris argues this shifts the perspective of leadership from a 'position' to the 'interaction', requiring a culture of trust. As staff wellbeing champion, Tom emphasised that staff felt both trusted by and trusted in the management team, resulting in staff perceiving the school as '*somewhere that cares about wellbeing*'. This sense of wellbeing may be explained by Hofstein *et al*.'s (2004) argument that practices such as distributed leadership enable professional growth, and Cherkowski and Schnellert's (2017) proposal that it gives teachers agency in promoting and improving wellbeing.

Schools also sought support from external partnerships to guide practice at a strategic level, including company trainers providing wellbeing resources, educational psychologists, behavioural advisors and a healthcare research organisation (page 99 and 171). The systematic literature review identified that schools adopting whole school change required long-term ongoing support (page 82). In the case study, the partnership with the Anna Freud centre was perceived to provide ongoing support through Tom's involvement in the pioneering schools' network as well as Jane's participation in reviewing the organisation's new research (page 171). However, further findings identified that developing successful, sustained partnerships presented challenges, with practitioners reporting that support was over-theoretical and lacked consistency (Omstead *et al.,* 2009; Elfrink *et al.,* 2017; O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018). Only one of twenty-six English primary schools was supported by an educational consultant to co-design whole-school wellbeing practice. However, this lack of evidence may have been the result of using a dataset that was not originally created to answer this study's research questions.

The current study therefore provides real world evidence about how schools benefit from supportive leadership and a mixed perspective of the usefulness of external support in designing and implementing wellbeing initiatives.

7.2.2.2   Embedding and formalising practice

Barry, Clarke and Dowling (2017) argue embedding wellbeing practice is a mechanism for sustainability. Embedding refers to incorporating wellbeing practice into all aspects of school life and is synonymous with a whole school approach (WHO, 1998). In this study, schools used the principles of evidence-based frameworks to embed their wellbeing practice, which was formalised into school policies and practices (pages 109 and 166). However, the only shared framework was the principle of delivering wellbeing practice universally to all pupils (WHO, 1998; Hughes and Dexter, 2011). Frameworks fell into two categories: 1) frameworks designed to promote wellbeing, and 2) frameworks for learning which had associated wellbeing benefits. School approaches differed depending on the focus of their frameworks (page 78). The SEAL programme developed social and emotional learning (Banerjee, Weare and Farr, 2014), the Australian Gatehouse project focussed on school connectedness and feeling safe (Omstead *et al.,* 2009), the 'Ten element map of mental health' understood wellbeing resulting from '*human, social and cultural influences'* at multiple levels of society (Elfrink *et al.,* 2017) and the positive education framework incorporated PERMA dimensions of wellbeing (Waters, 2011). Similarly, the principles of positive psychology, the values education model and the character education framework were employed by several schools (page 110). The case study school adopted the principles of a rights respecting school and the 'Five steps to mental health and wellbeing' framework to support the school community (page 168). In contrast, several other English primary schools recognised some learning frameworks also had potential to benefit pupils' wellbeing, including the growth mindset model, risk-based learning, self-directed learning and philosophy for children (page 110). This plethora of approaches demonstrates schools understood the importance of using evidence-based frameworks to guide wellbeing practice, reflecting wider literature (Barry *et al*., 2017; Gillard *et al.,* 2021). However, they also present an explanation for Waters' (2017, p. 7) assertion that '*while teachers are committed to student wellbeing, they feel unsure of themselves when it comes to knowing which practices are effective'.

Scholars also highlight wellbeing initiatives are more successfully embedded where there is a focus on high quality implementation (Weiss *et al.,* 2016; Darlington, McNamara and Jourdan*,* 2017; Rosas and Knight, 2019). Five of the six reviews and half of the studies presented findings on implementation, yet reviewers were also critical that implementation failed to be considered in designing wellbeing practice (page 81) (Durlak *et al*., 2011; Weare and Nind, 2011; Elfrink *et al.,* 2016; Murphy *et al.,* 2017; Dix *et al.,* 2018; O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018). A reason for this failure may be the inherent complexity of considering multiple factors, which Pearson *et al*. (2015) suggest

includes who and how people are involved and the setting's characteristics. Additionally, Pearson *et al*. (2015), echoed by Samdal and Rowling (2011), highlight the importance of focussing on all stages of the process including planning, initial implementation, embedding practice, adapting and evolving practice. There was limited evidence of schools adopting process frameworks. Durlak (2016) and Dix *et al.* (2018) designed their own process frameworks for implementing wellbeing practice in the SLR, whilst Waters (2011) demonstrated other schools successfully adopted models not designed as process frameworks to evaluate positive psychology initiatives (page 82). Jane used the analogy of building for how practice was implemented and sustained (page 166). A series of foundational '*joists*' remained fixed, upon which practice adapted and evolved (page 165). In all, a focus on implementation appeared scant, reflecting the wider literature that schools placed a greater focus on the design and content.

7.2.2.3   Pedagogy for integrating wellbeing

Most schools sought to integrate wellbeing into other aspects of the day, alongside standalone PDL or PSHE lessons (pages 101 and 149). Pearson *et al.* (2015) recognise that where wellbeing promotion is seen as separate, staff perceive it as an additional responsibility, which may have a detrimental effect on their own wellbeing, and therefore is less beneficial for pupils. Thus, scholars recognise benefits where promoting wellbeing is implicitly 'infused' or 'woven' into daily school life (Norrish *et al.,* 2013; Waters, 2021). The level of integration appeared dependent upon the evidence-based frameworks adopted. A small number of schools employed values-led practice integrating wellbeing across curricula (page 107). In the case study Tom demonstrated how meeting children's wellbeing needs was, in part, facilitated through a pedagogic approach which supported and practised relevant skills and knowledge in other subject lessons (page 150). These examples reflect Barry, Clarke and Dowling (2017, p. 438) argument that wellbeing promotion is most successful where schools have 'embedded [practice] into the core mission of the school and integrated [it] into educational practice'. Tirri (2011, p. 159) conceptualises such practice as 'holistic pedagogy' whereby schools recognise 'the cognitive, social, moral, emotional and spiritual dimensions of education'. She proposes benefits include developing personal values and worldviews, building social and emotional literacy, encouraging reflection and independent learning. With these associated benefits, this new real-world knowledge has the potential to address Ofsted's recent focus on pupils' personal development.

The SDA and case study English primary schools adopted a range of pedagogic strategies for learning, practising and supporting wellbeing across curricula (pages 114 and 150). Findings demonstrated that schools employed similar pedagogic styles. Delivery included playing games, simulations, modelling positive behaviours, using discussions, open-ended questioning, role play

and storytelling. Schools recognised this to enable children to be actively involved in their learning. Although, O'Reilly *et al.* (2018) argued that scant use of technology limited pedagogic practice. There was no evidence that technology was used to support wellbeing teaching, however there was evidence of the value given to arts-based teaching methods. This was exemplified in 'mindful-seeing' art lessons and the case study school's decoration of a zebra statue, involving children representing the school's wellbeing ethos through painting (page 155). Schools also gave children opportunities to practise their learning within a supportive culture, incorporating questioning, self-reflection, problem solving, critical thinking and solution-focused decision-making and group working across curricula (pages and 6.3.1.2). Wellbeing was further integrated with outdoor learning and Forest school used by just under half of schools in the SDA and the case study school (pages 114 and 156). Humberstone and Stan (2009) and Cosgriff (2017) recognised such experiences provided multiple mechanisms associated with improving pupils' wellbeing. In the present study, schools reported benefits included improving social skills, developing independence, team-working, solving problems, positive risk-taking, with the effect of building confidence and self-esteem (page 102). This reflects Waite, Boling and Bentsen's (2016) findings about child-led, skills-based learning. This section has provided real world exemplifications of how schools have adopted recommendations in existing literature to integrate wellbeing learning across curricula (NICE, 2013; Weare and Nind, 2011; Barry, Clarke and Dowling, 2017).

7.2.2.4   Reviewing outcomes and processes

Most English primary schools in the SDA and case study understood the importance of using reviews both to measure outcomes of wellbeing practice alongside evaluating the practice itself (pages 120 and 168). Publications mainly measured social and emotional attributes associated with wellbeing, including social competence, emotional literacy, self-awareness and self-regulation (page 77) (Durlak *et al.,* 2011; Weare and Nind 2011; Murphy *et al.,* 2017; O'Reilly *et al.* 2018; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018). A minority of schools used standardised measures including Boxhall Profiling, the Happiness Scale and the Strengths and Difficulties questionnaire to capture similar outcome measures (page 121). Two schools used online assessment measures from Wellbeing Compass and Thrive Online (page 121). This diversity of measurements is unsurprising as McCellan and Stewart (2015) and Kempf (2018), amongst others, highlight the lack of common approach to defining and, thus, measuring wellbeing. It was more common that pupil and parent annual surveys were used, rather than using objective measurement tools (pages 121 and 169). However, this study found informal methods were used far more extensively (pages 121 and 169). At a whole-school level, staff and head teachers commonly adopted open-door policies whereby pupils and parents were encouraged to raise

concerns at any time, with staff being highly visible at the beginning and end of school days. At classroom-level several schools used worry boxes/monsters and a smaller number used a traffic-light system to gauge a snapshot of class mood. Other mechanisms included having access to wellbeing champions and specialist wellbeing staff.

Existing literature acknowledges the challenges of measuring school-based initiatives. Rosas and Knight (2019) argue evaluating the extent to which complex programmes have met their aims needs to be multidimensional. Moreover, Kempf's (2018) exploration of the difficulties in measuring wellbeing in Canadian schools, highlights the struggle in isolating outcomes directly attributable to school practice. In this study, there was limited evidence that schools acknowledged these challenges. In the case study school, Jane and Tom recognised the complex interconnection of staff and pupil wellbeing, measuring both through self-reported questionnaires and regular informal feedback (page 169). However, Jane argued that measurement alone was not sufficient and school management needed to be respectful of staff views, claiming '*it's no good asking people if you're not going to validate what they give you back*'. The case study also recognised differing benefits between methods for measuring wellbeing (page 169). It demonstrated how informal observations highlighted immediate wellbeing concerns about children who consistently lost minutes of 'golden time'. Whereas, data from annual questionnaires was useful in guiding strategic planning (page 169). However, this study also added weight to existing criticisms over the lack of pupil involvement in measuring wellbeing outcomes. Only Holsen, Iversen and Smith's (2009) and Clarke, Bunting and Barry's (2014) publications involved children in their evaluation process (page 78). The design of this thesis demonstrated how creative, innovative methods enabled new insights about aspects of the case study school that children associated with their wellbeing, such as how social relationships and physical spaces supported feelings of happiness and safety (pages 160 and 175). This implies that such methods have merit in being incorporated into schools' assessment and review processes.

Some schools also recognised the importance of evaluating their processes of promoting wellbeing. However, the section has already highlighted that schools showed limited use of process frameworks in implementing initiatives. Likewise, evidence of formal process evaluation was scant (page 81). There was a focus was on implementation fidelity with Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, (2018) and Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014) claiming confidence in observation as a beneficial measurement tool. In contrast, Durlak *et al*. (2011) were uncertain how best to evaluate implementation. Additionally, Durlak *et al.* (2011), Murphy *et al.* (2017) and Elfrink *et al.* (2017) argued evaluation was not sufficient amongst their studies, calling for frameworks to be introduced to improve ongoing assessments.

Whilst this study has evidenced the existence of regular outcome and process reviews, it appears there is potential for schools to seek more complete understanding of the complex, multifaceted nature of whole-school wellbeing promotion to best refine practice to enable pupils to flourish.

7.2.2.5 Sustaining and evolving practice

Askell-Williams (2017) argues sustainability should be the key focus now school-based wellbeing promotion is maturing. To promote sustainability, Askell-Williams (2017) and Moore *et al.* (2022) propose schools require supportive leadership, staff engagement, ongoing training, initiative design, ongoing evaluation and available resources. Evidence of committed leadership and ongoing evaluation has been demonstrated in 7.2.2.1 and 7.2.2.4. The findings revealed that other promotors of sustainability. Dix *et al.* (2018) and the case study school highlighted the importance of identifying and meeting the specific wellbeing needs of children in their local settings (page 83 and 143). O'Reilly *et al.* (2018) and Kirivuusu *et al.* (2016) recognised lack of resourcing and a school culture unoriented to wellbeing as barriers to meeting needs (page 82). Additionally, Weare and Nind (2011), Durlak (2016) and O'Reilly *et al.,* (2018) identified the positive effects of sufficient training, although O'Reilly *et al.* (2018) found gaps in ongoing support. Durlak (2016) argued that engaged, motivated staff had potential to act as role models, promoting sustained practice. In the case study, sustainability was facilitated through recognising and meeting staffs' own wellbeing needs (page 145). Moreover, Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry (2010) highlighted the importance of understanding school context for sustainability by recognising the impact of family and local contexts on wellbeing practice (page 85).

Schools also understood communicating a shared vision is essential for sustaining practice. Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014) and Dix *et al.* (2012) recognised the importance of early communication with all stakeholders, including parents as a mechanism for 'buy-in', that engages the whole school community (page 81). Likewise Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry (2010) and Dix *et al.* (2012) emphasised communicating with collaborators in the wider community at this stage of the process (page 85). The benefit of communication enabled schools to establish wellbeing practice as a key component of school '*business*' (Dix *et al.,* 2012; Clarke, Bunting and Barry, 2014). The case study school focussed on the importance of ongoing communication. Jane perceived a common wellbeing language as essential for consistent communication within the school community (page 157). Tom understood sustained practice was driven through '*keeping it on the agenda'* (page 170). He argued conversations between staff and children alongside communications through regularly changing displays were vital to their whole-school approach (page 170). These findings echo Cefai and Askell-Williams (2017) study of Australian teachers'

perspectives, recognising a shared language facilitated wellbeing at school- and classroom-levels as well as promoting understanding of the importance of school wellbeing practice.

Schools recognised practice evolved over time. This reflected Askell-Williams (2017) assertion that sustainable practice was driven by adaptation of practices. Jane identified that change was not consistent but resulted from periods of rapid change, such as during her arrival at the school, followed by slower progress whilst embedding practice across school life (page 169). Whilst Jane has been a consistent leader in her school, Moore *et al.* (2022) argue that turnover of key staff is a 'major' barrier to sustainability. Evidence of this was found in Omstead *et al.'s* (2009) study of whole-school change where two schools with rapid staff turnover realised far fewer benefits for their pupils (page 76). Additionally, it appeared different factors drove adaptations to wellbeing practice. In the case study school, changing practice was influenced both by external factors alongside internal school policies and practices (page 172 and 182). Tom perceived the wellbeing lead role to have been developed in anticipation of macro-level education policy change, placing greater importance on schools as settings to promote wellbeing. Additionally, he identified the organic process of expanding a playtime activity introduced for a small cohort of pupils in lockdown (page 172). The school recognised improvements to children's wellbeing in the playground when structured games were introduced, including strengthened relationships and successful team working. This activity was adapted to offer structured play to all. This section recognises that practice requires a dynamic, evolving process to meet changing immediate and long-term needs of the whole school community (Rosas and Knight, 2019).

7.2.3 Sub-question three: What are the contextual factors which promote or impede wellbeing initiatives?

This section focuses on how context influences wellbeing promotion in schools. Findings from the three phases of the study have been subsumed into three final themes which form the basis of the discussion: 1) schools' social environments, 2) other influencing factors within schools' contexts and 3) the influence of the wider external context (see Figure 7-6). To organise the discussion, Darlington, Violon and Jourdan's (2018, p.2) conceptualisation of 'context' has been used. The first two sections focus on 'people', 'management' and 'characteristics of the setting' whilst the final section explores 'cultural and historical background', 'community' and 'macro national context'.

What are the contextual factors which promote or impede initiatives?
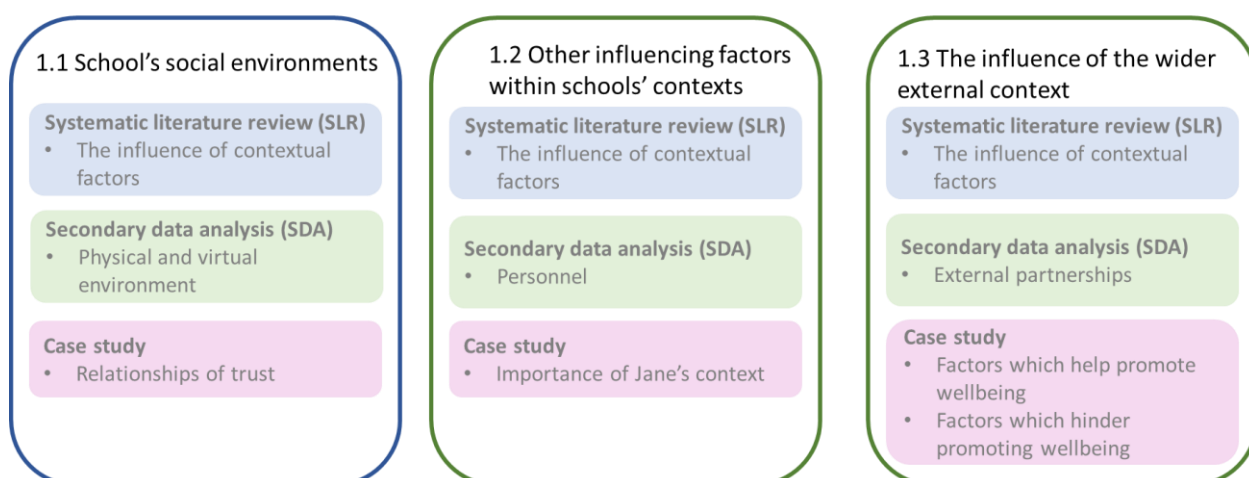
Figure 7-6 Synthesis of findings to answer question three

7.2.3.1   Schools' social environments

There was consensus amongst schools that people were highly influential in promoting wellbeing (pages 98 and 173). Schools sought to develop positive relationships between pupils and teachers, between teachers, teachers and school leadership and between the school and families /carers, perceiving these were pivotal to improving pupils' wellbeing. This reflects Seligman's (2011) focus on social connectedness and positive relationships as fundamental for flourishing and WHO's (1998) recommendation for schools to develop social environments and partnerships as part of the health promoting schools framework. All schools sought to support relationships through a whole-school approach with a focus on '*everyone*' being involved in creating kind, respectful and non-judgemental social interactions; in some schools this included lunchtime supervisors and other non-teaching staff (pages 98 and 146). These findings echo Aldridge and McChesney's (2018, p. 135) systematic review highlighting that all teachers regardless of any specialised training can '*proactively and intentionally'* work towards creating a positive social environment. This highlights how wellbeing promotion is not a standalone activity, and even small improvements in the quality of interactions can better support the school community. Pupils also emphasised the importance of positive relationships for wellbeing in their maps (page 174). All children associated good relationships with peers and teachers as fundamental to promoting their sense of happiness and safety, resulting in them '*enjoying*' and '*loving*' school. Some pupils also emphasised how strong relationships with teachers boosted their achievement through feeling

supported to take learning risks. These findings echo previous research which found positive relationships resulted in pupils' sense of belonging, connectedness with school, feeling safe and improved academic outcomes (Allen *et al.,* 2018; Kutsyuruba, Klinger and Hussain, 2015). Additionally, Tom and Jane recognised how positive relationships built trust between people (page 178). They argued that a benefit of trust between staff and pupils enabled children to feel valued for their uniqueness. Similarly, Roffey (2016, p. 34) highlights how positive relationships facilitate trust and allow children to feel 'worthwhile', 'loveable' and 'capable'.

The impact of trust on the social environment was further explored through the case study. Ofsted recognised that *trust and teamworking are created through very positive relationships* at the school which appears synonymous with Bryk and Schneider's (2003) concept of '*relational trust',* existing where people feel valued, genuinely listened to and respected for differing views. School management drove the culture '*of kindness, of compassion, of listening, of, of recognising when you don't get it* right' (page 157). These traits align with Bryk and Schneider's (2003) characteristics for promoting relational trust, including having integrity, acknowledging the vulnerabilities of others and actively listening to their concerns. Findings showed leadership encouraged risk taking whereby staff and pupils were supported to voice their needs and expose vulnerabilities, mistakes and challenges (pages 153 and 178). According to the PDL policy, staff were encouraged to say if they did not know as '*there is no shame in not knowing the answer'.* Staff recognised relational trust between themselves and Jane, with Tom demonstrating how vulnerabilities could be shared, '*if I approach management with a mental health issue it will be well supported*'. This reflects Bryk and Schneider's (2003) argument that trust enables 'genuine conversations', which Berkovich (2018) concurs improves staff wellbeing. In turn, staff wellbeing is widely associated with better pupil wellbeing (Cefai & Cavioni, 2014; Harding et al., 2019). Jane also understood positive relationships as enabling the school to develop '*a bank of goodwill and trust'* (page 174). An exceptional example of trust was demonstrated during the Covid-19 pandemic where pupils, parents and staff entrusted the school to keep them safe and provide support. Trust facilitated high staff and pupil attendance through a confidence that changes to school practice would support health and wellbeing (page 186). This exemplifies Bryk and Schneider's (2003) assertion that strong relational trust enables changes to be made more easily. The importance of enabling change through trust is particularly relevant in the light of the earlier discussion which argued that promoting wellbeing is most beneficial when perceived as a process of continual change (page 205).

Most schools also recognised the value of specialist roles, whereby a small number of staff had additional responsibilities for pupils' wellbeing. They reported these enabled children to build relationships with people who modelled skills and behaviours associated with flourishing (page

98). Roles were mainly adopted by existing staff provided with additional training from external organisations. However, as part of a large multi-academy trust (MAT) with a focus on wellbeing, a further school employed a '*wellbeing and attendance'* higher level teaching assistant (HLTA) (page 99). This highlights that, as Hatcher (2011) suggests, MATs have the potential to create pioneering practices with benefits for the wider education system. Specialist roles in the remaining schools included designated mental health leads or wellbeing leads, mental health first aiders, wellbeing champions and ambassadors and mentors (page 99). Over half of schools had a wellbeing team. Tom perceived that the value of a specialist wellbeing role allowed time to build trusting, positive relationships with children, stating the '*main focus of her job is talking to children'*. Whilst most roles were undertaken by adults, a small number of schools also trained pupils as wellbeing champions and peer mentors (page 177). A further school had trained ten parent wellbeing champions and several schools, including the case study school, recognised the importance of governors in promoting wellbeing (pages 99 and 181). In developing a collaborative approach, the findings demonstrated how more people within the school community were encouraged to feel empowered as agents of wellbeing practice, which scholars highlight such practice increases personal confidence and self-esteem and provides social connectedness (Hall, 2010; Anna Freud Centre, 2020). Additionally, involving other stakeholders may address the recognised time constraints on teachers to fulfil such roles, although some teacher involvement is essential in a whole-school approach (Danby and Hamilton, 2016).

7.2.3.2   Other influencing factors within schools' contexts

Characteristics of the setting were also identified to influence their wellbeing practice (pages 97 and 180). Factors included school demographics, staff attitudes and experiences, the physical environment and perceived stressors for pupils. Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry's (2010) comparison of two school contexts emphasised how the success of wellbeing practice was fundamentally shaped by the school's demographic profile, identifying that where families had positive perceptions and strong relationships with the school pupils benefitted more (page 85). This resonates with Nastasi and Schensul's (2005) argument of the importance in understanding the school setting to enable initiatives to be tailored to their environment. Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry (2010), in identifying potential barriers to the wellbeing initiative, provided schools with the understanding to mitigate the effects of contextual factors. Durlak's (2016) review also highlighted that staff attitudes and experiences both facilitated and hindered practice (page 84). Teachers with favourable attitudes acted as role models, motivating others and sustaining practice. This echoes Byrne *et al.'s* (2018) study whereby school staff with positive attitudes to

promoting wellbeing encouraged novice teachers to use their pre-service wellbeing learning within their new roles. Yet, negative attitudes were identified as barriers, with Durlak (2016) recognising reduced pupil benefits. Similarly, Wood (2018) found that staff attitudes to pupils from '*Asian*' and '*lower-class*' communities negatively influenced SEL initiatives, whereby practice was used to correct '*wrong*' behaviour (page 84). Parents' attitudes were also found to impact wellbeing practice. In the case study certain subgroups of parents had negative attitudes towards their children attending school trips and residential stays (page 179). Jane recognised that addressing parental attitudes and anxieties enabled pupils to attend activities aimed to support their wellbeing. This illustration gives weight to Nastasi and Schensul's (2005) and Hill *et al*.'s (2005) arguments that a '*one size fits all*' approach is insufficient for promoting wellbeing. Rather Jane's determination to mitigate parental concerns exemplifies Keshawaraz *et al*.'s (2010) requirement of addressing '*diversity in*' schools as well as '*diversity between*' schools.

The case study also exemplified how staff experiences influenced wellbeing promotion. Jane's previous professional experiences had shaped her vision for sustained wellbeing practice (page 180). In her early career, Jane identified how feeling respected, being listened to and being encouraged to work collaboratively supported and improve her own wellbeing, through fostering belonging and supporting her professional identity. This experience influenced the use of assembly times to encourage pupils both to embrace their individuality and gain a sense of belonging through finding their '*tribes*'. Whilst Jane's goal of asking pupils to recognise the value of being, at the same time, unique and similar to others may sound contradictory, Knez *et al.* (2020) argue that personal and collective identity facilitate personal and collective wellbeing, both being necessary for flourishing. Thus, Jane's strategy adapted from her own experiences appears beneficial for supporting her pupils' wellbeing and supports the argument wellbeing promotion is inherently complex (Rosas and Knight, 2019). The case study also highlighted how school strategies shaped teachers' professional identities. Whilst developing skills associated with distributed leadership mediated traits related to personal identity, encouraging team-working and collegiality in a shared responsibility for promoting pupils' wellbeing supported a sense of shared teacher identity (page 164 and 178). Using past experiences to adopt strategies for staff wellbeing, ultimately improved pupils' own wellbeing (Harding et al., 2019).

Another characteristic of the setting was the influence of schools' physical environments. Most schools placed importance on outdoor spaces as places for wellbeing (pages 97). Recent systematic reviews argue that green spaces support wellbeing through improved mood, happiness, greater life satisfaction, improved attention, reduced stress and a sense of restoration (McCormick, 2017; Vanaken and Danckaerts, 2018; Zhang *et al.,* 2020). However, most schools recognised that it was the space's function, rather than the spaces themselves, which was more

influential on pupils' wellbeing (page 97 and 156). Just under half of schools used gardening both to enhance learning and support wellbeing. Several schools engaged pupils in nurturing animals including chickens, ducks, rabbits and some larger farm animals as a mechanism to encourage caring and improve wellbeing (page 102). In a recent review Abat-Roy (2021) suggests that introducing animals into schools has the potential to improve pupil-staff interactions and relationships between children, the importance of which was discussed on page 207. Additionally, wider literature argues that animals promote curiosity, improve motivation and engagement, and support self-regulation (Gee et al., 2017; Abat-Roy, 2021). Physical spaces were also used for meditation and mindfulness (page 97). The benefit of encouraging meditation and mindfulness in schools is associated with developing awareness, promoting emotional regulation, relaxation and improving concentration (Campion and Rocco, 2009; Ager, Albrecht and Cohen, 2015; Waters *et al.,* 2015). As this discussion has shown that different activities share similar benefits, schools may focus on high-quality delivery of a few selected activities within their physical spaces.

Findings also identified that characteristics of the pupils themselves were influential on how wellbeing was promoted. Children's anxiety was a potential barrier to their subjective sense of wellbeing, with many schools seeking to adapt their environments to mitigate perceived challenges (pages 97 and 161). Almost half of schools had introduced eco activities such as enabling pupils to recycle waste and achieving nationally recognised eco awards. Schools understood this facilitated children's sense of wellbeing through having agency in looking after their environment. Wider literature recognises growing anxieties amongst children about climate change and the eco-crisis (Wu, Snell and Samji, 2020). In Hickman *et al.'s* (2021) global survey of 10,000 children, over half of respondents felt '*powerless*' and '*helpless*' about making a difference to the climate crisis. A further challenge for some pupils was their anxiety in relation to unstructured times such as playtime and lunchtime. Bristow and Atkinson (2020) identify play as important for wellbeing but argue the playground can be a place that is socially and emotionally challenging. To counteract this, most schools offered alternative activities alongside traditional unstructured play and provision of large equipment supporting physical play.. A small number of schools had adopted calm clubs and spaces for children seeking quieter play or solitary time at lunchtimes (page 97). Schools differed as to whether children were selected to attend these alternative activities or whether sessions were open to all children. Whilst schools appeared to offer a range of solutions to reduce children's concerns, Bristow and Atkinson's (2020) review cautioned that without engaging children in the decision-making, schools did not always identify meaningful activities.

7.2.3.3   The influence of the wider external context

Schools perceived the influence of cultural and historical backgrounds, enacted through families' attitudes and behaviour (page 143 and 179). In the case study Tom argued *'what happens at home affects what happens at school',* focussing on how families may negatively impact children's wellbeing and learning (page 143). The findings echoed Bronfenbrenner and Morris' (1998) concept of the influence of 'proximal' environments on young children, finding that both staff and pupils identified relationships at home, school and in the local community were most influential on children's wellbeing (page 143). O'Reilly *et al.* (2018), Durlak *et al.* (2011) and Banerjee, Weare and Farr (2014) recognised that differing socioeconomic, ethnic and cultural school profiles influenced outcomes of wellbeing initiatives (page 77). Jane argued that influencing factors were dynamic rather than static. She exemplified this through the fall in families' engagement with religious institutions over her time at the school, perceiving this to be a barrier both to children's *'connection with their humanity'* and the spiritual dimension of their wellbeing. Jane demonstrated how schools can tailor wellbeing practice for their own setting (Nastasi and Schensul, 2005). In seeking to mitigate the impact of falling family engagement with religion the school exposed pupils to the broad philosophical principles from many religions (page 183).

Most schools also perceived that children's wellbeing benefitted from relationships with people and organisations within the community, recognising these links served a variety of functions (pages 85,119 and 154). Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry (2010) argued that local community groups could be *'key contributors'* to promoting wellbeing in schools (page 85). They considered these to include public sector and voluntary organisations, other schools, sports clubs, cultural and religious organisations, and town-wide events. English primary schools also evidenced similar links with places of worship, charities, local businesses and school volunteers (page 119). Additionally, Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry (2010) argued that to maximise benefits for pupils these organisations needed support and training from the school (page 85). Benefits were perceived to include supporting cognitive, emotional, physical and spiritual aspects of wellbeing and widening pupils' social networks (pages 77 and 148). Schools reported the social benefits of developing community relationships, reflecting the findings of Ferguson's (2006, p.8) systematic review which found community links develop social capital, build networks and promote children's sense of *'trust and safety'* in their local community. Jane also highlighted additional benefits from collaborating with a local doctors' surgery to create an exhibition of pupils' artwork on the topic of wellbeing (page 154). She recognised a sense of achievement and recognition, at both personal and school level, through pupils sharing their values and learning. In addition, wider research identifies engaging in community arts-based projects has the potential to boost children's positive emotions, promote agency and confidence through the creative process, practise skills of self-

reflection and self-expression and enable pupils to experience a resulting sense of empowerment, satisfaction and achievement (Seligman, 2011; Celume *et al.,* 2017).

Several findings recognised that macro national context influenced schools' daily lives, emphasising schools were most affected by political changes from the education department. In the case study, Jane perceived the positive impact of the recent green paper '*Transforming children and young people's mental health provision'* on changes to the Ofsted inspection framework and mandatory mental health education, placing greater focus on personal development and wellbeing (page 182). She emphasised how this had changed attitudes amongst education stakeholders, including Ofsted inspectors and local authority staff, to the wider importance of promoting wellbeing for learning and longer-term life satisfaction. Similarly, Durlak (2016), O'Reilly *et al.* (2018) and Kiviruusu *et al.* (2016) emphasised that national educational systems were a key influence on wellbeing promotion (page 85). There was also evidence that school-level issues were driven by macro-level factors. Several schools Identified lack of teacher time as a limiting factor to promoting wellbeing (Clarke*,* O'Sullivan and Barry, 2010; Elfrink *et al.,* 2009) (page 84). Similarly, Tom highlighted how political decisions resulted in an overly long waiting list for ELSA support in the case study school (page 184). Through Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological lens, whilst limited resources were experienced at school level, it was the interrelating governmental and local authority policies which drove these manifestations. Additionally, this discussion emphasises not just which factors influence local school practices but also the complexity of interactions between factors. Despite a growing governmental focus on wellbeing in schools, there is restricted funding for schools as part of wider economic policies. Thus, the government acts as both facilitator and barrier to broadening schools' involvement in promoting wellbeing. In all, this discussion has provided real world evidence of factors which influence school practice at multiple levels, addressing Nutbeam's (2019) argument that health promotion is most successful where it takes account of children's contexts. It echoes previous literature about both the diversity and changing nature of these influencing factors (Dahlgreen and Whitehead 1991; Lippman, 2007; Nutbeam, 2019). Moreover, this study has revealed the extent of the task if schools are to comprehensively evaluate the impact of interrelated factors, within and outside their settings, on wellbeing practice (Keshawaraz *et al*., 2010; Rosas and Knight, 2019).

7.2.4   Sub-question four How do children experience whole-school wellbeing promotion?

This section focuses on children's perspectives about how they experienced whole-school wellbeing promotion. Year six pupils at the case study school created detailed, high quality and unique responses during the mapping activity which has enabled this study to *'enrich [its] understanding'* about wellbeing practice by generating insights *'untapped by other research methods'* (Clarke, Bunting and Barry, 2014, p. 591). Echoing Hall's (2010, p. 333) findings of engaging primary school pupils in research, these children demonstrated a range of skills and knowledge related to wellbeing, confidently used an emotional vocabulary, conveyed self-awareness, demonstrated reflective skills and focussed on personal strengths as well as proving a '*maturity*' as co-responders.

7.2.4.1   Children's experiences of wellbeing

All children reported a variety of experiences they associated with wellbeing and Seligman's (2011) PERMA theory of wellbeing will be used to organise this discussion. The PERMA model understands wellbeing as subjective and multidimensional based on positive emotions, engagement with activities, positive relationships, meaningful experiences and accomplishment, and that positive experiences of these dimensions are associated with flourishing (Seligman, 2011).

Positive emotions

Children used a range of vocabulary to capture feelings including being '*happy*' and '*safe*' (prompted by the definition presented to them), feeling '*proud*', '*loving*', 'excited',' *fun*', '*enjoying*', '*joking*' and '*brave*'. This reflects the school's emphasis children developing an emotional vocabulary (page 158). Children also emphasised how they benefitted from positive emotions experienced by their teachers, describing higher levels of personal wellbeing when staff were '*kind*', '*supportive*', '*caring*', '*cheerful*' and '*encourag[ing]*' (page 153 and 158). Literature proposes positive emotions benefit children through facilitating social connectedness, which was recognised in the answer to sub-question five on page 222. (Tugade and Fredrickson, 2004; Alexander *et al.,* 2021). Most children understood relationships with peers and staff had generated happiness, safety, humour and fun (page 158 to 160), implying the importance of the school's strategies of building social skills, promoting positive relationships and developing a culture of wellbeing (page 157). Several children also expressed that emotions such as pride and happiness stemmed from learning, often requiring persistence and resilience to overcome personal challenges (page 153 and 156). This mirrors Csikszentmihalyi's (2002) concept of 'flow'

which argues meaningful, achievable activities create positive emotions including joy, interest and contentment. The school's ability to cultivate positive emotions through learning is an exemplification of its vision of meeting children's wellbeing needs, employing stimulating teaching and supporting children to take learning risks (page 148). A small number of children also reported experiencing negative emotions including '*fear*', '*worry*', feeling '*scared*', '*nervous*', '*sad*' and '*devastated*'. In most cases these were in relation to facing new experiences including staying away from home for a week and performing in the year six play (page 156). For most experience of these emotions was temporary and diminished once the task was completed, this will be discussed more fully in section 'Achievement' below.

Engagement

Several children included experiences of how the school had facilitated their engagement in daily activities. Engagement refers to how pupils involve themselves in school life (Seligman, 2011). Children identified engagement was associated with feeling supported, feeling activities were relevant and having fun (page 153 and 158). One child recognised support from a teacher facilitated their engagement to read, despite initial challenges with spelling, stating '*she always made me feel better about it*' (page 153). They recognised despite a lack of self-belief, '*even tho I wasn't very good',* teacher support enabled them to '*feel better about it'*. This example reflects Kern *et al.*'s (2021) concept of the behavioural, psychological and cognitive dimensions of engagement, whereby the child persevered (behavioural) through the motivation and confidence generated by their teacher (psychological) to practice and develop reading skills (cognitive). A few children also identified that engagement in learning was motivated by reward systems, part of the school's strategy for celebration (page 151). Recognising individual progress enabled learning to feel meaningful and supports Herbert's (2017) argument that engagement in school results from relevant and personal experiences. Children benefitted from the school's aim to *'foster curiosity, fun and laughter'* (page 148). One child engaged more easily with year six SATs tests*, 'which was difficult',* because the teacher *'made it fun'.* Fun was also identified by a few children as encouraging social engagement through the activity of joke sharing amongst the class cohort and teacher, further discussed on page 216. The importance for children's wellbeing of having fun at school was highlighted by pupils' responses when imagining an ideal school for wellbeing in Simmons, Graham and Thomas's (2015) participatory study. In all, children perceived they had been motivated to engage in activities through a variety of school strategies, with existing research suggesting wellbeing benefits are not only short-term but that engagement also predicts attainment in later life (Finn and Zimmer, 2012).

Positive relationships

As this chapter has already placed weight on the value of positive relationships**,** this section of the discussion is intentionally short (page 207). All children recognised the importance of relationships as fundamental to happiness and safety (page 174 to 177). Many children understood that friendships with peers became increasingly sophisticated over their time at school. Several talked about being '*happy*' to have a single friend '*to play with'* in the earliest school years but valued the importance of a friendship group as they got older. Groups of friends were '*supporting*', enabling them to '*feel safe'* and one child spoke of the importance of friends for emotional regulation, '*friends help me succeed by keeping me calm*'. Many children also recognised that pupil-teacher relationships provided similar benefits including feeling safe and connected, although teachers additionally supported children during adverse events such as being hurt, bullied and during new experiences including the Covid-19 epidemic (pages 158 and 186). These findings reflect Powell *et al.'s* (2018) study of Australian children who associated trusting relationships and social connectedness with happiness and wellbeing. Additionally, the importance of developing these positive relationships at primary school age is seen by Brogaard-Clausen and Robson (2019) to be a foundation for long-term social wellbeing, developing lifelong skills for building successful relationships.

Meaning

Children appeared to find meaning in a range of activities including learning, building and sustaining friendships, play and engaging in extracurricular activities (pages 153, 156, 158 and 159). Seligman (2011) associates meaning with experiencing a sense of purpose in life. Most children focussed on learning as the purpose for attending school, demonstrating how they experienced a sense of agency from progressing academically (page 153). Children also identified having fun and playing as meaningful experiences. Several children reported on their enjoyment of physical play and craft-making in their early years, demonstrating that it was the activity itself which was of most importance. Play continued to be meaningful as children became older. Some children continued to enjoy physical play although the findings highlighted that play became less tangible and was commonly associated with belonging to friendship groups and using humour. Additionally, children understood the benefits of play were now heightened through sharing the activity with others (page 158, 159 and 175). Several children focussed on the joy of the whole class sharing the '*secret*' of discovering the class teacher's '*food stash'* (page 160) This resonates

with previous findings that shared play enables positive emotions and strengthens social bonds (Nijhof *et al.,* 2018; Alexander *et al.,* 2021). Children also valued the meaning associated with extracurricular activities including school trips and residential stays. Some children had recognised the purpose of their residential stay as a mechanism for self-growth. Participation had given pupils agency to overcome their negative emotions of anticipating the challenges of their stay, replacing them with pride, satisfaction and improved self-confidence (page 156). These findings reflect Tugade and Fredrickson's (2004) study which argues experiencing positive emotions allows people to regulate negative emotions, with the benefits of broadening personal horizons and building resilience against stressors (Tugade and Fredrickson, 2004).

Achievement

Most children recognised the importance of achievement for their wellbeing, associating accomplishment with a range of positive emotions including feeling '*good*', '*happy*' and '*loving*' and '*enjoying*' their accomplishments. This resonates with Seligman's (2011) concept that achievement brings wellbeing through mastery and attaining set goals, resulting in pride. In reflecting on reception class and year one, a small number of children associated achievement with making a friend, fitting in to the rhythm of school and feeling secure, with little focus on learning (page 174). Children's focus on seeking a sense of belonging, echoes existing research which found links between school connectedness and children's wellbeing (Allen and Bowles, 2012; Roffey, 2013). From year two onwards, children predominantly understood achievement as mastering the skills associated with learning, with several children perceiving they '*improved*' and could '*understand*' better over time, implying their personal agency in the learning process (page 153). In year six, achievement was also associated with positive performance in the SATs tests. The strategies the school employed to support mastery and attainment have been discussed earlier (pages 148 and 149). Several children experienced the benefits of accomplishment through feeling more '*confident*' and '*proud*', with two children highlighting particular enjoyment in mastering personally meaningful subjects of reading and maths (page 153 and 158). Additionally, one child recognised the longer-term benefits of achievement, emphasising their enduring '*love*' of reading despite initial challenges with spelling. This resonates with Bradford and Keller's (2015) argument that attainment is more satisfactory where children have been required to employ significant effort.

This discussion has provided new real-world examples of how children experience whole-school wellbeing promotion. It recognises the subjective and multifaceted nature of wellbeing and emphasises that children uniquely experienced all five dimensions of Seligman's (2011) PERMA

model, highlighting its suitability as a lens for this PhD study (Ryan and Deci, 2002; Pollard and Lee, 2003). Inherent in this model is the understanding that children experience hedonic and eudaimonic facets of wellbeing concurrently (Seligman, 2011). Furthermore, it illustrates the interrelatedness between aspects of wellbeing that positive emotions enhance relationships and vice versa, and achievement is more satisfying where it is meaningful and children are better engaged. Thus, this study recognises that children experience wellbeing holistically, not as a series of discrete dimensions, and argues that a consideration of how these factors influence each other is desirable for schools as part of wellbeing promotion process.

7.2.4.2   Challenges for whole school wellbeing promotion

Whilst children overwhelmingly demonstrated how they felt supported by the school, one child identified negative experiences arising from perceived barriers to wellbeing (pages 161 and 177). By exploring this single case of a child whose responses differed from their peers, the discussion highlights broader challenges for children in applying wellbeing skills and knowledge to everyday situations, particularly '*unexpected*' situations (Resnick, 2007; Kangas, 2010).

In contrast most children's positive feelings about friendships, this child described the challenging experience of having a friend they did not really like**,** '*I also made another friend named Olivia*. I didn't really like her*' (page 176). The child conveyed the negative influence of this relationship on their wellbeing and stated that they only felt happier once the '*friend*' had moved schools. The child makes visible that despite acquiring knowledge on the '*value of forming positive relationships'* within the PDL curriculum (page 148), they were unable to apply these skills to change or end a friendship with an unliked peer. This reflects Pfeffer and Sutton's (2000) concept of the 'knowing-doing gap' whereby knowledge that has been generated through learning is not successfully applied to relevant situations. More broadly, this incident highlights the benefits of school staff seeking to understand what factors prevent the application of wellbeing learning and for whom.

The same child also identified two scenarios where further negative feelings arose through occasions where strategies used to promote wellbeing failed to meet their expectations (page 161). Firstly, in reception class they expressed the negative change from feeling '*safe*' to feeling '*sad*' when their buddy, under the school's buddy system, failed to show up and the child became lost in the school building. Secondly, the child expressed their perceived loss of the friendship bench which **'***blew down from the weather and I never saw it since'.* They identified that this was the mechanism that allowed them to play with others, as it **'***show[ed] that you had no one to play*

with and other people would ask if you wanted to play with them'. These recollections made visible the child's experience of distressing emotions alongside their perceived lack of agency in rectifying challenging events, *factors* associated with lower levels of wellbeing (Seligman, 2011). This passive acceptance and experience of loss is contrary to the school's aim to '*encourage resilience for overcoming challenges and barriers'* (page 148). As wider research identifies social support is associated with overcoming loss, it appears teachers may have had an important role in supporting the child to become active in finding solutions to these adverse situations, however this is not possible if they are unaware of the importance of particular events to pupils (Cakar, 2020). Thus, it appears *beneficial to make the 'invisible visible' by affording children opportunities to reflect on and voice their lived experiences of wellbeing promotion as part of a predominantly adult-driven process (*Proctor and Rogers, 2014). Moreover, understanding what is not working has benefits for developing and refining initiatives (Robertson *et al.* 2015; Garrido *et al.,* 2019).

7.2.4.3   The value of children's lived experiences for whole-school wellbeing promotion

This discussion has highlighted the valuable contribution made by the children's insightful reflections about their lived experiences of whole-school wellbeing promotion. As a result, this section considers how this new knowledge can assist wellbeing practice, beginning with a revised definition of wellbeing. Next, it proposes how pupils' voices can be employed in both measuring outcomes and evaluating processes to better inform ongoing practice.

Redefining children's wellbeing

Current literature is critical of research using adult definitions of wellbeing when studying children (Fauth and Thompson, 2009; Raghavan and Alexandrova, 2015). Indeed, this study adopted a definition generated in collaboration with the case study school's head teacher, my doctoral supervisor and myself. Therefore, developing a revised definition that incorporates children's own concepts of wellbeing appears useful. The definition used as a stimulus in the map drawing activity was feeling '*happy, safe and good about myself'*, chosen as being age-appropriate and using a vocabulary familiar to the children within this setting. The subsequent findings demonstrated the importance children placed on feeling happy as well as physically and psychologically safe. However, the proceeding discussion has shown that pupils identified further factors which they associated with positive experiences of wellbeing. Children repeatedly referred to the importance of positive relationships, particularly with peers, as being associated with happiness. Many children also emphasised the significance of establishing a sense of belonging within friendship groups and their class cohorts. Several children identified increased levels of

satisfaction and confidence arising from the active process of overcoming challenges, recognising that both academic learning and extracurricular activities provided opportunities for self-growth. Children also referred to the importance of fun for wellbeing. It appeared fun was subjectively experienced with pupils suggesting it was manifested during physical play, being with friends, sharing jokes and using humour. Teachers were also associated with having fun. In the light of these factors a revised definition of wellbeing is proposed:

> *'feeling happy, safe, connected to my friends, teachers and school, overcoming challenges, growing in confidence, feeling satisfied and having opportunities to play and have fun.'*

The benefits of this new definition are:

- It uses children's own concepts of wellbeing, addressing criticisms of a lack of child-oriented definitions (Ben-Arieh *et al.,* 2009; Fauth and Thompson, 2009; Raghavan and Alexandrova, 2015; Goswami, Fox and Pollack *,* 2016)
- It is a multidimensional definition combining hedonic and eudaimonic factors, reflecting current discourse in the field that wellbeing is multifaceted (Keyes and Annas, 2009; Diener *et al.,* 2010; Seligman, 2011; Huppert & So, 2013)
- It focusses on emotional, social and psychological aspects of wellbeing, recognised as most appropriate to promote within school settings (Durlak *et al.,* 2011; Nutbeam, 2019)
- It focuses on salutogenic aspects of wellbeing, not avoiding deficits, recognising factors which enable children to experience higher levels of wellbeing or flourishing (Antonovsky, 1996; Green *et al.,* 2015; Mittelmark and Bauer, 2016)

How children's perspectives can inform whole school wellbeing promotion

In capturing their voices, pupils offer personal perspectives on 1) their subjective levels of wellbeing and 2) their lived experiences of whole school wellbeing promotion. This revised definition offers an appropriate stimulus for pupils to reflect on wellbeing in the future, by considering the extent to which they feel personally fulfilled in each of the factors. This could provide an alternative or additional outcome measure for the school. As the mapping activity has demonstrated, encouraging children to respond through creative methods enables knowledge to be collected that would not be generated through more commonly used data collection methods

such as adult-designed, self-report questionnaires (Literat, 2013; Clarke, Bunting and Barry, 2014; Nind, 2014). More broadly, this definition may be appropriate for adoption in other primary school settings.

In seeking to understand how children experience whole-school wellbeing promotion, a further question may prompt children to reflect on what works within their school and how perceived challenges are not currently met:

> *'What makes me feel happy, safe, connected to my friends, teachers and school, helps me to overcome challenges, enables me to grow in confidence, allows me to feel satisfied and lets me play and have fun.'*

The benefit of collecting children's responses enables the school to evaluate wellbeing practice from their perspectives. It would allow the school to build on aspects of wellbeing promotion which benefit children and seek to address children's perceived challenges through changing and refining structures and processes as necessary. However, consideration of how pupils could be engaged in this challenging task of evaluating wellbeing practice needs careful thought.

In all, this section has demonstrated the relevance of involving pupils in participatory research about whole-school wellbeing promotion in a real-world setting. It illustrates how capturing children's voices can assist schools in all stages of the implementation process. During planning, children's conceptualisations may be adopted as part of schools' visions and aims for wellbeing promotion. Once implemented, wellbeing practice can be modified through listening to children's lived experiences, as part of a sustainable approach. Regularly reviewing children's perceptions of their wellbeing will enable schools to measure potential improvements generated through their whole-school wellbeing initiatives (Moore *et al.,* 2015; Rosas and Knight, 2019).

7.2.5   Sub-question five: How has the disruption of Covid-19 reshaped practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing?

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic significantly influenced how schools sought to promote pupils' wellbeing (Gov.UK, 2020a). Periods of school closure required schools to implement rapid adaptations to existing practice. Data collection for phase two occurred during the first period of school closure and lockdown from March 2020 to June 2020. For phase three data collection was undertaken between April 2021 and July 2021 when schools were open but social distancing meant pupils and teachers worked within 'social bubbles' which minimised social interactions. The resultant findings, discussed below, add additional knowledge to existing evidence about how English primary schools supported pupils' wellbeing during this time.

Chapter 7

This discussion focuses on three themes developed in relation to the reshaping of whole-school wellbeing promotion during the Covid-19 epidemic. Whilst not exhaustive, these themes are: 1) a spotlight on wellbeing, 2) intimacy in home-school relationships and 3) overcoming challenges to pupils' wellbeing.

7.2.5.1 A spotlight on wellbeing

Most schools placed increased importance on the wellbeing of their pupils during school closure. Several schools emphasised the priority of pupils' wellbeing over learning during these periods, particularly at the start of school closure (pages 126 and 184). Alongside a focus on pupils, schools emphasised the importance of family wellbeing (page 127). Supporting wellbeing was perceived to equip pupils and families with skills, knowledge and strategies to cope with a range of challenges including restricted access to outdoors, social isolation, health and employment issues (page 125). This focus on wellbeing concerns reflects Moss *et al.'s* (2020) survey of 1,653 primary teachers in England where 84% of teachers (in advantaged schools) to 91% (in disadvantaged schools) felt concern for pupils' wellbeing during school closure. The study also reported concern for poorer levels of family wellbeing, reported by 62% of teachers in advantaged schools and 77% in disadvantaged schools. In this PhD study schools emphasised the importance promoting wellbeing through a focus on facilitating positive emotions, acknowledging, normalising and managing a range of feelings, staying connected to school, family and friends, enjoying personally meaningful activities, the importance of establishing and maintaining routines and remaining motivated by engaging in a variety of experiences (pages 127 to 132 and 184). These findings demonstrate that the strategies adopted during school closure reflect the design of whole-school wellbeing promotion which already existed within schools, highlighting how the approach, aims and strategies of wellbeing practice remained consistent (pages 126 and 185). The significant difference during these periods was that rather than school staff facilitating pupils' wellbeing learning and skills practise, school staffs' new role was to support families from a distance to undertake these roles in the home.

Many schools recognised how the home environment had the potential to influence pupils' wellbeing (page 128). Several schools recognised that conflicting work and caring roles for parents and staff, had the potential to increase levels of household stress. A small number emphasised how a climate of stress negatively impacted on wellbeing, encouraging families to balance facilitating children's learning with minimising stress (page 127). This reflects Moss *et al.'s* (2021) assertion that young children's wellbeing is associated with their parents' wellbeing. In seeking for households to replicate the culture of wellbeing developed in their schools, staff encouraged

parents to make this period enjoyable and fun (page 128). Schools offered parents a range of strategies to create an environment that supported wellbeing including creating a sense of family belonging through demonstrating love and kindness, understanding behaviours, supporting children to articulate emotions, recognising and respecting conflicting opinions, promoting a sense of peace through recognising when family members needed space, and using restorative principles after periods of relationship breakdown (page 128). This finding resonates with Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological theory which argues that amongst younger children, the proximal environments of home and school most significantly influence children's development. Where a suitable household climate was unachievable, school signposted families to external resources and a small number acted as places of safety that adults and pupils could attend (page 126 and 185). In all, the findings highlighted how the school setting remained a pivotal place for promoting wellbeing, that teachers' roles evolved to support families to facilitate their own wellbeing, and that wellbeing was a key for schools.

The findings highlighted how schools understood that keeping pupils motivated was a driver for them to flourish during this period. Most schools demonstrated how staff facilitated engagement by instilling the benefits of participating in meaningful tasks, acting as role-models by undertaking recommended activities themselves, set physical and creative challenges, continued to employ opportunities for rewards, and facilitated celebration through online assemblies and newsletters (pages 130). The importance placed on motivation reflects Moss *et al.'s* (2020, p.8) findings that primary school teachers perceived pupils were motivated best through making activities '*appealing and enjoyable'.* With the learning of traditional subjects being confined during school closure, pupils were encouraged to engage in a diverse range of other enjoyable activities. These included arts, music, cookery, dancing, imaginative play and physical play (pages 127 and 131). This resulted in pupils engaging in longer periods of creativity than would occur in a typical school day. Manyukhina's (2021, p.8) small sample of twelve primary-aged pupils argues that children reported benefitting from '*creating and enjoying'* the arts without time constraints. Findings from the case study school highlighted how the mechanism to access some activities, affected their availability for pupils. Tom highlighted how a virtual connection enabled some pupils to continue to benefit from music lessons, emphasising their potential importance for pupils' wellbeing where they were '*struggling to engage so much with some of the learning'* (page 184).

7.2.5.2   Intimacy in home-school relationships

The findings demonstrated how relationships between school staff, pupils and families became more intimate during school closure. There was considerable evidence that staff adopted what

Hallam (2009, p. 329) describes as a '*language of emotions*' during the period of school closure (page 130). Headteachers and staff in most schools regularly reported '*missing*' their pupils. In several schools, communications were signed off with sentiments including *lots of love'*, '*much love always'* and '*love to you all'.* Many schools emphasised how much they cared for pupils and their families. Staff revealed experiencing a range of emotions from joy, positivity and pride to frustration and worry. Whether intentionally, school staff used their communications to model the skills of emotional awareness and self-reflection. Several schools also sought to normalise a range of feelings being experienced by pupils and families, recognising that different people may react to the same situation in different ways (page 127). In the case study school, the importance Jane placed on a shared language of wellbeing also facilitated pupils, staff and parents to have genuine conversations about wellbeing concerns (pages 185 and 186). These findings reflect Hallam's (2009) evaluation of the social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) programme, an initiative wellbeing promotion in UK primary schools. Hallam (2009) recognises that having an emotional language facilitates self-awareness amongst pupils and staff, enabling them to benefit from strategies and resources provided by schools to manage emotions. In this study, schools provided families with a range of resources to manage emotions including emotion cards that enabled children to select how they were feeling, information about managing big emotions and signposting to extensive external emotional intelligence resources (page 127).

This study has emphasised the importance schools placed on connectedness as a mechanism for wellbeing (pages 129 and 185). However, Page *et al.* (2021) highlight that repeated lockdowns have resulted in feelings of isolation and loneliness and Manyukhina's (2021) study highlights how pupils perceived a lack of social interactions as negatively impacting wellbeing. In this study, children reflected differing opinions on the impact of school closure on their sense of belonging. Whilst a small number of year six pupils at the case study school reflected the hardship of not seeing friends and teachers, other pupils reported that technology enabled them to maintain these relationships virtually (page 132). Additionally, two children highlighted the enjoyment of spending time with family at home, implying a change of focus from school connections to family relationships. Schools placed importance on maintaining a sense of school belonging, adapting wellbeing practice through several new strategies including regular home-school online consultations and telephone calls, sharing details about activities taking place between staff and peers still attending school, and sharing teachers' experiences from home (page 131 and 132). In turn, pupils and families were encouraged to share their own learning, activities and creations via school websites, Twitter and other platforms (page 131 and 132). This strategy of maintaining connectedness remotely appeared to have created a new intimacy in home-school relationships. Newsletters and other school communications shared details about teachers' partners, children,

pets, home and leisure time (page 130 and 132). A small number of schools also created videos which presented teachers' homes, gardens and pets, previously unseen by pupils and families. Similar details about the home environment and pupils' families were shared through writing and uploading photographs and videos. Alongside facilitating connection, Moss *et al.'s* (2020) study highlighted that the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic increased closeness in the relationships between school and home, with teachers perceiving they had improved understanding of their school's local community. Increased understanding was also evident in this study, whereby some schools encouraged members of the school community to be respectful of each other's additional working and caring commitments (page 130). In all, the benefit of a period of increased intimacy during school closure, has had the potential to both improve existing home-school relationships and facilitate schools to further refine wellbeing practice to be more applicable for their pupils and families. Additionally, in capturing pupils' lived experiences and opinions of school closure, these findings have given new insights about how and to what extent children perceived their sense of belonging had been interrupted.

7.2.5.3   Challenges to whole-school wellbeing promotion during the Covid-19 pandemic

Despite the rapid adaptations schools made to sustain whole-school wellbeing promotion during school closure, Tom exemplifies a wide understanding amongst schools about the challenges of maintaining wellbeing for all pupils, claiming '*its heightened all the divisions that existed already'* (page 185). This reflects wider literature recognising that disparity between pupils from different socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds. With only 1% of children attending school in March 2020, the findings highlight schools' reliance on online platforms and internet connection to support pupils and families at home (page 132) (Montacute and Cullinane, 2021). However, Montacute and Cullinane (2021) highlight that 1.78 million households with children have no access to an electronic device, nearly 600,000 children had no access to the internet and nearly 1 million children only had access through a mobile network. The discussion has highlighted wellbeing strategies implemented reliant on electronic access including online teaching, pupil-teacher consultations, communications via letters and newsletters and social media interactions. Pupils and families without access were limited in their ability to learn, maintain social connections with teachers and friends, receive support for personal and family wellbeing, and missed out on opportunities to engage in school challenges and celebrations. To mitigate the effects of disadvantage, many schools provided learning and wellbeing packs and maintained connections through telephone calls with families, although these pupils were still unable to engage with many opportunities available to their peers (page 132). The findings evidenced that

school practice was adapted over time to better support the wellbeing of such pupils. In the case study school, Jane reported that during the second period of school closure, these pupils were encouraged to attend school. The disparity in opportunities for pupils during school closure reflects a wider consensus that *'teachers are far more likely to feel that home schooling has been successful in more advantaged communities'* (Moss *et al.,* 2020).

A further challenge was addressing the concerns of pupils and families in returning to school in the periods of reopening. During school closure, pupils received constant messaging about the dangers of the Covid-19 virus for vulnerable family members, the importance of social distancing and restrictions on mixing with other households through school communications and the media (page 185). As a result, in the case study school, a year six pupil reflected on feeling *'safe at home'* and another pupil perceived *'I could protect my family and friends'*. Children also felt *'happy'* and *'enjoy[ed]'* this period by connecting with *'my mum'* and *'teacher and friends'*. Tom also felt some pupils benefitted from time at home, stating *'some children did benefit from more time with families over lockdown… those [pupils] with anxiety who felt some sort of control and calm.'* This reflects Manyukhina's (2021) findings that children reported enjoying aspects of school closure, however, most pupils in the small sample appreciated a return to school to see friends and gain teacher support. The case study school was the only school where data collection took place after schools had reopened, offering unique insights into promoting pupils' wellbeing on their return to school. Whilst the findings have shown that schools focus on promoting the social, emotional and psychological aspects of wellbeing, it was apparent that staff and families placed a greater importance on health and personal safety at this time. The findings highlighted how the case-study school adapted their strategies to address the school community's new needs, and how the focus was on pupils' short-term wellbeing in the first few weeks back in school. To motivate pupils and families to re-engage with face-to-face schooling, the school sought to mitigate risk from the Covid-19 virus by funding the early introduction of lateral flow tests, implementing appropriate social distancing, facilitating flu and covid immunisations for staff, and promoting a respectful but autonomous approach to mask wearing for staff. Jane's confidence in meeting the school community's needs was evident through her assertion that *'we do mitigate the risk of infection all the time'*. The findings also suggested that the school continued to meet other wellbeing needs with a medium-term focus. Tom highlighted the importance of getting *'anxious'* pupils *'involved again'* as well as *'reforging…[school] community links'*. This focus on addressing the impact of school closure on pupils' wellbeing resonates with wider literature and governmental policy on this topic. Moss *et al.* (2020) claim that teachers feel providing a 'safe environment' to prioritise pupils' psychological wellbeing is more important than catching up on learning. The government

has also prioritised pupils' wellbeing through additional funds available through the 'Wellbeing for Education Return' programme (Gov.UK, 2020b).

7.3   A discussion of broad principles in response to the overarching research question

This section considers the overarching research question, **How do schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish?** A prolonged reflection on the data used to answer the sub-questions identified several broad principles that formed consistent threads throughout the findings. These became evident from stepping back and considering the detailed analysis once it had been undertaken. The section is organised using the three stages of planning, implementation and review, in line with the theoretical model (page 37). Moore *et al.* (2015) and Rosas and Knight (2017) argue that a process-driven lens is valuable for assessing complex interventions such as promoting wellbeing, making it an appropriate choice for framing this discussion. Figure 7-7 presents the broad principles being discussed.
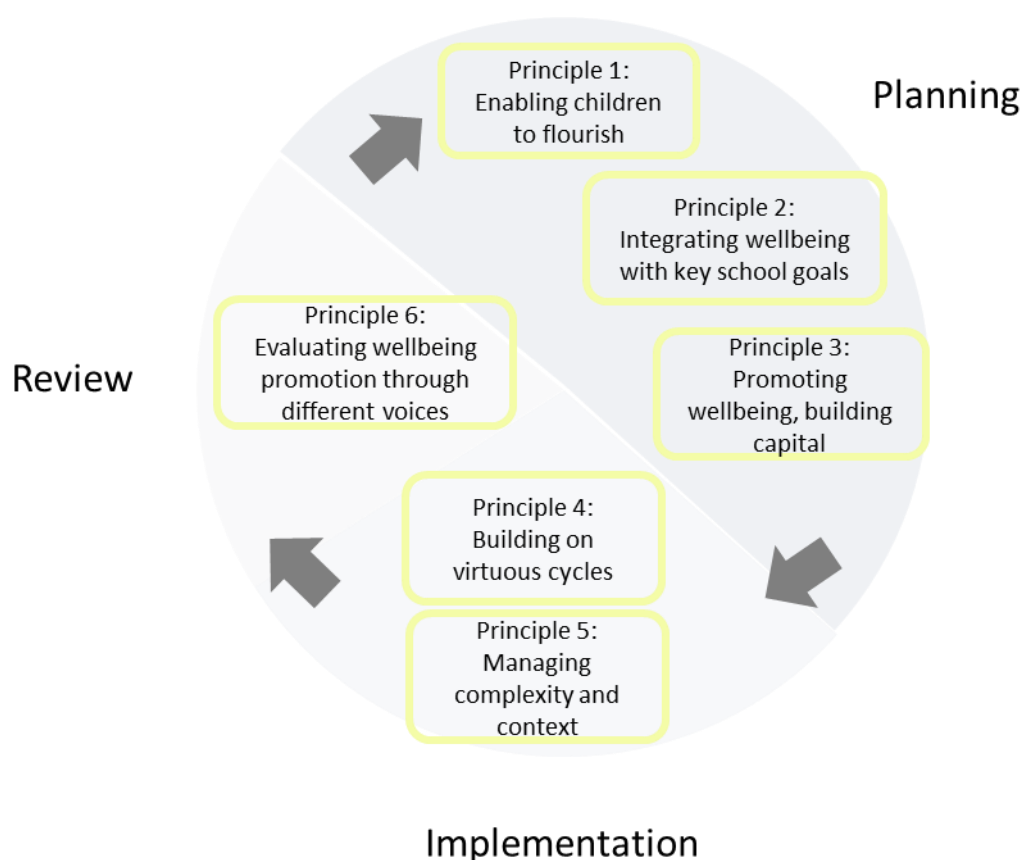
Figure 7-7 The six broad principles developed from a reflection on the consistent threads running throughout the analyses

7.3.1 Stage one: Planning

7.3.1.1 Principle one: enabling children to flourish

Schools understood the purpose of whole-school wellbeing promotion was to develop and sustain high levels of wellbeing amongst their pupils, with most schools aiming for pupils to '*flourish*' (page 91). This study recognises '*flourishing*' as experiencing high levels of wellbeing across the five dimensions of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing: positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning and achievement (page 29). Flourishing is associated with children enjoying life and better coping with adversities (Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff, 2002). This was echoed by the year six pupils who recognised that the school's wellbeing practices supported them both to enjoy their time at school as well as overcome a variety of social, learning and situational challenges (page 214). Staff and pupils also understood that pupils were most likely to flourish through a combination of hedonic (pleasurable) and eudaimonic (meaningful, satisfying, goal-oriented) experiences, evident both in the aims and strategies adopted by schools as well as the pupils' lived experiences from their maps (pages 191 and 214). Theoretical literature argues that hedonia is immediate and short-lived and is associated with positive emotions, whilst eudaimonia is related to satisfaction and develops over the longer-term (Keyes, Shmotkin and Ryff, 2002; Seligman, 2011). Thus, it was appropriate that the findings demonstrated that schools focussed on both short-term and longer-term aims as a mechanism to facilitate pupils to flourish (page 194). This thesis, therefore, argues that schools demonstrated a '*zoom aspect'* in their approach to promoting pupils' wellbeing (see Figure 7-8). Schools '*zoomed out'* to incorporate opportunities for all pupils to gain skills and experiences associated with longer-term benefits such as resilience, problem-solving and building self-esteem and self-worth. Children emphasised how these strategies promoted a sense of lasting satisfaction, pride in themselves and self-efficacy as agents of their own wellbeing (page 215 and 217). Schools' visions for long-term wellbeing were promoted through learning, extracurricular activities and residential visits, Forest school and outdoor learning. Strategies focussed, predominantly, on eudaimonic aspects of wellbeing including meaningful challenges, risk-taking and rewards, and engaging pupils through goal setting (pages 194 and 197). These findings resonate with Ben-Arieh and Frones (2011, p.463) concept of 'well becoming', where schools, as '*social structures'* shape '*the unfolding of the life course*' of their pupils. In contrast, '*zooming in'* describes the process whereby schools met pupils' short-term wellbeing needs, through promoting the development and practice of skills and knowledge for immediate social, emotional and psychological wellbeing within a supportive school culture (page 193). Whilst all schools showed evidence of adopting the zoom aspect, a few

schools zoomed out further focussing on the eudaimonic factors associated with lifelong wellbeing, discussed further on page 231.
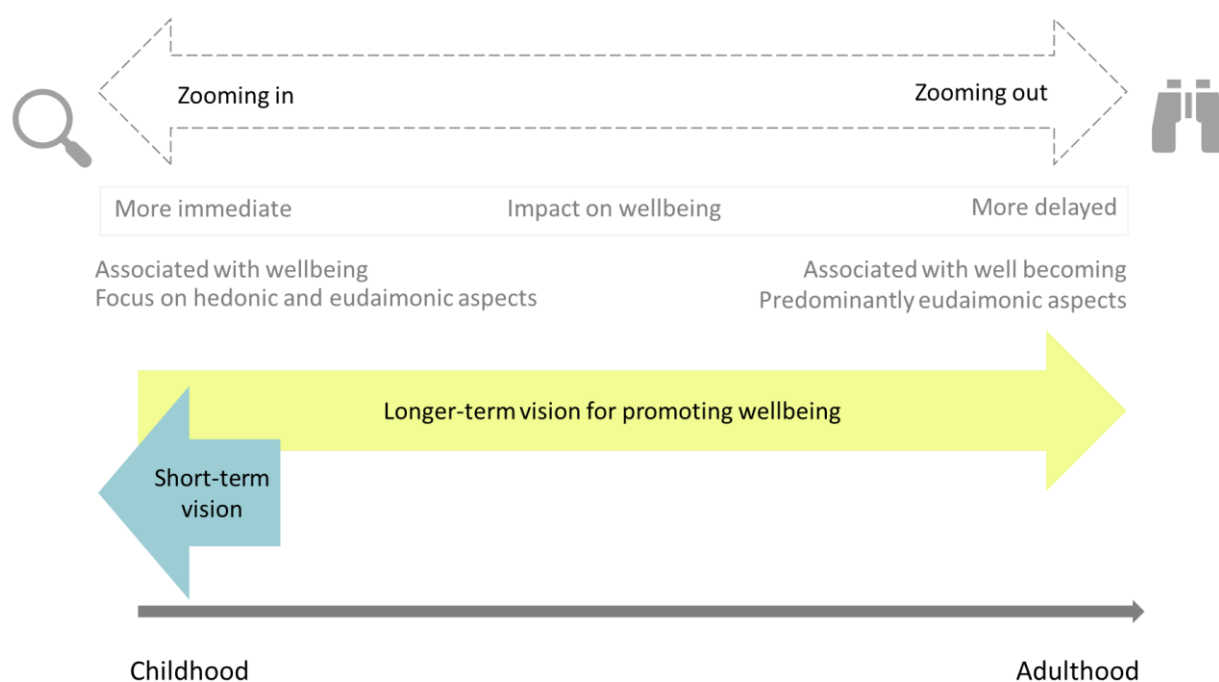
Figure 7-8 The zoom aspect of whole-school wellbeing promotion

7.3.1.2 Principle two: integrating wellbeing with key school goals

All schools recognised the interrelationship between wellbeing and learning, highlighting how high levels of wellbeing resulted in improved readiness to learn and attainment (page 195). Schools used a whole-school approach which focussed both on wellbeing learning and developing a culture to support wellbeing (pages 195 and 196). This reflects Public Health England's (PHE, 2015, p. 7) judgement that wellbeing promotion which develops social and emotional capabilities alongside positive changes to the *'culture, ethos and environment of a school'* facilitates the largest improvements to pupils' educational performance. To maximise benefits schools required sufficient time for promoting wellbeing and, in the case study school, Tom suggested that the workload of specialist staff was too great, resulting in a waiting list for ELSA support (page 213). This reflects a broader concern over workload, evident in the Teacher Workload Survey which reports that 52% of primary teachers perceive workload as '*a fairly serious problem'*, implying constraints on time available for promoting pupils' wellbeing (Walker, Worth and Van den Brande,

2019, p.5). This was further exacerbated by the disruptions of the Covid-19 epidemic, with a resultant decline in pupil wellbeing (Hamilton and Gross, 2021). Thus, it can be argued that unless wellbeing promotion can be synthesised with schools' key goals it has the potential to be seen as an additional burden for school staff. Historically the purpose of education has focused on learning and attainment, although DfE (2019) now reports that a further goal for schools is to build character, resilience and wellbeing. It might, therefore, be argued that whole-school wellbeing promotion can reinforce these key goals in two ways: 1) by driving improvements in academic performance, the traditional role of education and/or 2) by fulfilling the wider remit of providing personal development, a newer key goal of education. Schools recognised that learning benefitted from providing opportunities for pupils to develop and practise a range of social and emotional skills including emotion-management, developing resilience, maintaining positive relationships, increased self-awareness and self-reflection (page 193). Several year six pupils in the case study school highlighted that feeling calm, respected and supported was motivating and enabled them to learn through making mistakes and taking risks (page 217). These findings concur with those of other researchers who found promoting the skills associated with wellbeing mediates academic improvements (Zins *et al.,* 2004; Gutman and Feinstein, 2008; Langford *et al.,* 2014).

Against a critical backdrop with the National Education Union (2019) and National Union of Teachers (2015) arguing the primary curriculum is too narrowly focused with excessive testing, Ofsted has recently implemented a new inspection framework with an emphasis on personal development, character and wellbeing (Gov.UK, 2018). Following the Covid-19 pandemic, the government has emphasised that promoting pupils' wellbeing is a key focus for all schools, supported by £8 million funding through the Wellbeing for Education Return programme (Gov.UK, 2020b). Whilst all schools in this study evidenced that wellbeing promotion was a central component of their daily activities, a small number of schools demonstrated a complete integration of wellbeing and learning. Just under a third of schools adopted evidence-based practices using values-based learning, character education or positive education, whereby wellbeing and learning are given equal importance (page 194). Several schools including the case study school also recognised a key goal as developing the '*whole*' child cognitively, social, emotionally and spiritually (page 192). Thus, it might be argued that schools have responded to recent political, health and social changes whereby the promotion of wellbeing is increasingly being perceived as a key school goal. In all, this study appears to bring useful real-world knowledge about how schools integrate wellbeing promotion with learning in the English education system.

7.3.1.3 Principle three: promoting wellbeing, building capital

All schools understood the benefits of offering pupils extracurricular activities and other opportunities for their wellbeing (page 197). Opportunities included creativity through arts and music, residential trips, visits to cultural institutions as well as outdoor physical and ecological pursuits. Year six pupils emphasised how these opportunities enabled them to develop skills, confidence, self-esteem and independence (page 216). A few schools focussed on how a range of life experiences could support pupils to flourish better in the longer-term. These schools were all characterised by pupils having greater than average disadvantage (page 194). The case study school emphasised how its vision was to '*offset disadvantage'* by normalising diverse experiences to broaden pupils' and families' horizons, to improve longer-term wellbeing (page 142). Jane recognised that the resulting benefits enabled pupils to build cultural capital. Bourdieu's (2010) concept of cultural capital is associated with a person's assets in terms of their knowledge, preferences, interests, possessions and education. He argued that cultural capital leads to inequalities, particularly for those with lower socio-economic status whose assets restrict opportunities within society. In response, Ofsted now requires schools to facilitate cultural capital as part of pupils' personal development *(*Gov.UK, 2019). This study identifies that there is a positive link between promoting wellbeing and building cultural capital, as both seek to offset inherent social and health-based inequalities (Bourdieu, 2010; Gov.UK, 2019). Additionally, this analysis found that social capital was facilitated through schools' wellbeing practices. Bourdieu (2010) defined social capital as the development of social cohesion, belonging and involvement in social networks. Both Jane and the year six pupils identified that cultivating a sense of belonging, recognising a child's '*tribe*' and developing networks of friends improved their levels of wellbeing (pages 152 and 216). This gives further weight to the argument that wellbeing and pupils' capital are closely related, and that schools can facilitate both simultaneously. This echoes Portela *et al.*'s (2013, p.1) study of the links between social capital and subjective wellbeing, where the relationship between the social capital components of '*social networks'* and '*social trust'* highly correlated with a sense of wellbeing. Furthermore, the adoption of the whole-school approach to promoting wellbeing, evident across schools in this study, is recognised to build what Goswami (2008) terms '*mental capital'.* His governmental publication defines the term as developing capabilities to be '*flexible*' and '*efficient*' learners, having '*emotional intelligence'*, social skills and resilience (Goswami, 2008, p.10). In all, this study has highlighted real world exemplifications of how schools sought to build pupils' personal capital by offering opportunities already available to advantaged children. Schools perceived that this process improved the potential for pupils to flourish through laying the foundations for improving their life chances and attainment as future individuals (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990; Seligman, 2011). However, as little existing literature

about the links between schools' roles in promoting wellbeing and cultural, social and mental capital exists, it appears that this area would benefit from further research.

7.3.2   Stage two: implementation

7.3.2.1   Principle four: Building on virtuous cycles

Schools understood the implementation of whole-school wellbeing promotion as a process of continual change, requiring regular review and refinement to enable pupils to flourish (pages 203 and 205). The value of a dynamic approach to wellbeing promotion is recognised by the DfE (2015, p.3) as *'a virtuous cycle'* through which pupils *'with better health and well-being can achieve better academically, which in turn leads to greater success'*. Pulimeno *et al.* (2020) argue that wellbeing promotion should be viewed as part of the virtuous cycle that enables pupils to attain academically and flourish, rather than as a standalone activity. It appears valuable to test Pulimeno *et al.'s* (2020) argument, as the model may have potential to explain how wellbeing promotion links to key school goals, the importance of which has been established in principle two. To test the virtuous cycle model, Figure 7-9 demonstrates its application to strategies implemented to improve staff wellbeing within the case study school:
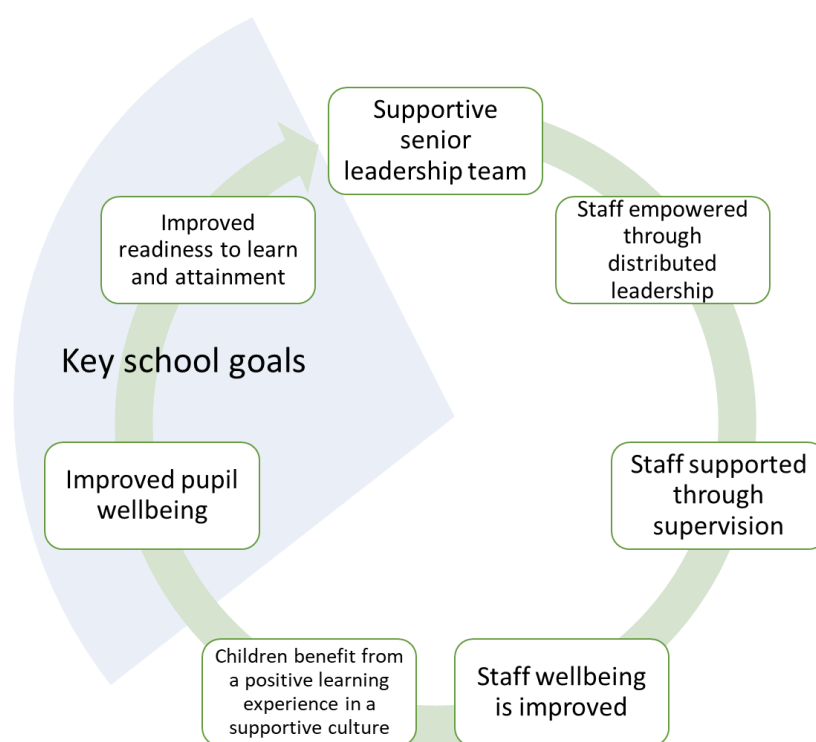
Figure 7-9 A virtuous cycle for wellbeing in the case study school

The model highlights how Jane's supportive leadership style was mechanised through a collaborative approach giving agency to staff, at the same time supporting them through providing supervision (pages 164 and 178). The benefits were recognised by Tom and Jane to improve staff wellbeing (page 178) which, in turn, provided positive role models for other staff and pupils (page 200) and a positive learning environment for pupils (page 157). This model appears to provide an alternative presentation of the findings which have previously appeared as discrete sections within this chapter. It, therefore, appears suitable as a lens through which to understand the relationships between elements of whole-school wellbeing promotion. As this example considered only a fraction of the case study school's wellbeing practice and the context in which it exists, it reveals that rather than a single virtuous cycle of wellbeing within a school, multiple virtuous circles exist concurrently (Rosas and Knight, 2019). There may be merit in further research exploring the impact of interrelationships between the components and contexts of whole-school wellbeing promotion using the dataset from this study.

7.3.2.2   Principle five: managing complexity and context

Scholars argue that for schools to successfully enable all children to flourish they need to reduce uncertainty when implementing whole-school wellbeing promotion (Savigny and Adam, 2009; Kahn *et al.,* 2018). If not, useful wellbeing practice may be discarded if outcomes do not meet

expectations, even though unrecognised complexities and contextual factors may be responsible for the underperformance (Savigny and Adam,2009; Clarke, O'Sullivan and Barry, 2010). The findings of this PhD study have demonstrated the complex nature of wellbeing promotion, evidencing the volume and diversity of strategies schools adopted (pages 194). Schools also understood the multiple levels at which wellbeing was experienced: individual, classroom and school community (page 203). Interdependencies between components also existed, where factors influenced and were influenced by others (page 232). Additionally, year six pupils highlighted how subjective wellbeing was influenced uniquely, with two year six children demonstrating a teacher's behaviour promoted happiness in one child but had a negative effect on another pupil, simultaneously (page 158). At a group level, parents' perceptions and concerns shaped wellbeing practice with Jane seeking to reduce parental anxiety amongst a sub-group of parents and Clarke, Bunting and Barry (2014) recognising the influence of parents' attitudes on promoting wellbeing (pages 85 and 179). Thus, there is merit in exploring how uncertainty can be managed by schools to maximise the benefits of wellbeing practice for pupils (Savigny and Adam,2009; Kahn *et al.,* 2018). WHO advocates systems thinking as a framework to understand complexity, enabling organisations to *'operat[e] more successfully and effectively in complex, real-world settings'* (Savigny and Adam,2009, p.19). Systems thinking seeks to make sense of what is happening by looking holistically at the interdependencies of systems rather than focussing on component parts (Savigny and Adam,2009; Kahn *et al.*, 2018). Rosas (2015) advocates that a systems perspective is a useful lens for promoting wellbeing in school settings to understand complexity and dynamism. There was some evidence that the case study school framed their sense-making through recognising wellbeing practice as a system of continual change. Jane highlighted the importance of using a process-focussed approach to ensure wellbeing promotion remained sustainable (page 164). Additionally, Jane's transformational leadership style which encouraged distributed leadership amongst teachers, echoes Kahn *et al.*'s (2018, p.4) assertion that, from a systems-thinking approach, leadership needs to be '*action-based'*, not '*role-based'*. Jane, therefore, may be considered a '*complexity-inspired'* leader who perceives the value of collaboration, communication and recognition that teachers are best placed to adapt content and pedagogy for their cohorts (page 199) (Kahn *et al.*, 2018, p.5). Systems thinking also explains Jane's recognition that changes within wellbeing practice occur at different speeds (page 206). Kahn *et al.* (2018, p.3) suggest adaptations to systems may manifest as *'slow, incremental* change' or *'rapidly when there is a substantial perturbation of the system'.* In the case study school '*perturbations'* resulted from Jane's arrival as head teacher and in response to the Covid-19 pandemic (pages 163 and 186). This gives further weight to the value of framing wellbeing promotion using the virtuous cycle concept, understanding practice as a system of small positive steps (page 232). This discussion, whilst not exhaustive, has suggested some benefits of a systems

thinking approach to recognise and manage the complexities and contextual influences evident in the study's findings. Its apparent usefulness for shaping whole-school wellbeing promotion in the case study school demonstrates its potential for schools more broadly.

7.3.3 Stage three: review

7.3.3.1 Principle six: Evaluating wellbeing promotion through different voices

Existing literature has called for better understanding about the benefits of whole school wellbeing promotion by listening to the views of children (Hall, 2010). A particular emphasis has focussed on specific pupil groups including different lived experiences between gender and socioeconomic status (SES) (Durlak *et al.*, 2011; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson*,* 2018; O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018). There was scant evidence that schools distinguished between promoting wellbeing for girls and boys, only two schools ran sessions for boys about the role of the man in society, and no activities were offered solely for girls (page 113). No schools provided evidence that they measured wellbeing outcomes by gender, although a lack of findings may be attributable to this study's research design, in part, using a secondary data analysis on existing datasets (Davis-Kean and Jager, 2017). The findings have, however, generated new knowledge about how English primary schools recognised the impact of SES on their pupils' wellbeing, with the potential for pupils from lower SES families less likely to flourish (page 194). This echoes previous literature highlightsing the negative effect of disadvantage on wellbeing (Moore *et al.,* 2015; Gregory *et al*., 2021; Kennewell *et al*., 2022). There was also evidence that strategies were shaped to the meet the additional needs of pupils from low SES backgrounds in supporting those pupils to flourish (page 194). Kennewell *et al.'s* (2022) study of over 61,000 Australian children found that higher SES groups were more likely to engage in studying, music practice, youth organisations, sports, reading, chores, arts and crafts, and socialising with friends. These activities were more closely associated with flourishing. Many schools sought an inclusive approach by offering free extracurricular activities to all pupils at lunchtimes, enabling wider participation as a method to offset this balance (page 197).

A further sub-group was looked-after children (who lived in care). Jane emphasised how this group had the potential to feel isolated (page 152). The school recognised that facilitating these pupils to identify their 'tribes' promoted a beneficial sense of connection. This resonates with Dex and Hollingworth's (2012) DfE-funded publication, which argues that children in care are a group

whose voices need to be heard to successfully address their wellbeing needs. In this analysis, there was less evidence about the sub-group of children with special educational needs. In the case study school with a relatively large number of pupils in this group, a single voice was captured through the mapping activity (page 214). The environment was modified to enable the child to engage in the task alongside their peers. They were accompanied by their LSA and sat in a specially modified corner of the classroom. Whilst this study anonymised pupils' responses making it unable to isolate that child's own experiences, it highlights the suitability of creative research methods for this group of children. In all, this study has sought to respond to the calls for more analysis of whole-school wellbeing promotion by subgroups of children (Durlak *et al.*, 2011; Fenwick-Smith, Dahlberg and Thompson, 2018; O'Reilly *et al.,* 2018).). However, further research with an appropriate research design would yield a richer understanding for shaping ongoing wellbeing practice (Dex and Hollingworth, 2012).

7.4 Conclusion and refinement of the conceptual model

This chapter has integrated the findings from the three phases of the study into a final thematic analysis and discussion as part of the mixed methods methodology. The discussion has been situated in wider literature to consider how this project both supports and differs from existing research. It has answered each of the research sub-questions and presented a series of broad principles in relation to the overarching question, **How do schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish?** The findings and analysis have generated new knowledge that comprehensively answers each question, thereby addressing the series of knowledge gaps that formed the research problem, providing new knowledge on this topic. It has used the theoretical framework to guide the analysis, with a particular focus on exploring how year six pupils reflected on the multi-dimensional experience of wellbeing. This resulted in a proposed new definition for children's wellbeing informed by these lived experiences. A higher-level analysis developed a series of broad principles which considered how pupils were facilitated to flourish through integrating wellbeing practice into broader school life, developing social, cultural and mental capital, building on multiple virtuous cycles of wellbeing and managing complexity and context. It also highlighted how, by listening to pupils' views, whole-school wellbeing promotion could be adapted for sub-groups of pupils, recognising that this was an area for further research.

In the light of this discussion, a final refinement of the conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools is presented in **Error! Reference source not found.**. A full explanation of the model is given on page 249.

Stage One: Planning

Principles
1) Enabling pupils to flourish
2) Integrating wellbeing with key school goals
3) Promoting wellbeing and building capital

School approach
- Salutogenic
- Whole-school

School vision and aims
- Promote flourishing
- Meet social, emotional and psychological wellbeing needs

Children experience wellbeing subjectively and holistically

Social, emotional and psychological wellbeing is associated with:
- Positive emotions
- Engagement
- Positive relationships
- Meaning
- Achievement

Stage Two: Implementation

Principles
4) Building on virtuous circles
5) Managing complexity and context

Whole-school wellbeing promotion Design and implementation

External relationships

Strategies and content

Additional opportunities

Culture for wellbeing

Individual

Microsystem

Mesosystem

Macrosystem

Chronosystem

Context

Continual change

Consideration of:
Leadership and support
Embedding and formalising practice
Pedagogy for integrating wellbeing
Evolving and sustaining practice

Stage Three: Review

Principles
6) Evaluating wellbeing promotion through different voices

Measuring outcomes
- Pupils' wellbeing
- Ongoing evaluation of the process of whole-school wellbeing promotion

Improved wellbeing

Languishing

Flourishing

Sustained practice

Figure 7-10 The final conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools

The following supplementary information provides additional guidance alongside the conceptual model:

Key components of planning and design

Planning and design

A 3-step process for planning and design:

Approach	Step one
Vision and aims	Step two
Strategies and content — School culture — Additional opportunities	Step three

Approach and strategies

Strategic approach
- Whole-school, salutogenic approach

Vision and aims:
- To enable pupils to flourish

Balancing wellbeing vs well becoming
- Consider the school's focus on pupils' wellbeing now compared with building foundations for future wellbeing

Building social, cultural and mental capital to support wellbeing

Components of whole-school wellbeing promotion

Teaching & learning:
- Stand alone lessons eg personal development curriculum
- Wellbeing content integrated into other subject lessons
- Other formal structures eg assemblies, circle time

Overarching components:
- Pupil voice, celebration, specific praise

Culture for wellbeing

- Adopting values and traits related to wellbeing
- Encapsulating values and traits in 'rules'
- Communication 'rules' amongst school community
- Using culture to promote pupil and staff agency
- Using culture to promote a sense of belonging and connection

Provision of additional opportunities

- Providing additional opportunities can help offset disadvantage
- Additional opportunities can build social, cultural and mental capital
- And broaden pupil and family horizons

Key components of planning and design

Aims and definitions

Aims
For pupils to flourish and be happy
- Pupils are active participants in whole-school wellbeing promotion, not passive receivers
- Promoting wellbeing meets needs at personal, classroom and school community levels
- A balance between addressing short-term wellbeing needs and building longer-term foundations for lifelong wellbeing

Definitions and language
- A multidimensional definition of wellbeing is required
- Pupils' experiences of wellbeing are subjective and are influenced by their immediate environment (school and home)
- Requirement for a shared language of wellbeing

Approach and strategies

Strategic approach
- A whole-school approach:
    - Involves everyone through mutual support, teamwork and collegiality
    - considers pupils, staff and family's wellbeing
- Use an evidence-based approach by adopting one or more theoretical concepts/models
- Identify the 'joists', the principles and assumptions, that remain consistent as wellbeing practice evolves

Strategies for whole-school wellbeing promotion
- Use multiple strategies to ensure the subjective wellbeing needs of pupils are met
- Develop strategies to promote pupils' agency:
    - Pupil voice for empowerment
    - Celebrations of uniqueness to develop self-worth
    - Cultivate connection to develop pupils' sense of belonging
    - Use specific praise to build pupils' ability to internally validate their own thoughts and behaviours

Culture for wellbeing

- Build trust between pupils, staff, school leadership and families through open and respectful relationships
- Recognise the importance of positive friendships amongst peers for pupils' wellbeing
- Pupil-staff relationships promote a sense of safety and belonging for pupils
- Sustained, positive relationships with families by engaging and supporting them builds a *'bank of goodwill and trust'*
- Collaboration, autonomy, empowerment and support promote a culture of wellbeing

Key contextual influences

School's social environment
- Involve everyone in whole-school wellbeing promotion
- Build trust in relationships
- Develop a 'bank' of goodwill with the school community
- The bank can be drawn upon in challenging times
- Develop specialist wellbeing roles amongst staff

Other school factors
- Utilise staffs' existing experiences and strengths to inform wellbeing practice
- Recognise staff perceptions, attitudes and beliefs about wellbeing promotion
- Recognise family perceptions, attitudes and beliefs
- Using the physical environment for promoting wellbeing
- Recognise and address pupils' anxiety e.g. through calm clubs

Wider externa context
Recognise and manage the impact of changing family and social factors
Engage with the local community to build social networks and enhance wellbeing activities
Manage for the effects of political and educational changes

Chapter 8   Conclusion

8.1   Introduction

This PhD thesis has recognised remaining gaps in the substantial existing knowledge about whole-school wellbeing promotion. As previous literature has evidenced the benefits of undertaking wellbeing practice in the school setting, the thesis has sought to address four areas where research remains scant: 1) initiatives within primary schools, 2) schools within the English education system, 3) the contextual factors which promote or hinder such initiatives and 4) pupils' lived experiences of whole-school wellbeing promotion. The purpose of this PhD thesis, therefore, has been to generate new knowledge which goes some way to addressing these gaps by asking the research question:

How do schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish?

This concluding chapter focuses on 1) how the PhD project has made an original contribution to this topic, 2) limitations of the research, 3) recommendations for future research and 4) implications of this project for professionals and policymakers. A reflection on the research process is followed by the conclusion which assesses the extent to which this project has fulfilled its purpose.

8.2   Original contributions to knowledge

This study has achieved originality from 1) developing an innovative research lens which recognises the interdisciplinary nexus at which whole-school wellbeing promotion sits, 2) adopting a bespoke mixed methods, multi-phase research design that encapsulates a range of voices, 3) creating a new definition for children's wellbeing, 4) generating new knowledge about whole-school wellbeing practices in English primary schools and 5) producing an evidence-based conceptual model and accompanying broad principles for planning, implementing and reviewing whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools.

8.2.1   An innovative theoretical lens

The project has developed an innovative theoretical lens through which to understand the research topic. It has proposed that to make sense of the complexity of whole-school wellbeing promotion and the influence of context on practice, the phenomenon is best understood from a

multidisciplinary perspective. Thus, the research lens was developed by combining three theories employed in the fields of education, health promotion and psychology: namely, Seligman's (2011) multidimensional PERMA theory of wellbeing, the world health organisation's (WHO, 1996) health promoting schools framework (HPS) and Bronfenbrenner's (2005) bioecological theory of human development. It was considered that the combination of these theories had the scope to address the study's research problem and questions.

A diagrammatical presentation of the resultant lens is shown in Figure 2-6, and a full explanation and rationale for the model is given in Chapter 2. Its usefulness within this study has been two-fold. Firstly, the lens has provided a framework for organising and making sense of the findings from the three phases of data collection and analysis (see chapters five, six and seven). It has also enabled an understanding of pupils' multidimensional lived experience of wellbeing, as evidenced in the findings (page 214). Secondly, it has been a valuable foundation on which to undertake the iterative process of developing a conceptual model for whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools (page 238).

8.2.2   A bespoke research design

This study has developed a bespoke research design to capture a range of voices (headteachers, school staff, pupils and researchers) on the topic of how whole-school wellbeing promotion enables pupils to flourish (see Figure 3-2). Using a qualitatively-driven mixed-methods methodology, a multi-phase research design was developed. Phase one incorporated a systematic literature review exploring research after 2009 in high income countries to capture broad knowledge generated by researchers to answer sub-questions one, two and three. Phase two used a secondary data analysis to explore a representative sample of twenty-six English primary schools. Combined thematic and numerical analyses sought to answer sub-questions one, two and five by capturing the voices of headteachers and other school staff. Phase three incorporated a case study design using multiple research methods including a narrative interview, semi-structured interview, participatory mapping method, observation and documentation analysis to capture insights from the headteacher, wellbeing lead and year six pupils. To integrate the strands of the analysis, part of the mixed methods design, a final thematic analysis sought to provide broad answers to each of the sub-questions and the overarching research question, ***How do schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish?*** At the end of each phase of the study the conceptual model of whole-

school wellbeing promotion in primary schools was updated based on the evidence from new knowledge generated.

8.2.3   A new definition for children's wellbeing

By capturing pupils' voices through the mapping activity, this study has highlighted that wellbeing is the aggregate experience of a range of dimensions (page 214). The dimensions are experienced holistically (simultaneously), rather than discretely. The findings also recognised that a pupil's uniqueness means wellbeing is a subjective experience.

The study has developed a new definition of children's wellbeing which is informed by pupils' responses. Children's wellbeing is:

> *'feeling happy, safe, connected to my friends, teachers and school, overcoming challenges, growing in confidence, feeling satisfied and having opportunities to play and have fun'*

8.2.4   A summary of new knowledge about how English primary schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish

Through answering the sub-questions and overarching question, this study has generated new knowledge about how twenty-seven English primary schools, including the case study school, used whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish in real world settings? A summary highlights pertinent findings, representing most schools in the sample:

8.2.4.1   Stage one: planning

- All schools used salutogenic and whole-school approaches to promoting pupils' wellbeing, focusing on positive aspects which enabled pupils to flourish, recognising the benefits of improving everyone's wellbeing for pupils and the importance of involving all school members.
- Schools balanced meeting short-term wellbeing needs with providing opportunities to develop the skills and knowledge associated with longer-term benefits, particularly in schools with significant disadvantage. This study has conceptualised this process as the '*zoom aspect'* of whole-school wellbeing promotion (see Figure 7-8).

- Schools addressed the social, emotional and psychological aspects of pupils' wellbeing and recognised pupils' wellbeing as a multidimensional.

- Schools demonstrated how they promoted each of the five dimensions of Seligman's (2011) PERMA model of wellbeing.

- Most schools failed to define the term '*wellbeing*', with the potential for misunderstanding.

- Schools adopted a sequential, three-step process to plan and design whole-school wellbeing promotion (see Figure 7-3).

- Schools used evidence-based frameworks and theoretical concepts to underpin the design of whole-school wellbeing promotion. Schools commonly combined frameworks and theories in their design, facilitating a bespoke approach to fulfil the requirements of their own setting and school characteristics.

- Schools employed guidance and/or resources from external private providers, charities, academic and health-based institutions, and government bodies to inform practice.

- Wellbeing teaching and learning was provided through a standalone curriculum alongside integrating wellbeing content into other subject lessons, 'circle-time' and assemblies (see Figure 7-4). General strategies of pupil voice, celebration and specific praise were used across the school day.

- A values-based culture supported wellbeing of the school community. Flourishing was associated with respect, kindness, compassion, caring, responsibility, tolerance, honesty, authenticity, aspiration, and valuing uniqueness. Values were embedded and shared.

- School culture facilitated pupils' agency for learning and increased self-responsibility for flourishing, empowering them to problem-solve, take risks and make mistakes in a supportive environment.

- School culture generated a sense of belonging, mediated by values of respect, tolerance, co-operation and valuing uniqueness. Pupils reported increased feelings of self-worth.

- Additional opportunities to promote wellbeing were adopted by schools included arts and music, extracurricular activities including sports, gardening, mindfulness and meditation, Forest school, eco-activities and animal care.

- How the activity was conceptualised influenced its ability to promote flourishing. For example, gardening was used to cultivate caring, teamwork and achievement. In expanding the activity to include selling produce to the local community, it additionally developed social skills, promoted a sense of community belonging, increased satisfaction and social capital.

- By offering additional opportunities to develop life skills and participate in a range of experiences, schools sought to '*offset disadvantage*', enabling pupils to flourish alongside building social and cultural capital.

8.2.4.2   Stage two: implementation

- Leadership style influenced wellbeing practice and traits associated with a transformational leadership style were evidenced in the case study school, including being passionate, empowering staff and pupils as agents of their own wellbeing, supporting staff, modelling the school's values and focussing on the process of whole-school wellbeing promotion rather than an end-result.

- This enabled distributed leadership amongst staff and built a culture of trust.

- Schools also sought training and support from external sources. These included private providers, educational psychologists, educational consultants, behavioural advisors and health-based organisations. Schools also joined networks for support.

- Embedding practice facilitated the sustainability of whole-school wellbeing promotion.

- Evidence-based frameworks supported the embedding of wellbeing promotion into policies and practices.

- Findings identified merit in building a core set of principles and assumptions, the '*joists*' of practice, upon which evolving strategies and activities were developed.

- Schools used a variety of pedagogic styles to enable pupils to practise skills associated with wellbeing and translate knowledge appropriately to other situations. These included playing games, simulations, modelling positive traits and behaviours, using discussion, open-ended questioning, role play, storytelling.

- Variety in pedagogic style enabled pupils to question, reflect, problem solve, think critically and adopt a solution-focused approach.

- Outdoor learning and Forest school developed social skills, team working, positive risk-taking, building confidence and self-esteem.

- Technology was little used within practices supporting wellbeing.

- Sustained practice resulted from a vision and language which was shared across the school community to keep whole-school wellbeing promotion '*on the agenda'.*

- Practice continually with periods of rapid growth resulting from contextual change such as new school leadership or governmental policy, as well as periods of slow change.

- Using a whole-school approach and recognising the link between wellbeing and learning enabled schools to build on virtuous circles to improve and sustain wellbeing practice, focussing on the process rather than a result.
- Evolving practice was prompted by macro-level political and social change such as the Covid-19 pandemic alongside organically adapting existing practice to better benefit pupils' wellbeing.
- Whole-school wellbeing promotion was identified as a complex process, with multiple components and multi-level outcomes. It was also influenced by complex contextual factors.

8.2.4.3 Stage three: Reviewing outcomes and processes

- Schools measured the outcomes of whole-school wellbeing promotion as well as evaluating the practice itself.
- Schools commonly used annual surveys of pupils, parents and staff to measure pupils' levels of wellbeing.
- Informal feedback was collected via open-door policies for pupils and families and high visibility of staff at the start and end of school days.
- The study went some way to identifying how whole-school wellbeing promotion was tailored for subgroups of pupils, particularly those from lower SES backgrounds, with schools seeking to offset disadvantage. It also highlighted how developing a sense of belonging supported looked-after pupils.

8.2.4.4 Implications of context for whole-school wellbeing promotion

Contextual factors which influence whole-school wellbeing promotion are multiple and complex.

- Wellbeing was mediated through relationships built on trust between pupils and teachers, between teachers, teachers and the SLT and between school and families.
- Pupils emphasised the importance of positive relationships with friends and staff for their wellbeing.
- Positive relationships enabled a '*bank of goodwill and trust*' that can be called upon during challenging times, such as during the Covid-19 pandemic.
- Specialist wellbeing roles provided pupils with role-models, built trust and provided safe spaces for raising concerns.
- Specialist roles include designated mental health leads, wellbeing leads, mental health first aiders, wellbeing champions or ambassadors and mentors.

Other influences within the school context

- The characteristics of the school setting influenced whole-school wellbeing promotion.

- High quality home-school relationships improved outcomes.

- Previous staff training and experiences positively drove whole-school wellbeing promotion where those experiences were deemed to have improved their own wellbeing. Experiences included being empowered, feeling a sense of equality and support for personal identity.

- The physical environment influenced the design of wellbeing practice enabling nurturing opportunities including gardening, caring for animals, and developing sensory and reflective spaces for mindfulness and meditation.

- Pupils exhibited characteristics of anxiety relating to climate change and unstructured periods within the school day. Schools offered eco-activities and alternative lunchtime spaces such as quiet areas and alternative social spaces such as calm clubs.

- Pupils' family and environmental backgrounds mediated wellbeing needs. Needs were continually changing.

- At a macro level, government legislation and Ofsted inspection criteria influenced how schools undertook whole-school wellbeing promotion.

- National and local governmental policies affected school funding, impacting staffing levels and availability of resources for wellbeing practice.

8.2.5   A conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools

An iterative process has been employed to develop a conceptual model for planning, implementing and reviewing whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools (see Figure 8-1). The model was reviewed and updated after each of the three phases of findings (Chapter 4, Chapter 5 and Chapter 6) and following the integrated analysis and discussion (Chapter 7). This has resulted in a final evidence-based model which has the potential to inform both future practice in similar settings and educational policy. A benefit of this process has been to use a systematic approach to build on new broad and detailed knowledge generated from a systematic literature review of international publications, a secondary data analysis of twenty-six English primary schools and an in-depth case study of a single English primary school (Becker and Domitrovich, 2011).
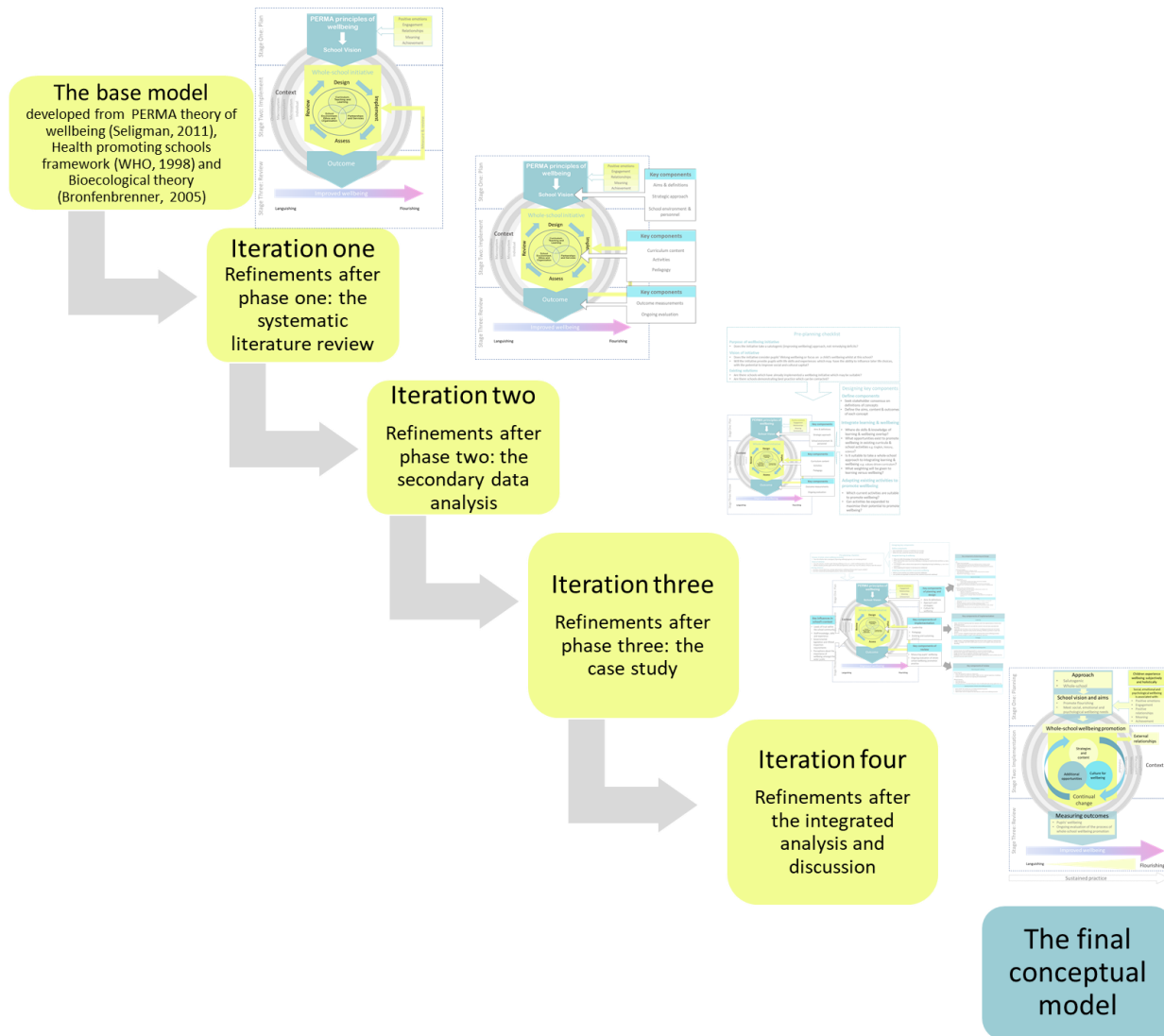
Figure 8-1 The iterative process of building the evidence-based, conceptual model for whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools

The final concept presents a straightforward diagrammatical model which follows the whole-school wellbeing promotion process from the planning stage, through implementation to the review (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). The model highlights how this process takes place within a complex context, and how schools develop external relationships with families and organisations within this context. The **planning stage** recognises that all English primary schools in this study used a salutogenic and whole-school approach to create a vision and set of aims to enable pupils to flourish. Applying this approach enables schools to focus on positive aspects associated with flourishing and recognises the requirement for everyone to be involved and the whole school community's wellbeing to be considered. The model recognises that schools are best placed to promote the social, emotional and psychological aspects of pupils' wellbeing, an approach which has been evidenced to have been adopted by the sample of schools in this study

(page 193). The model conceptualises children's wellbeing as subjective and multidimensional. It uses Seligman's (2011) dimensions of wellbeing: positive emotions, engagement, positive relationships, meaning and achievement, and emphasises that children's lived experiences captured in this thesis demonstrate these dimensions are experienced holistically, not discretely. The **implementation stage** identifies that schools translated their vision and aims into multiple strategies which were used to promote wellbeing, recognising that pupils responded uniquely to these strategies. Thus, by offering numerous strategies there was more likelihood that all pupils would have positive outcomes. The model encapsulates the evidence into three domains: 1) strategies and content, 2) a culture for wellbeing and 3) additional opportunities (page 192). It depicts whole-school wellbeing promotion as a process of continual change rather than an end-result, with arrows presenting a continuous circle of review and refinement. The final third stage, **the review,** recognises the requirements of schools to consider both pupils' levels of wellbeing as well as an ongoing evaluation of the process itself. As evidenced in Chapter 7, it appears essential to capture pupils' voices as part of this process. The model conveys the desirability to advance personal, classroom and school community along the continuum towards flourishing. A final arrow at the bottom of the model emphasises that whole-school wellbeing promotion needs to be sustained over time. Supplementary information supports the conceptual model by providing detailed, evidence-based principles for guiding whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools (page 239).

8.3   Limitations of the research

The research design for this PhD project had to be modified following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and sustained periods of school closure. This led to delays in primary data collection and raised ethical implications about researching with professionals designated as keyworkers. This resulted in changing the weighting from a project based on 70% primary data collection to 70% secondary data analysis (see Figure 8-2 and Figure 8-3).
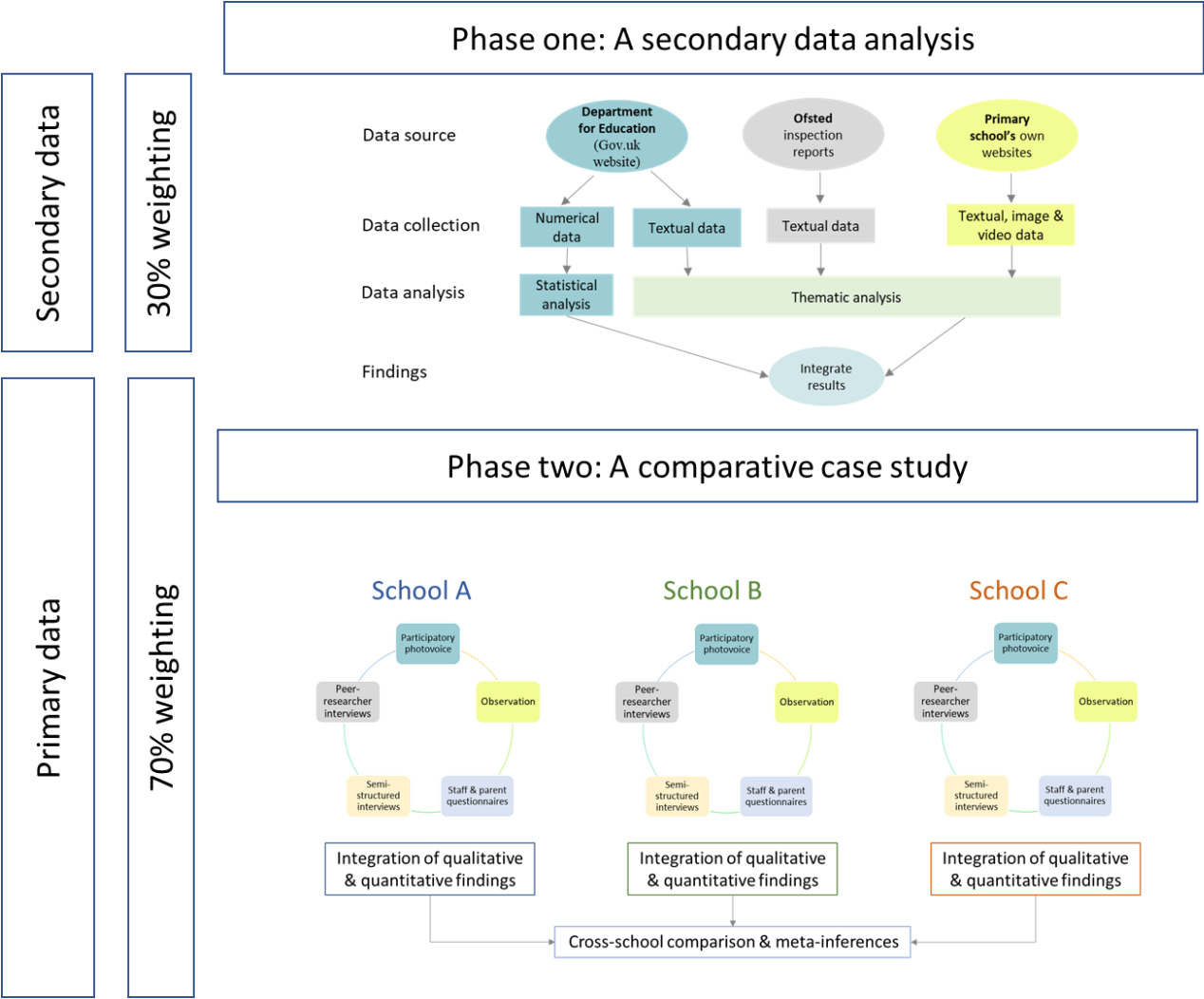
Figure 8-2 The original research design
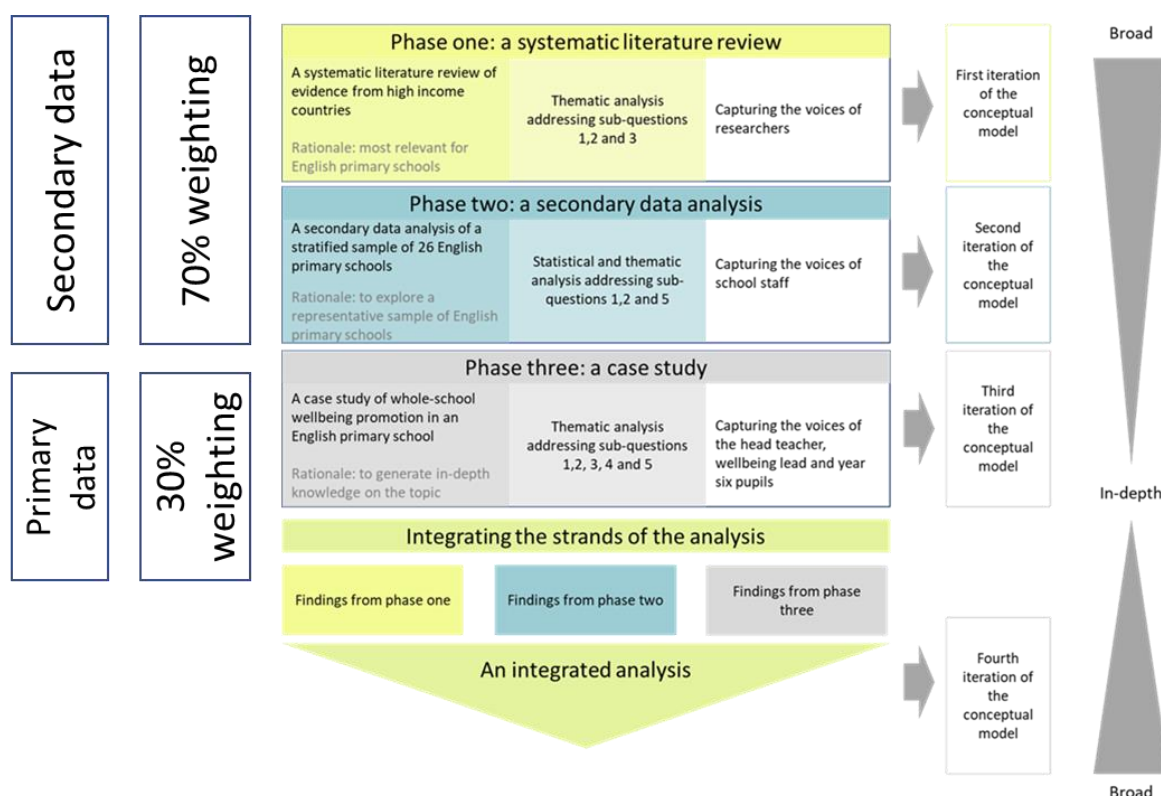
Figure 8-3 The revised research design

The implications of this revised design were:

- There were fewer rich data about pupils' perspectives and lived experiences of whole-school wellbeing promotion. Whilst originally seeking data collection with pupils from three schools, the project ultimately captured the experiences of seventeen year six pupils in the case study school. Thus, new knowledge was developed based on data from a predominantly adult perspective.

- The participatory element of the design was limited in its scope of how children were involved in the research process. Whilst the original design sought to engage pupils as co-researchers, empowering them to capture the views of their peers, the impact of school closures resulted in utilising the mapping activity where pupils had a more limited role as co-responders. This had ethical implications on the extent to which pupils were engaged alongside reliance on an adult-driven research method.

- Using a secondary data analysis restricted data collection to existing datasets in twenty-six sample schools in phase two. This resulted in the interrelationships between wellbeing

practice and context in those schools remaining largely unknown, despite the importance that this project has placed on understanding and managing environmental factors.

8.4   Recommendations for future research

The analysis highlighted four areas that it appeared would benefit from further research:

- The findings demonstrated the myriad interrelationships that existed between the components of whole-school wellbeing promotion and the context in which it was implemented. Therefore, there appears to be merit in reanalysing the current dataset using a systems thinking approach, enabling wellbeing practice to be considered in its entirety rather than broken into components. Advocates of this approach for studying health promotion in a school setting, argue that recognising schools as complex adaptive systems enables more beneficial and sustained change for pupils (Keshavarz *et al.*, 2010; Rosas, 2017).

- The original research design proposed a comparative case study design to explore whole-school wellbeing practices in three English primary schools. It appears valuable that this is undertaken as an extension of the PhD study . The benefit of comparison allows similarities and differences to be highlighted, with the potential to add to further understanding of this topic.

- The analysis demonstrated the relationship between promoting pupils' wellbeing and building pupils' social and cultural capital (page 231). A search had revealed scant existing literature about this topic relating to mainstream primary schools. Thus, there seems merit in addressing this current knowledge gap.

- This study's findings generated new knowledge about how schools modified strategies within wellbeing practice to better support some subgroups of pupils. The participatory mapping activity undertaken with year six pupils in the case study school highlighted its suitability to capture the lived experiences of a child with SEN, although their responses were anonymised in this study. Whilst this study's findings have been valuable, it is recognised that they have made a small contribution to this area. As leading scholars in this field have called for further research about the outcomes of wellbeing promotion amongst subgroups of pupils, it is recognised that further research is still required.

8.5 Implications of this PhD project for professional practice and education policy

A purpose of this PhD project is to convince the reader that schools can undertake whole-school wellbeing promotion without 'reinventing the wheel'. It has emphasised how the sample schools used wellbeing practices and outcome measures that were already in existence, taking best practice from other school settings and adopting existing staff and pupil surveys to monitor outcomes. Schools took existing practice and adapted it to make it more relevant for their specific school setting. I, therefore, hope that the approaches of English primary schools identified in this PhD thesis are equally transferable to schools within the English education system and more broadly.

The thesis presents an evidence-based conceptual model and a series of broad principles for planning, implementing and reviewing whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools. It is anticipated that in developing the study's findings into these practical applications, they will have relevance for teachers and other professionals. The model and principles may also provide a useful framework for education policymakers.

The systematic literature review, phase one of the study, provides an analysis of recent evidence relating to whole-school wellbeing promotion in high income countries. As a stand-alone review, its strength is its focus on this topic in relation to primary level schooling. This contrasts with most evidence which concentrates on this phenomenon in secondary schools with an older pupil age-group.

8.6 Personal reflection

My interest in children's wellbeing and how society has the potential to influence the extent to which a child flourishes or falters has developed through professional and personal experiences. I feel passionate that using evidence-based practices to develop skills and understanding which help facilitate higher levels of wellbeing is extremely valuable. Additionally, my conversations with those who have experienced low wellbeing, has reinforced my belief that introducing children early to wellbeing practice is most beneficial. In using whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary school settings, I feel hopeful that this approach will be hugely beneficial for pupils whatever their starting point is.

This PhD study has been completed during a period significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. As such it has thrown up unforeseen challenges which have been difficult to overcome at times, including repeated delays to primary data collection and long periods of working in

isolation at home. However, researching during the pandemic has also been an opportunity to practice many skills which will be useful for a career in research including problem-solving, finding creative solutions, remaining flexible and working to moving deadlines. It has also enabled me to focus on my own wellbeing by being grateful for my candidature, remaining motivated about my research topic, and practising patience, positivity and resilience.   Having to significantly modify the original research design, involved a period of personal re-adjustment in which the new design felt 'second best'. Attendance at an online workshop about maintaining research impact during the Covid-19 pandemic was hugely useful in enabling me to realise that the outcomes of my PhD project could be just as well met through an alternative research design. In completing the thesis, I feel that these findings have generated a breadth and depth of new knowledge that would have been unachievable through the original design, as the secondary data analysis enabled me to include a greater sample of English primary schools. However, I also acknowledge that a comparative case study design may have given valuable, additional insights that are missing here, piquing my interest to seek funding to continue researching within this field for the benefit for children.

I have also reflected on the challenge of undertaking mixed methods research as a novice researcher. This project has necessitated rapid immersion in a range of data collection and analysis methods, many of which I had no practical experience of prior to embarking on PhD study. However, through accessibility to relevant taught modules and regular meetings with my hugely supportive supervisors, I developed the knowledge and confidence to employ these methods. A notable challenge came from integrating the separate analyses from each of the research methods within the case study into a whole, making sense of a wealth of data within the wordcount available. Similarly, synthesising the findings from the three phases into an integrated analysis to address the research questions, as part of the mixed methods methodology, was a time-consuming and non-linear process. Whilst I could honestly say my brain hurt at times (!), I am delighted that this was my chosen methodology and research design as I have learned so much in relatively short period of time, within a supportive environment.

8.7   Conclusion

This project has researched a topic about which I am passionate; how schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish. It has sought to address a series of research gaps in a well-developed body of evidence. These gaps were identified as 1) a lack of evidence at primary school level, 2) limited existing knowledge from the English education system, 3) the need

for more consideration about how context influences wellbeing practice and 4) a lack of engagement with children in the research process, forming the research problem for this study. A qualitatively-driven mixed methods methodology was used to develop a three-phase research design to answer the overarching research question, 'How do schools use whole-school wellbeing promotion to enable pupils to flourish?' In addition, in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic, the study sought to understand how schools reshaped wellbeing practice during school closure.

The discussion in Chapter 7 has comprehensively answered those research questions, addressing the research problem. Thus, the new knowledge generated by this study has gone some way to addressing the gaps identified in existing literature. Whilst some limitations have arisen from the required modifications to the research design due to the Covid-19 pandemic, these have been recognised as opportunities for further research. A strength of this research is its originality, in developing a multidisciplinary theoretical lens, a bespoke research design, a new pupil-driven definition of children's wellbeing, new knowledge about how English primary schools use wellbeing practice to enable pupils to flourish and an evidence-based conceptual model of whole-school wellbeing promotion in primary schools. It has also captured the considered, valuable insights of pupils reflecting on their lived experiences of a school's wellbeing practice. To conclude, this project has emphasised how its findings demonstrate that schools do not need to 'reinvent the wheel' to implement whole-school wellbeing promotion. Rather enabling pupils to flourish can rely on borrowing and adapting existing practices, which the conceptual model has sought to encapsulate.

Appendix A   Appendix to chapter one

A.1   Risks and protective factors for mental wellbeing

	Individual	Family	Community
Risk Factors	Male Learning disability Physical Illness Academic failure Low self-esteem Developmental delay Communication problems	Parental conflict Maternal sensitivity & attunement Family breakdown Poor parenting including inconsistent/unclear discipline, hostility, lack of supervision Physical, sexual or emotional abuse Parental mental illness Criminality or substance addiction Death or loss including 'being looked after'	Socio-economic disadvantage Homelessness Disaster Discrimination Parental Unemployment Poor school ethos Bullying
Protective Factors	Female Self-esteem Sense of identity Self-efficacy (mastery) Good communication & social skills School success	At least one good relationship with an adult within or outside the family Authoritative discipline Support for education Good inter-parental relationships	Wider support networks Access to sport & leisure opportunities High standard of living Schools with strong academic and non-academic opportunities Supportive school ethos Good relationships with peers Good housing

Source: Adi Y, Killoran A, Janmohamed K & Stewart-Brown S (2007) Systematic review of the effectiveness of interventions to promote mental wellbeing in children in primary education. Report 1: Universal approaches: non-violence related outcomes National Institute of Health and Clinical Excellence (NICE), London, UK.

Appendix B   Appendix to chapter three

B.1   Sampling strategy for the secondary data analysis

The sampling strategy was based on Brown's (2018) strategy in 'Mental health and wellbeing provision in schools' as her rationale was that this strategy:

> *'was designed to ensure representativeness of schools with different characteristics and to limit the likelihood of biases.'* (p. 80).

- **Original strategy (Brown 2018)**

Category	Definition	Strata	Minimum number of schools, where N=45
Geographical location	Education region	North East North West East Midlands West Midlands East of England London South East South West Yorkshire and Humber	5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5 5
Deprivation	Pupils eligible for free school meals at any time during the past 6 years %	High Medium Low	10 10 10
School location	As identified in https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/rural-primary-schools-designation	Rural Urban	30 10
Ofsted rating	Most recent Ofsted rating	Outstanding Good Requires improvement	10 10 10
School type	Identified by Gov.uk	Academy Free school Maintained Faith	15 2 15 5

- **Modifications to the original strategy**

Whilst this strategy provides sound basis, it has been modified to include the most recently published government statistics on school characteristics, with the following changes being included:

Geographical location

Brown has included a constant number of schools across all education regions. However, the split of primary schools across regions varies, so it was determined that a more appropriate strategy would be to sample based on the actual proportion of primary schools per region. This information was sourced at https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2018) and outlined below:

Education region	Number of state-funded primary schools (including academies & free schools)	Percentage
North East	861	5
North West	2446	15
Yorkshire & Humber	1775	11
East Midlands	1634	10
West Midlands	1768	11
East of England	1995	11
London	1817	11
South East	2597	15
South West	1873	11
Total	16776	100

Deprivation

Brown does not state how she has categorised the percentage of children receiving free school meals (FSM) into in high, medium and low categories. This study uses the government published national average percentage of 23% to form the midpoint of the 'medium' category. The categories are, thus defined as:

- Low is less than 16%
- Medium is 16.1% to 30%

- High is 30.1% and above

This was tested on a small sample of schools resulting in broadly similar results across the categories, establishing the suitability of parameters used.

School location

Brown splits schools between urban and rural settings in the ratio 3:1. However, a government publication (available https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2018) reports schools lie within a 4:1 ratio, with 13,414 urban English primary schools and 3,352 rural schools. This latter ratio has, therefore, been used for the purposes of this study.

Ofsted rating

Brown's (2018) sampling strategy uses an equal split across the ratings (outstanding 33%, good 33%, requires improvement 33%). This study has modified this to reflect Ofsted statistics from August 2019. Based on actual percentages per rating for English primary schools, this study uses the following proportions: outstanding (18%), good (70%), requires improvement (10%) and inadequate (3%).

School type

This study uses the government statistics available at 'Schools, Pupils and their Characteristics: January 2018 - National Tables' Excel spreadsheet for English primary schools is as follows:

School type	Number	Percentage
Community	6746	
Foundation	603	
Total maintained	7349	44%
Academy (minus free schools)	4440	27%
Voluntary aided	2904	
Voluntary controlled	1921	
Total faith	4825	28%

Free schools	152	1%
Total	16766	100%

Additional categories for stratification

In addition to categories above, two additional factors were included to provide for greater comprehension.

School size

It was anticipated that school size had the potential to for differing financial and staff resourcing which may affect the scope of whole-school wellbeing promotion. The most recent pupil numbers from the Gov.UK school statistics website was captured. Schools were categorised by the rating: large (above 450 pupils), medium (250 to 449 pupils) and small (below 250 pupils).

Cultural/ethnic background

Existing literature criticises the lack of analysis by pupil background as a weakness of previous research on whole-school wellbeing promotion. Therefore, data were captured using the category 'Pupils whose first language is not English' (available at Gov.uk) as a useful indicator of pupil background. The average %, according to Gov.uk, is 21.2% so the medium category was defined as 21.2% +/- 8% approximately as the medium category. Low was defined as 0% to 14% and high was above 30%.

B.2 Gatekeeper approval form

Gatekeeper approval

Title of project: A case study to explore exemplary practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing in an English primary school

Dear

I am a final year PhD student who is undertaking a mixed methods study to explore how English primary schools promote the wellbeing of their pupils. Whilst a considerable evidence base exists to demonstrate the benefits for children, less evidence exists at primary school level and within the English education system.

As a school which has been identified as using exemplary practices, your expertise and experiences would be of great value to other professionals, academics and policymakers.

I am, therefore, writing to ask for your permission to use your school as a case study for exemplary practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing. This would involve access to your school and your authorisation for two interviews to take place with school staff and a drawing activity to be completed with year six pupils. It is expected that each research element will take approximately an hour to complete and can be arranged for your convenience. Information sheets will be made available for participants, parents/carers of pupils taking part and for the pupils themselves, and relevant consent and assent (from pupils) would be sought prior to research taking place. All participants would have a right to withdraw at any time within the process and for any data collected up to that point to be destroyed.

All data and findings will be kept strictly confidential and identities will be anonymised. These data will be published in my final PhD thesis, and may form part of a published journal article in the future.

University of Southampton ethics number: 64777 (pending)

Please tick to confirm that your understanding of the research study and that you are happy for your organisation to be involved

I confirm that I have read and understand the information provided ☐

I understand that participation of our organisation and participants is voluntary and that they are free to withdraw at any time ☐

I understand that all data collected will be anonymous and remain confidential ☐

I agree for our school, staff and pupils to take part in the study ☐

Name of gatekeeper………………………………………………………….

Date………………………………………………………………………

Signature…………………………………………………………………..

University of Southampton ethics number: 64777 (pending)

B.3   Participant information sheet for the narrative and semi-structured interviews

Participant Information Sheet

Study Title: A case study to explore exemplary practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing in an English primary school

Researcher: Rowan Edwards
ERGO number: 64777

You are being invited to take part in the above research study. To help you decide whether you would like to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please read the information below carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide to take part in this research. You may like to discuss it with others but it is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you are happy to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?
This study is being undertaken as part of a wider PhD project. I am a student in the School of Education at the University of Southampton exploring the ways in which schools promote pupils' wellbeing. Whilst there is strong evidence that these types of initiatives are beneficial for children, there is limited evidence about approaches within English primary schools. Therefore, this PhD project seeks to generate new knowledge which may be useful both for teaching professionals and academics, and ultimately pupils. The project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

Why have I been asked to participate?
The project will benefit from a detailed understanding of exemplary practice in an English primary school. As headteacher, your expertise and experience in promoting pupils' wellbeing is very valuable.

What will happen to me if I take part?

Participation in the study involves taking part in a narrative interview with myself, the PhD student. It is anticipated that this will be a one-off interview which will take approximately one hour to complete. With your agreement, the interview will take place on your school site. The purpose of the narrative interview is to enable rich, detailed data to be collected on the personal experiences of designing, implementing and sustaining a whole school approach to promote pupils' wellbeing (Creswell, 2014). It allows an interrupted, free-flowing narration to generate new, nuanced knowledge which will be useful for a variety of stakeholders in the disciplines of education and health.

The interview will be audio recorded to capture all the details of your narrative. The recording will later be transcribed, and on completion the recording will be destroyed. The transcribed interview will analysed as part of the PhD study and may form part of a series of published journal articles.

The case study is part of a larger PhD study which is due for completion in September 2022.

Are there any benefits in my taking part?

Whilst there may be no direct benefit to you taking part in the study, there could be significant benefits for other schools seeking to implement similar initiatives. In addition, it is anticipated that the knowledge generated through this case study be published as a series of journal articles, informing an academic and professional readership.

Are there any risks involved?

It is not anticipated that there are any risks involved in taking part in this narrative interview.

What data will be collected?
Data generated during the interview will be collected by myself. No personal information will be collected and, where used in the study, data will be anonymised by using a coding system. The interview transcript will be held under a pseudonym. Electronic data will be password-protected and encrypted. It will be stored on the University of Southampton's Onedrive, in accordance with the study's data management plan. If hard copies are produced, they will be secured in a locked cabinet. The consent form will be kept separately from non-identifiable data.

Will my participation be confidential?
Your participation and the information we collect about you during the course of the research will be kept strictly confidential.

Only members of the research team and responsible members of the University of Southampton may be given access to data about you for monitoring purposes and/or to carry out an audit of the study to ensure that the research is complying with applicable regulations. Individuals from regulatory authorities (people who check that we are carrying out the study correctly) may require access to your data. All of these people have a duty to keep your information, as a research participant, strictly confidential.

The consent form will be kept in electronic form, encrypted and password protected. The audio recording will be kept until transcription is completed, and then destroyed. The transcript will also be kept electronically. It will be anonymised using a code, encrypted and password protected and kept separately to the consent form.

Parties with access to the data will include myself and my supervisors who oversee the PhD project. Participant contact details will not be kept beyond the length of this study.

Do I have to take part?
No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you decide you want to take part, you will need to sign a consent form to show you have agreed to take part.

What happens if I change my mind?
You have the right to change your mind and withdraw at any time, up to six weeks after the interview is completed, without giving a reason and without your participant rights being affected.

Withdrawal can be made verbally or in writing at any point to myself or my supervisor up to six weeks after the interview. Any data collected up to that point will be destroyed and not used in the PhD study.

What will happen to the results of the research?
Your personal details will remain strictly confidential. Research findings made available in any reports or publications will not include information that can directly identify you without your specific consent.

Appendix B

The results of this interview will be analysed and integrated with other findings from other phases of the study in the final written PhD thesis. It is anticipated that a series of journal articles will be published on completion of the project. You will be given a summary of the findings after the research is completed to disseminate as you consider appropriate to colleagues and parents.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like further information, please contact me at rjre1g13@soton.ac.uk.

What happens if there is a problem?
If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should speak to the researchers who will do their best to answer your questions.
If you remain unhappy or have a complaint about any aspect of this study, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Research team
Researcher: Rowan Edwards, PhD Student, School of Education, University of Southampton. Email: rjre1g13@soton.ac.uk.
Supervisors: Dr Jenny Byrne j.byrne@soton.ac.uk
                Professor Marcus Grace m.m.grace@soton.ac.uk

Data Protection Privacy Notice
The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, 'Personal data' means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University's data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University's policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason ('lawful basis') to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable

information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University's data protection webpage (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer (data.protection@soton.ac.uk).

Thank you.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and considering taking part in the research.

B.4   Pupils' participant information sheet for mapping activity

Study Title: A case study to explore exemplary practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing in an English primary school

Researcher: Rowan Edwards
ERGO number: 64777

Information sheet for year six pupils
(To be read aloud by the class teacher)

You are going to be asked to draw maps which will help you to think about your time at this school and some of these will be used by Rowan, the PhD researcher, in her project at the University of Southampton. Your parents or people who look after you have already been asked to let us know if they are happy for your map to be used by Rowan. However, it is also important for you to choose whether you would like to be included in the research. Please can you listen carefully to this information so you can decide whether you would like to take part. I will now tell you a bit about what Rowan would do with your drawings.
Rowan has come to our school because it has been recognised as being really excellent at supporting your happiness, safety and making you feel good about yourself. This is sometimes called your wellbeing. She is also talking to your headteacher and other members of staff about the things they do. However, it would be really good to hear your views. Rowan wants to understand the ways in which you feel the school helps you to feel happy and how this may have changed over your time here. So perhaps some things were useful when you were younger, but you feel different things are more helpful now. She would like you to draw a map about all of the things you can remember from you time at school. She will use your drawings and her interviews with some of your teachers to tell other people what your school does. These may include people at the university, other researchers and staff in different schools. Rowan will write about what you have included on your maps and will put some of the maps themselves in her research report.
There are different ways of going about the task. There are two different templates that you can use to get you started (show templates) or else you can create your own map. One important thing is to make your map anonymous; this makes sure that no-one who reads Rowan's report knows who you are. So, please don't write your name on the map itself. If you turn your paper over there is a space to write your name on the back.
Everyone is going to make a map, but you can choose whether you would like your map to be used by Rowan. If your parents or person who looks after you has agreed, and you would like to take part then your map will be included. If you agree now but change your mind while you are creating your map that is fine and you just need to let an adult know that you don't want Rowan to use your map. However, once the maps have been collected in you cannot change your mind.
Do you have any questions? Please can you fill in your form (the assent form) to let us know what you have decided. The form again tells you that it is your choice and you can change your mind at any time during the activity.

Research project information for parents and carers

Title: A case study to explore exemplary practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing in an English primary school

Researcher: Rowan Edwards

Your child is being invited to take part in this research study. To help you decide whether you would like your child to take part or not, it is important that you understand why the research is being done and what it will involve.

Please read the information carefully and ask questions if anything is not clear or you would like more information before you decide whether to allow your child to take part in this research. You can speak to Julie Greer or myself.

You may like to discuss it with others but it is up to you to decide whether or not for your child to take part. If you are happy for them to participate you will be asked to sign a consent form.

What is the research about?

This study is being undertaken as part of a wider PhD project. I am a student in the Education School at the University of Southampton exploring the ways in which schools promote pupils' wellbeing. Whilst there is strong evidence that these types of initiatives are beneficial for children, there is limited evidence about approaches within English primary schools. Therefore, this PhD

project seeks to generate new knowledge which may be useful both for teaching professionals and academics, and ultimately pupils. The project is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council.

Why has your child been asked to participate?

Your school has been recognised as providing very high standards in promoting pupils' wellbeing. It is valuable for others to understand the experiences of children. Your child is an expert about wellbeing promotion in their school.

What will happen to your child if they take part?

Your child will be asked to participate in an activity where they are asked to draw maps about the things that have helped their wellbeing during their time at the school. All children will complete this activity as part of their ordinary lesson with their class teacher. Hopefully, they will find this an enjoyable activity.

Whilst all pupils will complete the activity, only those where parents or carers have given their consent will have their maps used in the research project. Your children can also say whether they want to take part in the research.

The class teacher will carry out the map drawing with the children as part of the lesson, and I will get involved once the drawings are completed.

This drawing activity is part of a case study about your child's school, and the headteacher and other staff are also taking part. The findings from your school will be

integrated into a larger study which is due to be completed in September 2022.

Are there any benefits to my child taking part?

Whilst there may be no direct benefit to you taking part in the study, there could be significant benefits for other schools seeking to implement similar initiatives. In addition, it is anticipated that the knowledge generated through this case study will be published as a series of journal articles, informing a wide academic and professional readership.

Are there any risks involved?

It is not anticipated that there are any risks involved in your child taking part. They will have their class teacher with them throughout. The topic is about promoting wellbeing, which is about thinking about things which have a positive effect on their lives.

In the unlikely event that your child was to become concerned or distressed, they could go to their class teacher.

Your child will also be made aware that they can stop the activity at any time.

What data will be collected?

The map drawings that the children have created will be photocopied if they are used in the research, so that the original drawings can be returned to your children for them to keep. The photocopied map will be anonymous, so I will not know who has created the maps. This means your child's identity will be confidential. I may include your child's drawing in my research report, but their identity would be unknown.

I will collect your consent form with your name and contact information, which I will keep confidential and not share with anyone. I will also keep your child's assent form (which shows they are happy to take part and has their name and class on). This information will be destroyed once the project is complete.

Will my child's participation be confidential?

All children will carry out the map drawing activity whether their parent or carer gives consent or not for them to take part in the research. So, children will not know who is or isn't taking part.

Only school staff and myself will know who has taken part, and I won't know which child has created each drawing once they have been photocopied.

Does my child have to take part?

No, it is entirely up to you to decide whether or not you want your child to take part. If you decide you want them to take part, you will need to sign a consent form to show your agreement.

What happens if I change my mind?

You have the right to change your mind and withdraw your child from the research up until the time they have finished the activity. You do not need to give a reason and your participant rights will be unaffected.

Withdrawal can be made verbally or in writing at any point to the headteacher, class teacher or myself. Your child will still complete the activity, but their map will not be used in the PhD study.

What will happen to the results of the research?

Your child's drawing will be analysed and integrated with other findings from the larger PhD project. This knowledge will be used to help teaching professionals promote wellbeing amongst children at other schools.

It is also expected that some of this knowledge will be published in academic journals. Your child's identity will always remain confidential.

Once the project is complete, a summary of the findings will be sent to your headteacher next year, so that they can disseminate them as they consider appropriate.

Where can I get more information?

If you would like further information, please contact Rowan at rjre1g13@soton.ac.uk.

What happens if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, please speak to Rowan first.

If you remain unhappy or have a complaint, please contact the University of Southampton Research Integrity and Governance Manager (023 8059 5058, rgoinfo@soton.ac.uk).

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The following sheet gives detailed information about the way in which you and your child's data is protected by the University of Southampton.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information. Kind regards, Rowan.

Data Protection Privacy Notice

The University of Southampton conducts research to the highest standards of research integrity. As a publicly-funded organisation, the University has to ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally-identifiable information about people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, we will use information about you and your child in the ways needed, and for the purposes specified, to conduct and complete the research project. Under data protection law, 'Personal data' means any information that relates to and is capable of identifying a living individual. The University's data protection policy governing the use of personal data by the University can be found on its website (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page).

This Participant Information Sheet tells you what data will be collected for this project and whether this includes any personal data. Please ask the research team if you have any questions or are unclear what data is being collected about you and your child.

Our privacy notice for research participants provides more information on how the University of Southampton collects and uses your and your child's personal data when you take part in one of our research projects and can be found at http://www.southampton.ac.uk/assets/sharepoint/intranet/ls/Public/Research%20and%20Integrity%20Privacy%20Notice/Privacy%20Notice%20for%20Research%20Participants.pdf

Any personal data we collect in this study will be used only for the purposes of carrying out our research and will be handled according to the University's policies in line with data protection law. If any personal data is used from which you can be identified directly, it will not be disclosed to anyone else without your consent unless the University of Southampton is required by law to disclose it.

Data protection law requires us to have a valid legal reason ('lawful basis') to process and use your Personal data. The lawful basis for processing personal information in this research study is for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest. Personal data collected for research will not be used for any other purpose.

For the purposes of data protection law, the University of Southampton is the 'Data Controller' for this study, which means that we are responsible for looking after your information and using it properly. The University of Southampton will keep identifiable information about you for 10 years after the study has finished after which time any link between you and your information will be removed.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personal data necessary to achieve our research study objectives. Your data protection rights – such as to access, change, or transfer such information - may be limited, however, in order for the research output to be reliable and accurate. The University will not do anything with your personal data that you would not reasonably expect.

If you have any questions about how your personal data is used, or wish to exercise any of your rights, please consult the University's data protection webpage (https://www.southampton.ac.uk/legalservices/what-we-do/data-protection-and-foi.page) where you can make a request using our online form. If you need further assistance, please contact the University's Data Protection Officer (data.protection@soton.ac.uk).

Thank you.

Thank you for taking the time to read this information sheet and considering taking part in the research.

B.6   Consent form for narrative and semi-structured interviews

CONSENT FORM

Study title: A case study to explore exemplary practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing in an English primary school

Researcher name: Rowan Edwards
ERGO number: 64777
Participant Identification Number (if applicable):

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

Please initial in each box

Statement	
I have read and understood the information sheet *(26/05/2021 /version number 2)* and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study.	
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time, up to six weeks after the interview is completed, and for any reason without my participation rights being affected.	
I understand the I will not be directly identified in any reports of the research	
I understand that I may be quoted directly in reports of the research but that I will not be directly identified (e.g. that my name will not be used).	
I understand that taking part in the study involves audio recording which will be transcribed and then destroyed for the purposes set out in the participation information sheet.	

Name of participant (print name)..

Signature of participant...

Date...

Name of researcher (print name)..

Signature of researcher ....

Date..

B.7   Consent form for parents for pupils' mapping activity

CONSENT FORM

Study title: A case study to explore exemplary practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing in an English primary school

Researcher name: Rowan Edwards
ERGO number: 64777
Participant Identification Number (if applicable*):*

Please initial the box(es) if you agree with the statement(s):

Please initial in each box

I have read and understood the information sheet *(26/05/2021 /version number 2)* and have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.	
I agree to take part in this research project and agree for my data to be used for the purpose of this study.	
I understand my participation is voluntary and I may withdraw at any time, up to six weeks after the interview is completed, and for any reason without my participation rights being affected.	
I understand the I will not be directly identified in any reports of the research	
I understand that I may be quoted directly in reports of the research but that I will not be directly identified (e.g. that my name will not be used).	
I understand that taking part in the study involves audio recording which will be transcribed and then destroyed for the purposes set out in the participation information sheet.	

Name of participant (print name)...

Signature of participant...

Date...

Name of researcher (print name)...

Signature of researcher ....

Date...

B.8   Pupils' assent form for the mapping activity

Assent form

Name……………………………………………………….

Class………………………………………………………

Yes, I want to take part

No, I don't want to take part

I know that I can choose not to take part in the research at any time while I'm creating my map, I just need to tell an adult.

B.9 SQUIN: Narrative interview preamble

Thank you for agreeing to talk to me about your school's journey, its biography if you like, of how pupils' wellbeing has been and is promoted. My research aims to highlight how schools have undertaken their health and wellbeing journeys, and so I'd like to hear the story about what has happened at [school name]. Please feel free to tell me anything your think is relevant. I don't want to be prescriptive as I understand each school's story will be unique, but it seems as if there are some key features of their journey that schools have been through. These include the starting point, creating a vision, building enthusiasm, implementing changes, and keeping going. It would be really helpful if you could say something about how your school has moved through these stages, as well as what you consider to be the most important factors in promoting wellbeing and what has helped or hindered the process. Furthermore, the disruption of Covid-19 has had a major impact on both the wellbeing of pupils and the way in which schools operate, and I wonder how this has changed what you are doing. Overall, please tell me your school's story about how pupils' wellbeing is promoted.

B.10   The semi-structured interview schedule

Study Title: A case study to explore exemplary practice in promoting pupils' wellbeing in an English primary school

Researcher: Rowan Edwards

ERGO number: 64777

Draft schedule for the semi-structured interview

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this interview. As a school which has been recognised for its excellence in promoting children's wellbeing, it would be very valuable to understand your insights and perspective on how this has been and continues to be achieved. I will ask a series of questions but please feel free to add anything which you feel is relevant.

What is the school's overall vision for promoting wellbeing?

Which school policies relate to wellbeing?

What do you consider to be the most important components in promoting wellbeing?

Can you tell me the way in which your school uses the following factors to promote pupils' wellbeing:

- The curriculum

- The school's ethos/culture

- Non-teaching time such as playtimes

- The part social environment plays

- The part physical environment plays

- Extra-curricular activities

Appendix B

- Any other areas you consider important

How do you measure the impact of what you are doing?

Within the school's context, what has helped or hindered promoting pupils' wellbeing?

How has Covid-19 impacted and changed what you do?

Is there anything else you would like to make me aware of?

B.11 Templates for the mapping activity

Template one

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

Starting school

Now

Template two

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself
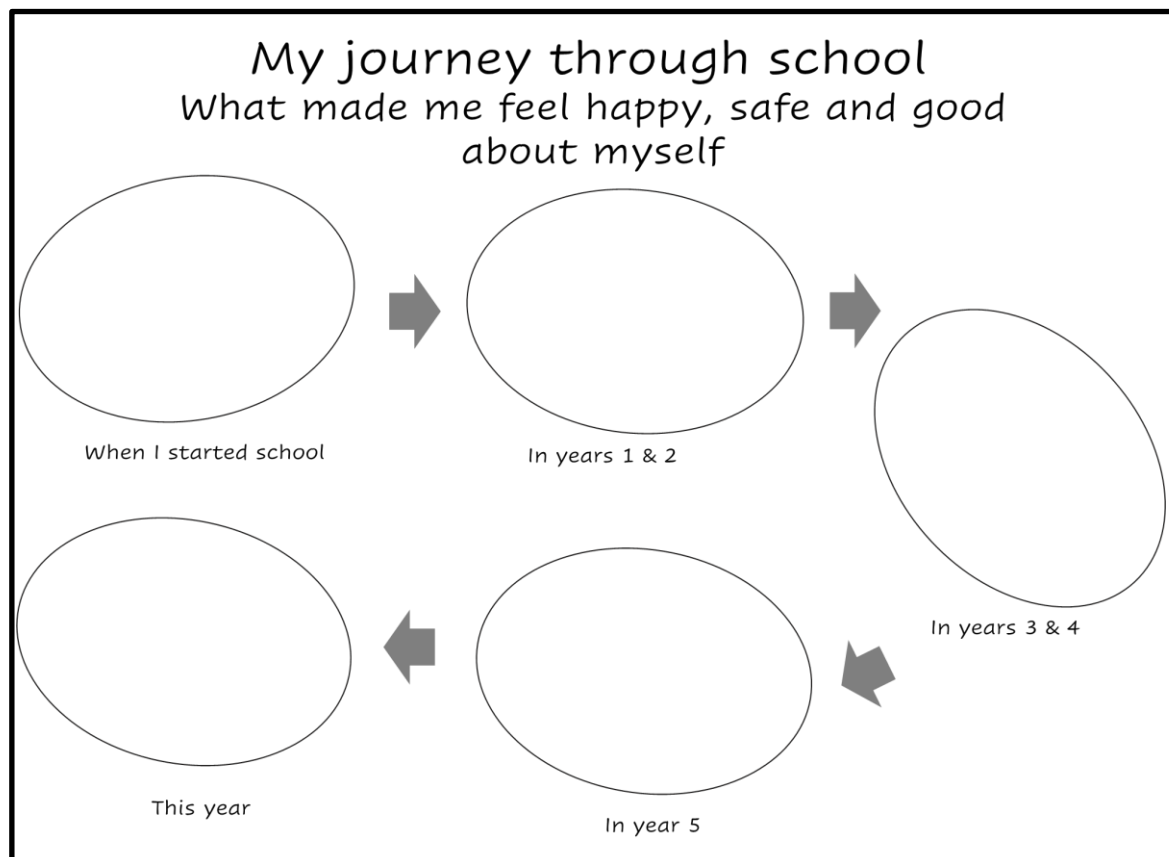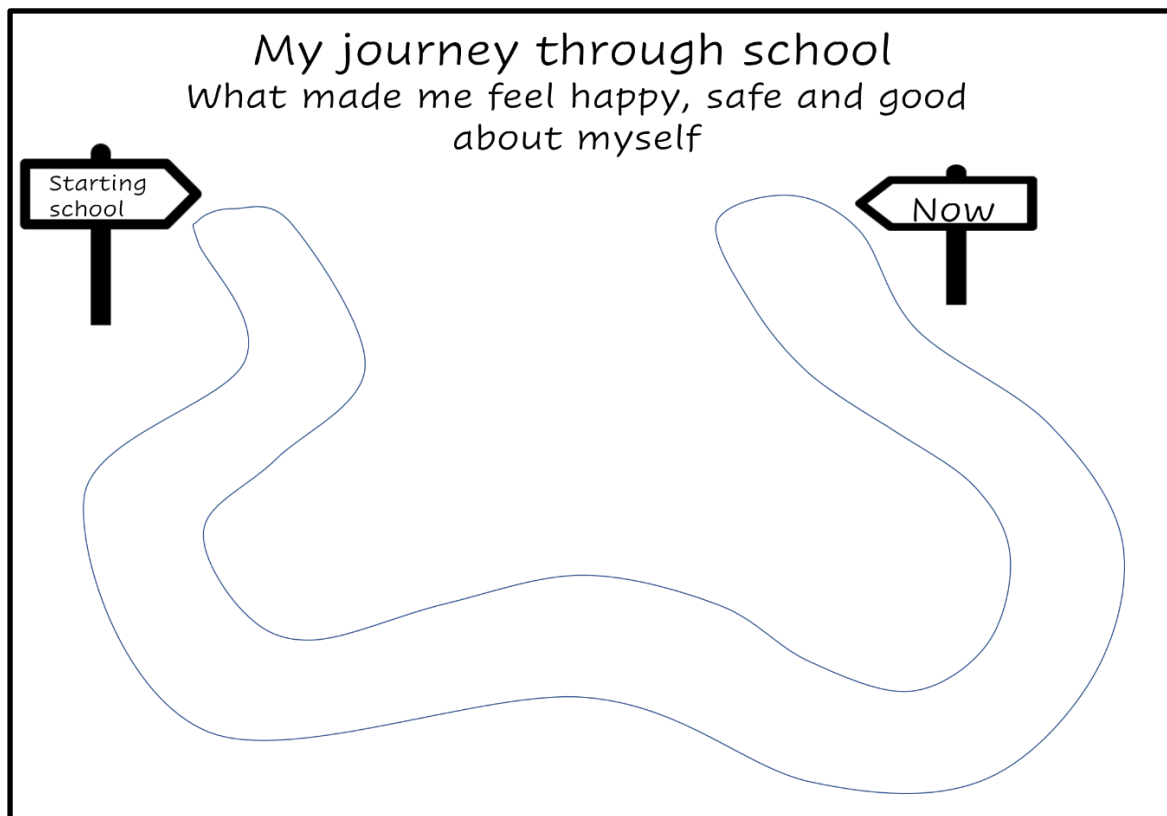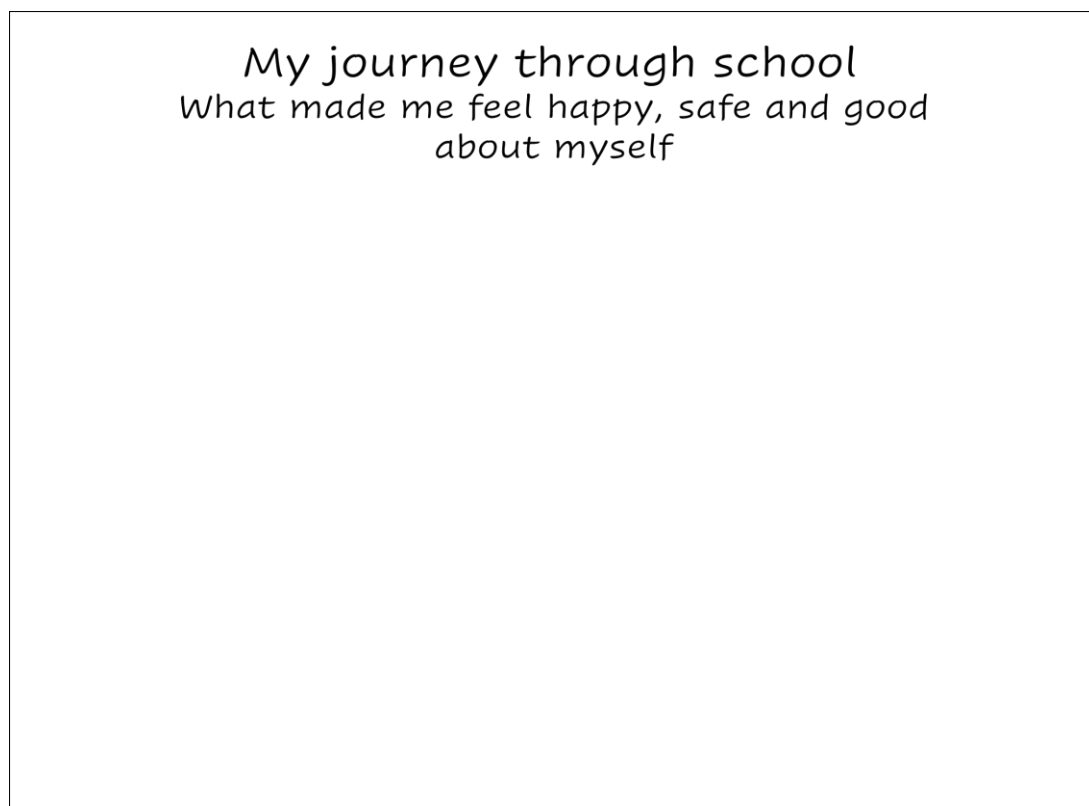
Template three

B.12 Ethics approval for secondary data analysis and case study

B.13 Data Management Plan

About your Research

PhD title:	**Enabling pupils to flourish: An exploration of whole-school wellbeing promotion in English primary schools**
Student name:	Rowan Edwards
Supervisor(s):	Emeritus Professor Jenny Byrne and Professor Marcus Grace
Ethics No. **(if appropriate)**	53526 A secondary data analysis 64777 A case study

About this plan

Date of plan:	27/69/2022	Frequency of reviews	12m
Date of next review:	N/A		
Agreed actions to help you implement the plan	N/A		
Agreed equipment and/or resources required:	Access to Filestore Secure filing space for paper-based data eg. Signed consent forms		

Appendix B

Further information (as appropriate):	

Project Description:

A three-phase qualitatively-driven mixed methods project to explore whole-school wellbeing promotion in English primary schools. Phase one adopts a systematic literature review, phase two comprises a secondary data analysis and phase three undertakes an in-depth case study of an English primary school.

What policies will apply to your research?

UoS policies:

Research Data Management policy

Open Access policy

Ethics policy

ESRC policy

GDPR

Data Protection Act 2018

Relevant publisher policy for published article

What data/research material will you collect or create?

Data will include both qualitative and quantitative data.

Phase one: systematic literature review

Sources: peer-reviewed publications

Data format: text

Data storage: word document, excel spreadsheet, PDFs of original articles. Analysis was carried out using Nvivo.

Quality assurance procedure – data entry validation will be undertaken to ensure accuracy and completeness.

Collection frequency - one time

Phase two: secondary data analysis

Sources – Department for Education Gov.UK website, Ofsted inspection reports (online version) & schools' own websites

Data format – text, numerical, visual, audiovisual

Data storage – word document, excel spreadsheet, PDFs of original data eg. Ofsted inspection reports. Text and image data were stored on UoS Filestore. Numerical data was stored in an Excel workbook. Analysis was carried out in Nvivo and Excel.

Quality assurance procedure – data entry validation will be undertaken to ensure accuracy and completeness.

Collection frequency - one time, during March to April 2020.

Phase three – case study

Sources – interviews with head teacher and wellbeing lead. Map making with year six pupils. Observation via field notes. Document analysis.

Data format – interviews, text and visual data from map making, text in field notes and text from documents.

Data storage – word documents, Excel workbook, image files. Analysis will be carried out in Nvivo and Excel.

Quality assurance –Member checking after transcription for interviews. A systematic approach for note-taking, recording, transcribing and storing data was guided by evidence.

Collection frequency – one time, summer term 2021.

How will your data/research material be documented and described?

Appendix B

Digital data was managed using a series of meaningful filenames & a record of abbreviations kept in line with UK Data Archive. Eg. A, B, C...DA, DB, DC.

Version numbers were used were used for documents in the form 1.0, with .1 increments for minor changes & 1.0 increments for major changes.

A document register was created on an Excel spreadsheet to maintain metadata eg name of document, data created, description of the data, relevant tags etc.

Children's maps were scanned and held on the UoS Onedrive.

How will you deal with any ethical and copyright issues?

In line with GDPR, all raw data will be kept on UoS Onedrive. Data was only be shared with my supervisors and this was done through the UoS Sharepoint site and Onedrive.

The study did not involve any special category data, although anonymised data involving minors was collected. My data is not deemed to be high value.

Data was pseudo anonymised using identifiers in place of names and locations. Direct quoting of raw data was used during reporting of the study and this did not involve two or more identifiers eg identifier of person only, not identifier of person and location of the school.

Paper based notes were digitalised and original copies shredded.

How will your data/research materials be stored, and backed up?

Raw data was saved on the UoS Onedrive for Business accessed through my university login details. This has adequate storage availability & backup procedures. Deleted files are recoverable for 30 days after deletion.

What are your plans for the long-term preservation of data/research materials supporting your research?

I am responsible for archiving the data which will be kept for 10 years after thesis submission or latest access, whichever is later.

Alongside the data will be a readme file, key to abbreviations, a methodology of the study and a reference to the thesis. Also, blank copies of the consent forms and participant information sheets.

Transcripts of interviews and focus groups will be kept. Audio or visual recordings will be destroyed.

Any key to personal details will be destroyed as well as signed consent forms.

Data will be stored in text files to avoid software obsolence, in line with recommendations from the UK Data Service.

It is anticipated that data will be stored with the UK Data Service as the study is ESRC funded.

What are your plans for sharing the data/research materials after the submission of your thesis?

It is anticipated there will be open access to my data in line with UoS and ESRC policies, accompanied by a readme file & other documents.

Data may be of interest to other academics, postgraduates and undergraduates.

The University of Southampton Library has developed this Doctoral Research Data Management Plan and guidance notes based on material adapted from the Australian National Data Service, Sheffield Hallam University, the Open University and the universities of Bath and Newcastle.

Appendix CAppendix to chapter four

C.1   Results from search strategy resulting in 901 publications

Results showing relevant articles										
					Australian				**Web of**	
Search term one	**Search term two**	**Search term three**	**CINAHL**	**ERIC**	**Education Index**	**MEDLINE**	**PsychINFO**	**SCOPUS**	**Science**	**Total**
Mental health promotion	Whole school	Implement*	2	3	1	6	12	116	8	**148**
Mental health promotion	Whole school	Intervention	1	3	2	0	19	149	6	**180**
Wellbeing OR well being OR well-being	Whole school	Implement*	1	13	13	4	23	164	5	**223**
Wellbeing OR well being OR well-being	Whole school	Intervention	7	5	91	7	27	17	1	**155**
Positive education	Whole school	Implement*	1	2	3	0	6	14	2	**26**
Positive education	Whole school	Intervention	0	0	1	0	7	3	0	**11**
Mental health promotion	Universal	Implement*	5	0	0	7	15	18	6	**51**
Mental health promotion	Universal	Intervention	11	1	0	16	28	29	21	**106**
Positive education	Universal	Implement*	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**0**
Positive education	Universal	Intervention	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	**1**
								Total	**901**	relevant articles

C.2 Twenty included publications

Publications included in systematic literature review					
Study	Country & Year	Aim	Research design & sample	School type	Quality H=high, M=medium, L=low
1. Banjeree, R., Weare, K. and Farr, W., (2014). Working with 'Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning' (SEAL): Associations with school ethos, pupil social experiences, attendance, and attainment. British Educational Research Journal, 40(4), 718-742.	2014 UK	To rate various aspects of the implementation of SEAL in 49 primary and secondary schools including attainment & attendance	Mixed methods using observation & semi-structured interviews. Sample n=2242 Thematic analysis	Primary & secondary	H
2. Bjorklund, K., Liski, A., Samposalo, H., Lindblom, J., Hella, J., Huhtinen, H., Ojala, T., Alasuvanto, P., Koskinen, H., Kiviruusu, O., Hemminki, E., Punamäki, R., Sund, R., Solantaus, T. and Santalahti, P. (2014). "Together at school"--a school-based intervention program to promote socio-emotional skills and mental health in children: study protocol for a cluster randomized controlled trial. BMC Public Health, 14(1): 1042-1042.	2014 Finland	To examine the effects of the intervention on children's social and emotional learning & record baseline results.	RCT protocol. Sample =79 schools. Self-report measurements completed by child, teach & parents. Statistical analysis	Primary	M
3. Clarke, A., Bunting, B., and Barry, M. (2014). Evaluating the implementation of a school-based emotional well-being programme: A cluster randomized controlled trial of	2014 Ireland	To evaluate the immediate and long-term impact of the Zippy's Friends	RCT (part of MM study) Sample=44 schools, 766 pupils.	Primary	M

zippy's friends for children in disadvantaged primary schools. Health Education Research, 29(5), 786-798.		intervention and to determine the impact of implementation fidelity on programme outcomes. 7 to 8 yr olds	Self-report by teachers. Statistical analysis		
4. Clarke, A., O'Sullivan, M., and Barry, M. (2010). Context matters in programme implementation. Health Education, 110(4), 273-293.	2010 Ireland	To present case studies of the profile and ethos of two schools participating in the programme, their links with the local community, the degree of parental involvement and the factors that influence programme implementation in the local context	Comparative case study design. Sample= 2 schools. Interviews and group discussions with teachers, pupils, parents and key informants from the wider community & self-report questionnaires for teachers. Thematic analysis	Primary	H
5. Dix, K., Slee, P., Lawson, M. and Keeves, J. (2012) Implementation quality of whole-school mental health promotion and students' academic performance. Child and Adolescent Mental Health, 17 (1), 45-51	2012 Australia	To examine the quality of implementation of school-wide Kidsmatter intervention & the impact of implementation quality on academic performance	Qualitative study

Sample= 96 primary schools, 4980 pupils. Self-report questionnaires completed by teachers & parents.

Statistical analysis | Primary | M |
| 6. Dix, K., Green, M., Tzoumakis, S., Dean, K., Harris, F., Carr, V. and Laurens, K., (2018). The Survey of School Promotion of The Survey of School Promotion of Emotional | 2018 Australia | Evaluation of an instrument which measures the extent to which a school has | Quasi-experimental

Sample= 598 school principals | Primary | M |

and Social Health (SSPESH): A Brief Measure of the Implementation of Whole-School Mental Health Promotion School Mental Health, 11, 1-15.		implemented policies and practices in four health-promoting domains: (a) creating a positive school community, (b) teaching social and emotional skills, (c) engaging the parent community, and (d) supporting students experiencing mental health difficulties	Statistical analysis		
7. Durlak, J. (2016) Programme implementation in social and emotional learning: basic issues and research findings. Cambridge Journal of Education, 46 (3), 333–345.	2016 US	Examines the importance of achieving quality implementation when assessing the impact of social and emotional learning interventions	Opinion piece Review of implementation literature and recent SEL empirical research.	Primary & secondary	Not applicable
8. Durlak, J., Weissberg, R., Dymnicki, A., Taylor, R., and Schellinger, K. B. (2011). The impact of enhancing students' social and emotional learning: A meta-analysis of school-based universal interventions. Child Development, 82(1), 405-432.	2011 US (Global review)	To examine the effects of SEL across a number of domains.	Meta-analysis. Sample= 213 SEL interventions. Statistical analysis	Primary & secondary	H
9. Elfrink, T., Goldber, J. Schreurs, K et al (2017) Positive educative programme A whole school approach to supporting children's well-being and creating a positive school climate: a pilot study Health Education, 117 (2), 215-230.	2017 Netherlands	To examine the effects of a Positive Education Programme in 2 primary schools in Holland.	Mixed methods. Sample = 2 schools. Questionnaires and interviews by students, teachers & parents.	Primary	H

			Thematic & statistical analysis		
10. Fenwick-Smith, A., Dahlberg, E. and Thompson, S. (2018) Systematic review of resilience-enhancing, universal, primary school-based mental health promotion programs. BMC Psychology, 6 (1), 30.	2018 Australia (Global review)	To examine the criteria for implementation & key elements for a comprehensive intervention in primary schools.	Systematic review. Sample = 11 studies of 7 MHP programmes. Thematic analysis	Primary	H
11. Hall, S. (2010) Supporting mental health and wellbeing at a whole-school level: listening to and acting upon children's views, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties, 15:4, 323-339, DOI: 10.1080/13632752.2010.523234	2010 UK	To examine using children's voices in whole-school change	Case study Sample=1 Thematic analysis.	Primary	M
12. Holsen, I., Iversen, A. and Smith, B. (2009) Universal social competence promotion programme in school: Does it work for children with low socio-economic background? Advances in School Mental Health Promotion, Vol 2(2), 51-60.	2009 Norway	To examine the effects of a universal social competence promotion programme (Second Step) on children from families characterised by low socio–economic status	Quasi-experiment Sample=11 schools, 1153 pupils. Age 10 to 12. Self-report instruments at baseline and after Yr1. Statistical analysis.	Primary	M
13. Kiviruusu, O., Björklund, K., Koskinen, H. -., Liski, A., Lindblom, J., Kuoppamäki, H. et al. (2016). Short-term effects of the "together at school" intervention program on children's socio-emotional skills: A cluster randomized controlled trial. BMC Psychology, 4(1).	2016 Finland	To examine the short-term effects of 'Together at school'. (same study as Bjorklund et al. 2014)	RCT Sample= 70 Finnish primary schools, 3704 pupils. Statistical analysis.	Primary	M

14. Kourmousi, N., Markogiannakis, G., Tzavara, C., Kounenou, K., Mandrikas, A., Christopoulou, E., and Koutras, V. (2018). Students' psychosocial empowerment with the 'steps for life' personal and social skills Greek elementary programme. International Electronic Journal of Elementary Education, 10(5), 535-549.	2018 Greece	To evaluate 'Steps for Life' programme, a universal programme to develop personal and social skills.	Quasi-experiment with control group Sample=2439 6 to 8-year olds. Self-report from pupils and teachers. Statistical analysis	Primary	M
15. Murphy, J., Abel, M., Hoover, S., Jellinek, M. and Fazel, M. (2017). Scope, scale, and dose of the world's largest school-based mental health programs. Harvard review of psychiatry, 25(5), 218-228.	2017 US (Global review)	Review of most widely used programmes globally.	Review Sample = 8 internationally implemented programmes. Thematic analysis	Primary & secondary	M/L
16. O'Reilly, M., Svirydzenka, N., Adams, S. and Dogra, N. (2018). Review of mental health promotion interventions in schools. Social psychiatry and psychiatric epidemiology, 53(7), 647-662.	2018 UK (Global review)	To review current evidence-based research of mental health promotion interventions in schools and examine the reported effectiveness	Review Sample = 10 studies. Thematic analysis	Primary & secondary	H
17. Omstead, D., Canales, C., Perry, R., Dutton, K., Morrison, C. and Hawe, P. (2009) Learning from turbulent, real-world practice: Insights from a whole-school mental health promotion project. Advances in School Mental Health Promotion, **2**(2), pp. 5-16.	2009 Canada	To capture participants' experience of the whole-school MHP and to understand the process of change within the schools	Qualitative study Sample=18 Interviews with active insiders, off-to-the-side observers, newcomers, parents, teachers, staff	Primary	M

			and community agencies. Thematic analysis		
18. Waters, L. (2011). A review of school-based positive psychology interventions. Australian Educational and Developmental Psychologist, 28(2), 75-90.	2011 Australia (Global review)	To review school-based interventions that have been designed to foster student wellbeing and academic performance by following a positive psychology approach that seeks to cultivate positive emotions, resilience and positive character strengths	Review Sample = 12 current interventions Thematic analysis.	Primary & secondary	M
19. Weare, K., & Nind, M. (2011). Mental health promotion and problem prevention in schools: What does the evidence say? Health Promotion International, 26(Suppl. 1), i29-i69.	2011 UK (Global review)	To review evidence-based school mental health interventions.	Review of systematic reviews. Sample=52 systematic reviews Content & thematic analysis.	Primary & secondary	H
20. Wood, P. (2018). Social and emotional learning schemes as tools of cultural imperialism: A manifestation of the national and international child well-being agenda? Pastoral Care in Education, 36(3), 253-265. doi:10.1080/02643944.2018.1479350	2018 UK	To determine how staff members in primary schools in Britain understood and made use of SEL	Qualitative (part of MM study) Sample=44 Focus groups and semi-structured interviews (n=24) with teaching staff. Thematic analysis.	Primary	M

C.3 Audit trail from coding to theme development for the systematic literature review

Theme

Sub-theme

Coding

- Key components (red circle - deductive)

- **Aims (and ambiguities)**
  - Narrow scope ← Developing skills and knowledge ← SEL interventions
  - Wide scope ← Whole school change ← Mental health promotion
  - ← Positive psychology initiatives
  - Ambiguity ← Lack of definition
  - ← Terms used differently

- **Outcomes**
  - Measuring wellbeing
  - Other measures
  - Challenges ← Measuring wellbeing amongst subgroups of pupils

- **Approaches**
  - Top down
    - Fixed ← SEL
    - ← US practice
  - Bottom up ← Flexible ← MHP & PPI
    - ← Practice in Europe and Australia
  - Challenges for practice
  - Sustainable change

- **Content**
  - SEL
    - Training
    - Pre-packaged
  - MHP & PPI
    - Guiding frameworks
    - External facilitators
    - Parental involvement

Red outline denotes deductive coding/ theme development
Black outline denotes inductive coding / theme development

Appendix C

Theme	Sub-theme	Coding

Implementation practices

- Quality of implementation
  - Focus on implementation ← Lack of focus
  - Guidance and frameworks ← Process frameworks ← Bespoke / Adopting other frameworks
- Support
  - External facilitators ← Challenges ← Initial training / Ongoing support
  - School leadership
- Implementation fidelity
  - SEL ← Adherence to guidance
  - MHP & PPI ← Embedding in school life
  - Variation at classroom level

Influence of context

- Influence within school
  - Quality of training
  - Staff time constraints
  - Influence of attitudes
- External influence
  - Meso level ← Family backgrounds
  - Macro level ← Political change

Red outline denotes deductive coding/ theme development
Black outline denotes inductive coding / theme development

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Appendix D   Appendix to chapter five

D.1   Identified population of primary schools identified through the inclusion criteria

School	Region									Deprivation			Location		Ofsted Rating				School type					School size			% Pupils with English as an additional language		
	North East	North West	East Midlands	West Midlands	East of England	London	South East	South West	Yorkshire & Humber	High	Medium	Low	Urban	Rural	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Not available	Academy	Free School	Maintained	voluntary	Faith	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low
A						x				x			x		x						x			x			x		
B		x										x	x		x				x						x				x
C			x							x			x			x					x				x		x		
D		x								x			x			x			x					x					x
E	x									x			x			x					x				x				x
F							x			x			x			x					x				x				x
G						x					x		x			x					x			x			x		
H									x		x		x			x					x				x			x	
I		x									x		x		x						x			x			x		
J				x								x	x			x					x				x				x
K							x				x		x			x					x			x					x
L						x						x	x					x	x			x	x		x		x		
M							x					x	x		x				x					x			x		
N				x						x			x			x			x						x				x
O						x						x	x					x	x						x				x
P							x			x			x			x						x	x		x		x		
Q		x									x		x		x						x				x				x
R		x										x	x		x				x						x				x
S		x								x			x			x						x			x				x
T		x										x	x			x			x						x				x
U						x					x		x					x	x						x				x
V				x								x	x		x							x			x				x
W		x								x			x		x						x				x			x	
X				x								x		x		x						x	x		x				x
Y							x			x			x			x					x				x				x
Z			x									x	x			x					x				x				x
AA				x								x	x			x					x					x			x
AB							x					x	x				x		x						x				x
AC				x							x		x		x						x			x				x	
AD							x					x		x	x						x	x		x			x		x
AE							x				x			x		x					x	x			x				x
AF							x					x		x		x					x	x			x				x
AG		x									x		x		x										x				x
AH				x								x	x			x						x			x				x
AI		x										x	x		x				x					x					x
AJ						x						x		x		x					x				x				x
AK							x	x		x			x			x					x				x				x
AL		x										x	x			x					x				x				x
AM				x						x			x			x			x						x			x	
AN				x								x	x			x					x				x				x
AO						x						x	x			x			x					x					x
AP		x										x	x			x					x				x				x
AQ						x				x			x			x					x				x		x		
AR							x					x	x		x						x				x			x	
AS								x				x	x			x						x	x		x				x
AT		x										x	x			x						x	x		x				x
AU	x											x	x			x					x				x				x
AV		x								x			x				x				x				x			x	

Appendix D

Population by sampling criteria

School	Region									Deprivation			Location		Ofsted Rating				School type					School size			% Pupils with English as an additional language		
	North East	North West	East Midlands	West Midlands	East of England	London	South East	South West	Yorkshire & Humber	High	Medium	Low	Urban	Rural	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Not available	Academy	Free School	Maintained	voluntary	Faith	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low
AW				x							x		x			x					x					x	x		
AX		x										x	x			x					x					x			x
AY									x		x		x			x			x							x			x
AZ		x								x			x			x						x	x			x	x		
BA		x										x		x		x						x	x			x			x
BB			x								x			x		x					x					x			x
BC								x			x			x		x					x					x			x
BD		x								x			x			x						x	x			x	x		
BE			x									x		x			x				x				x				x
BF		x										x		x		x					x				x				x
BG		x								x			x		x						x			x			x		
BH			x								x		x			x					x				x				x
BI	x									x			x			x					x				x				x
BJ						x						x	x		x					x		x			x				x
BK						x						x		x		x					x	x			x				x
BL									x			x	x			x			x		x			x				x
BM		x									x		x			x					x				x		x		
BN				x								x	x			x					x				x		x		
BO								x		x			x				x		x						x				x
BP						x						x	x			x			x		x				x				x
BQ								x				x	x			x			x						x				x
BR			x									x	x		x				x					x				x
BS						x						x		x		x					x	x		x				x
BT		x										x	x			x					x	x		x				x
BU				x						x			x			x			x					x		x		
BV		x								x			x			x					x	x		x		x		
BW				x							x		x			x			x					x				x
BX	x											x	x		x					x			x				x
BY						x					x			x		x					x	x		x				x
BZ				x								x	x		x				x				x			x		
CA	x											x	x			x			x					x				x
CB			x								x			x		x					x			x				x
CC		x									x		x				x		x					x				x
CD								x			x		x			x			x					x				x
CE						x					x		x			x			x		x			x				x
CF		x								x			x			x			x					x			x	
CG				x								x	x			x					x			x				x
CH		x									x		x			x					x			x				x
CI								x			x		x			x					x				x			x	
CJ						x						x	x			x					x				x			x	
CK						x						x	x			x					x				x			x	
CL			x									x	x			x					x			x				x
CM						x						x	x			x					x	x		x			x		
CN			x							x			x			x			x					x		x		
CO			x							x			x				x		x					x		x		
CP		x									x		x			x					x	x		x				x
CQ			x								x		x			x			x					x				x
CR		x								x			x			x					x			x				x
CS						x						x	x			x			x					x				x
CT		x								x			x		x						x			x		x		
CU		x									x		x			x			x					x		x		
CV		x									x		x			x					x			x			x	
CW				x							x		x				x		x					x			x	
CX						x						x	x	x	x						x	x		x			x	
CY				x								x	x	x	x						x	x	x			x		
CZ								x				x	x	x					x							x			x
DA			x							x			x			x			x			x		x				x
DB			x									x	x		x						x			x				x
DC						x				x			x			x					x			x		x		
DD		x								x			x			x					x	x		x				x
DE						x					x		x			x					x			x			x	

	Population by sampling criteria																												
	Region									Deprivation			Location		Ofsted Rating				School type					School size			% Pupils with English as an additional language		
School	North East	North West	East Midlands	West Midlands	East of England	London	South East	South West	Yorkshire & Humber	High	Medium	Low	Urban	Rural	Outstanding	Good	Requires Improvement	Not available	Academy	Free School	Maintained	voluntary	Faith	High	Medium	Low	High	Medium	Low
DF				x						x			x			x			x					x					x
DG						x				x			x			x					x				x		x		
DH								x				x	x		x				x				x		x				x
DI			x									x	x		x						x			x					x
DJ						x					x		x			x					x			x				x	
DK						x					x		x			x					x				x		x		
DL			x							x			x			x					x				x		x		
DM				x							x		x			x			x				x		x		x		
DN		x										x	x			x						x	x		x		x		
DO							x			x			x			x					x			x				x	
DP		x									x		x			x					x			x					x
DQ					x						x		x			x			x					x					x
DR			x							x			x			x					x			x			x		
DS		x										x	x		x							x	x					x	
DT								x				x		x		x						x	x		x				x
DU			x									x	x			x						x	x		x				x
DV		x									x			x		x						x	x			x			x
DW						x					x		x		x						x			x				x	
DX								x				x	x		x				x									x	
DY						x				x			x			x			x					x				x	
DZ						x						x	x		x							x	x	x				x	
EA							x				x		x			x			x					x				x	
EB						x					x		x			x					x				x			x	
EC					x							x	x		x						x				x				x
ED						x					x		x		x						x				x		x		
EE						x						x	x		x						x			x				x	

D.2 Sample of 26 English primary schools identified through the sampling strategy

See appendix **Error! Reference source not found.** for a full description of the stratified sampling strategy.

School F	
School K	School BF
School N	School BH
School S	School BV
School V	School BX
School X	School CQ
School Y	School CU
School AJ	School DA
School AK	School DB
School AO	School DC
School AW	School DH
School AY	School DI
School BC	School DK
	School EE

D.3 Characteristics of the stratified sample

The characteristics of the sample of 26 English primary schools were compared with all English primary schools to investigate how representative they were of the whole.

Region

Four schools were located in the East Midlands region, two schools in the East of England, five schools in London, one in the North East, four schools in the North West, three in the South East, three schools in the South West, two in the West Midlands and two schools in Yorkshire and Humberside. Table 1 identifies that the East Midlands and London are each overrepresented in the sample by 5% and 8% respectively. In contrast, the East of England is under presented by 4% and West Midlands by 3%. However, these are relatively small differences and it can be considered that the sample is broadly in line with the distribution of English primary schools by region (see figure 1).

Table 1: A comparison of the sample, study population and total number of primary schools by region

Education region	Primary schools in sample	Total number of primary schools
East Midlands	4 (15%)	1775 (10%)
East of England	2 (8%)	1768 (12%)
London	5 (19%)	1995 (11%)
North East	1 (4%)	861 (5%)
North West	4 (15%)	2446 (15%)
South East	3 (12%)	1817 (15%)
South West	3 (12%)	2597 (11%)
West Midlands	2 (8%)	1634 (11%)
Yorkshire & Humber	2 (8%)	1873 (10%)
Total	26	16766 (100%)

Figure 1: A comparison of sample schools versus all English primary schools by region (%)

A comparison of sample schools versus all English primary schools by region (%)
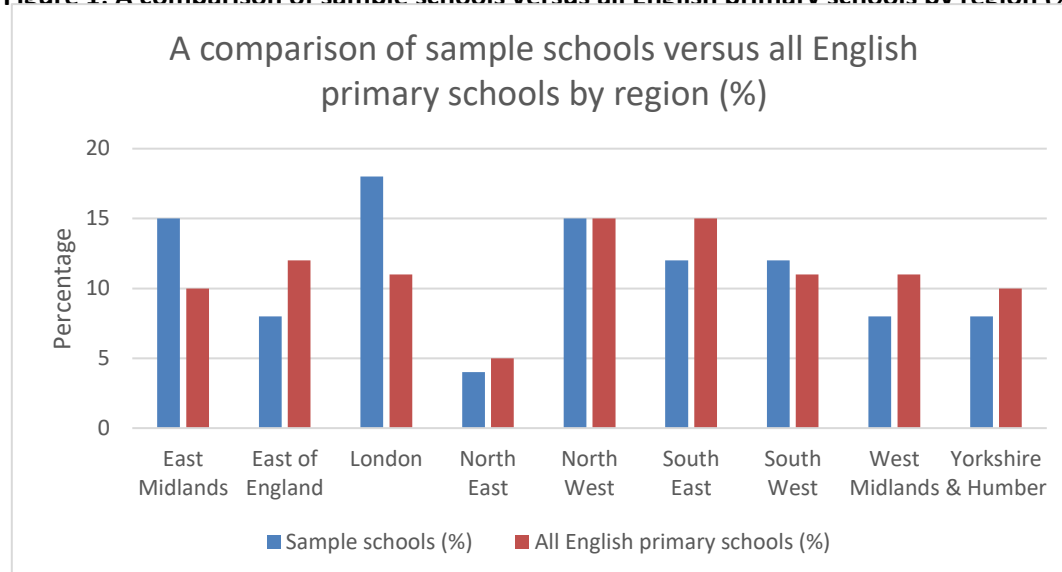
Location

Twenty-two school was categorised as urban and four schools as rural. Urban schools accounted for 85% of the sample compared with a national average of 80% amongst all English primary schools.

School type

The greatest proportion of schools were maintained (14 schools), eight schools had academy status, three were voluntary and one was a free school (see Table 2). Of the 26 schools, five were faith schools, either Church of England or Catholic religions, of these three were voluntary controlled or aided and two had academy status.

Table 2: Sample schools by type compared with all English primary school

School type	Total English primary schools (DfE 2018)	Total %	Sample schools	Sample %
Maintained (Community & foundation)	7349	43.8	14	53.9
Academy (minus free schools)	4440	26.5	8	30.8
Voluntary aided / controlled	4825	28.8	3	11.5
Free schools	152	0.9	1	3.8
Total	16766	100		100

The sample was broadly in line with the national profile of school types although the sample had a higher proportion of maintained schools, 53.9% compared with a national total of 43.8% of all schools. Conversely, the sample had fewer schools of a voluntary type (11.5%) compared with the national percentage of 28.8% of all schools being voluntary by nature (see figures 2 and 3).

Figure 2: A comparison of sample schools versus all English primary schools by type
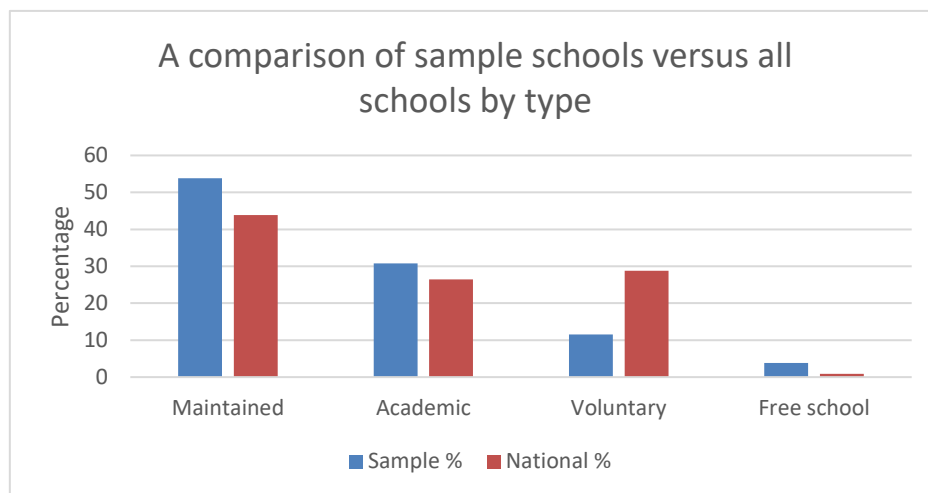
Figure 3: Sample schools by school type (N=26)
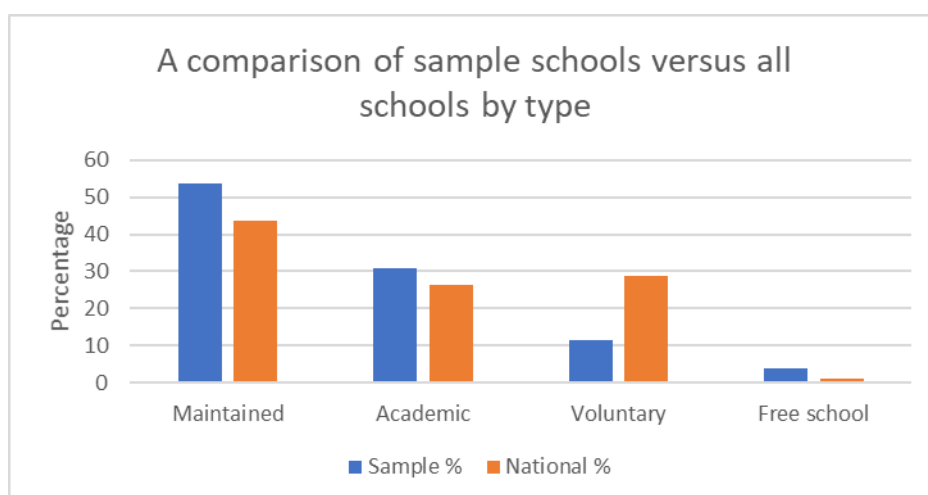
School size

Appendix D

The number of pupils in the sample primary schools ranged from 91 to 966, with a mean of 351 pupils. One school is omitted from these results as it reported a total school size from 3 to 18 years, so the number of pupils for the primary school was unobtainable. Of the twenty-five remaining schools eleven schools (44%) had fewer than 250 pupils, seven schools (28%) had between 250 and 450 pupils and a further seven schools (28%) had over 450 pupils.

DfE (2019) reports that English primary schools have an average of 282 pupils. The sample mean is 351, suggesting that schools within the sample are larger than the national average. School EE has 966 pupils which skews the sample mean, however even when this result is omitted the sample mean is 325 pupils. Therefore, it can be concluded that number of pupils represented in the sample schools is larger than typically found in English primary schools (see figure 4). Eleven schools in the sample are smaller than the English average of 282 pupils and fourteen schools are larger (one school was omitted as data could not be obtained).
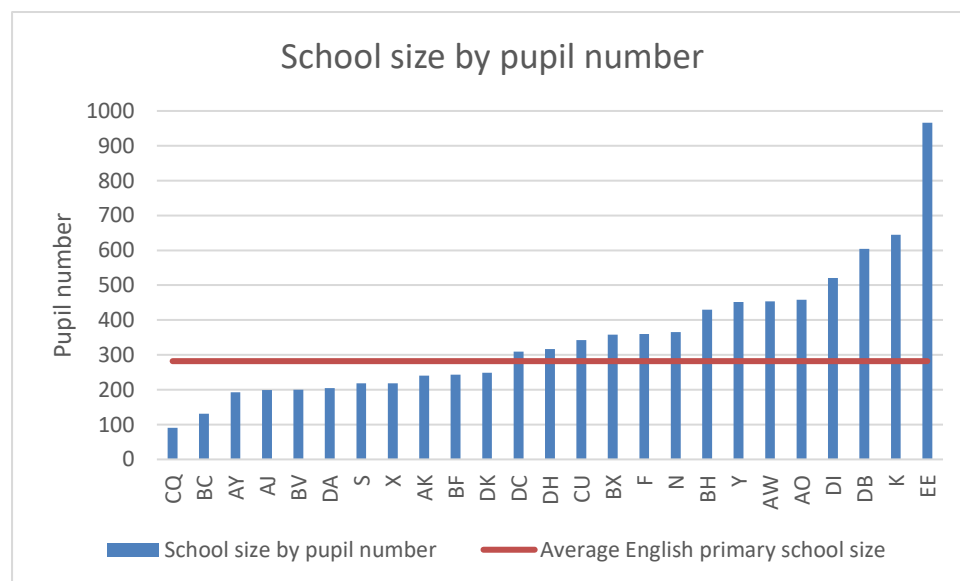
Pupil demographics

Percentage of pupils receiving free school meals

As it commonly used, the level of pupils from economically disadvantaged families was measured through the percentage of children receiving free school meals (FSM). The average across all English

primary schools is 23%. Percentages ranged from 6% to 59% in the sample, with a mean of 23.6% in line with the national average. Fourteen schools had a smaller FSM % than average and twelve schools had more children than average receiving free school meals.

% of pupils receiving free school meals
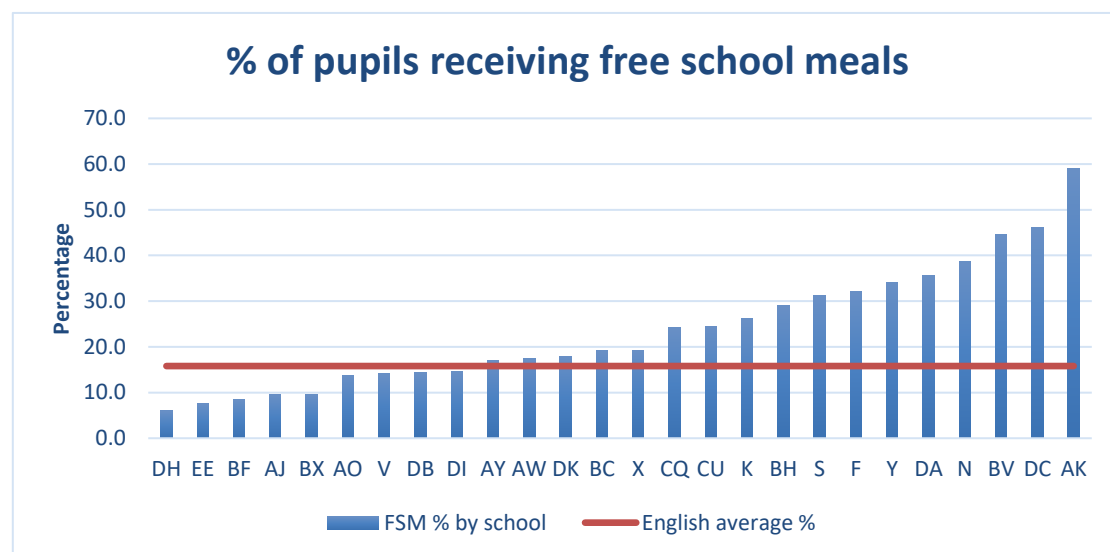
Using the categorisation in the sampling strategy, eight schools (30%) fell in the high category, nine schools (35%) in the medium category and nine schools (35%) in the low category.

Percentage of pupils for whom English is an additional language

The percentage of children where English is an additional language (EAL) was selected as a measure of cultural and ethnic diversity within schools. Amongst the sample this ranged from 0% to 74.8%, with a sample mean of 14.5%. This was below the average for all English primary schools of 21.2%. Nineteen schools in the sample fell below this average for all primary schools, with seven schools above average.

% of pupils with English as an additional language
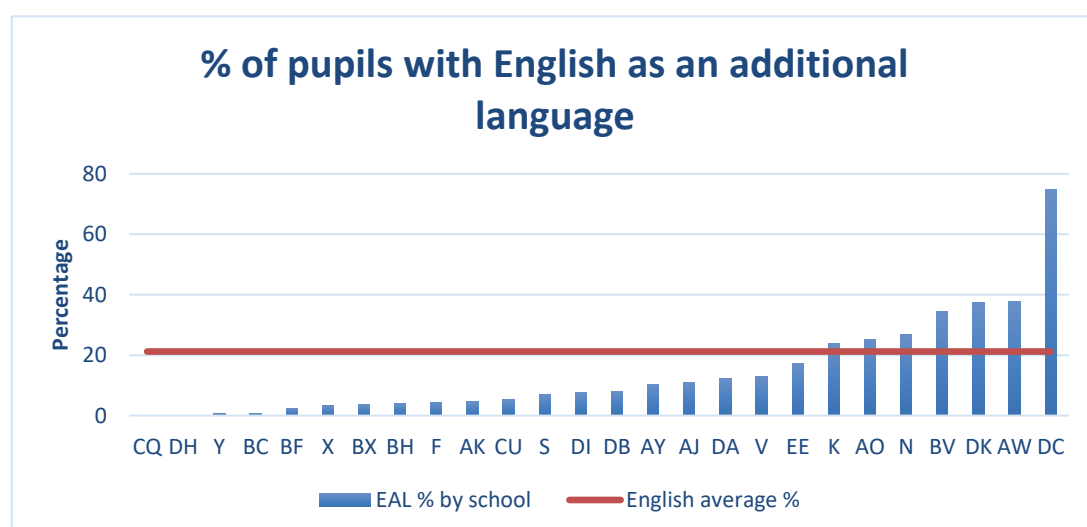
Appendix D

Using the categorisation in the sampling strategy

Ofsted rating

Six schools within the sample had received an outstanding rating in their latest Ofsted report. Nineteen schools, equating to 73% of the sample, received good as a rating and one school was reported as requiring improvement. These results are broadly in line with the 2020 government statistics for all schools (see table below).

Ofsted rating	Schools in sample	Sample rating (%)	National rating 2020 (%)
Outstanding	6	23	19
Good	19	73	67
Requires improvement	1	4	10
Inadequate	-	-	4
Total	26	100	100

Sample schools by Ofsted rating
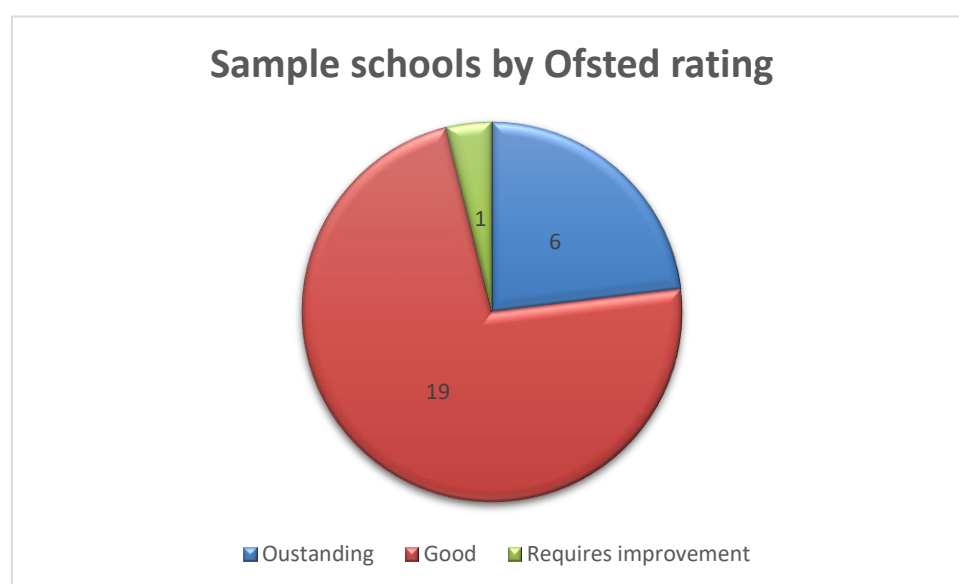
D.3.1 Twelve schools selected for the qualitative analysis

A purposive sample of twelve schools was used for the qualitative analysis. The rationale being that used a diverse selection of approaches to whole-school wellbeing promotion. The table below also demonstrates the diversity of school characteristics within this sample, ensuring the analysis considers the topic in a variety of school settings.

The sample size was chosen to provide both a comprehensive exploration and a manageable volume of data.

School	Location	School size	School type	Faith school	FSM%	EAL%	Ofsted rating	Location	Rationale for selection
AO	South East	Large	Academy	No	Low	Medium	Good	Urban	Peaceful school, meta-cognition, growth mindset
AW	London	Small	Maintained	No	Medium	High	Good	Urban	Used educational consultant to develop a five year school vision
AY	Yorks & Humber	Small	Academy	No	Medium	Low	Good	Urban	Values-led and character learning
BF	North West	Small	Maintained	No	Low	Low	Good	Rural	Rest easy approach, calm space, direct quoting from pupils
BV	North West	Small	Voluntary	Yes	High	Low	Good	Urban	Local authority approach to wellbeing, Zippy's Friends (popular SEL programme)
BX	North East	Medium	Maintained	No	Low	Low	Outstanding	Urban	Wellbeing award for schools (WAS), focus on outdoor learning
DC	London	Medium	Maintained	No	High	High	Good	Urban	Philosophy for wellbeing, MindUp, zones of regulation
DI	East of England	Large	Maintained	No	Low	Low	Outstanding	Urban	PATHs hub school, uses Thrive
EE	London	Large	Maintained	No	Low	High	Outstanding	Urban	Values-based education, uses Thrive
F	South East	Medium	Maintained	No	High	Low	Good	Urban	Primary school of the year, 2015 (TES). Risk-taking, outdoor learning
N	East of England	Medium	Academy	No	High	Medium	Good	Urban	Happiest primary school in Britain (2019), Carnegie award for excellence in mental health (Gold)
S	North West	Small	Voluntary	Yes	High	Low	Good	Urban	AcSEED award for commitment to emotional wellbeing and mental health

D.4   Illustration of a raw dataset using School N as an example

D.4.1   Data extracts from Gov.UK Primary school statistics website
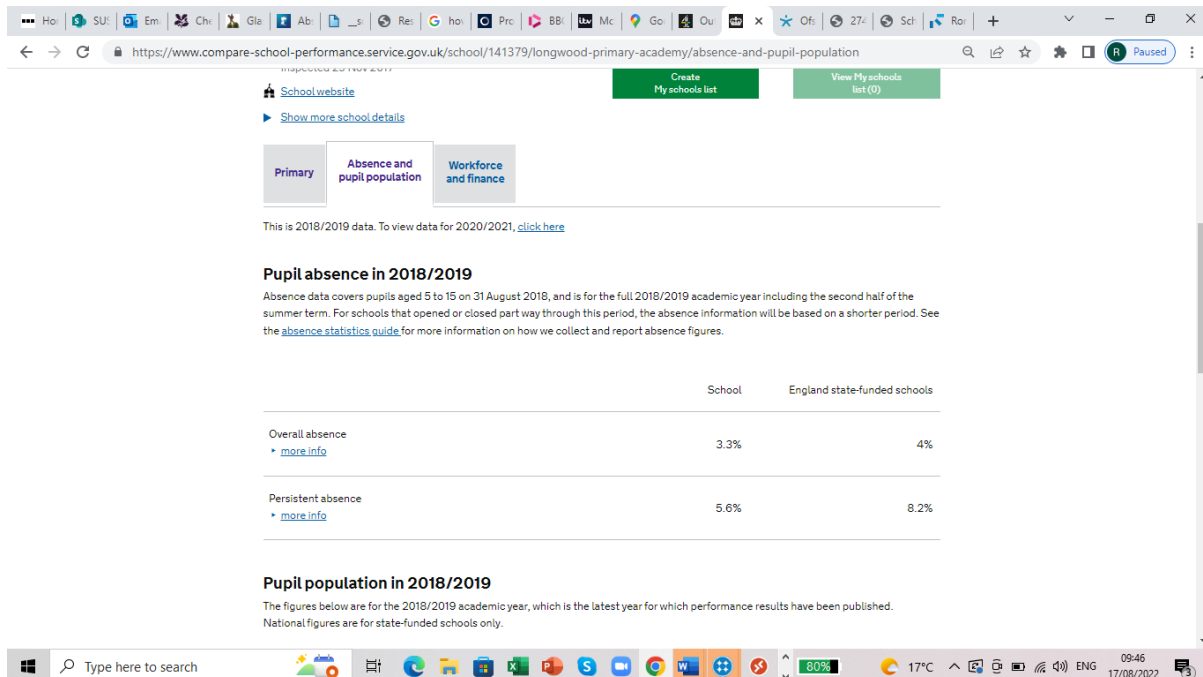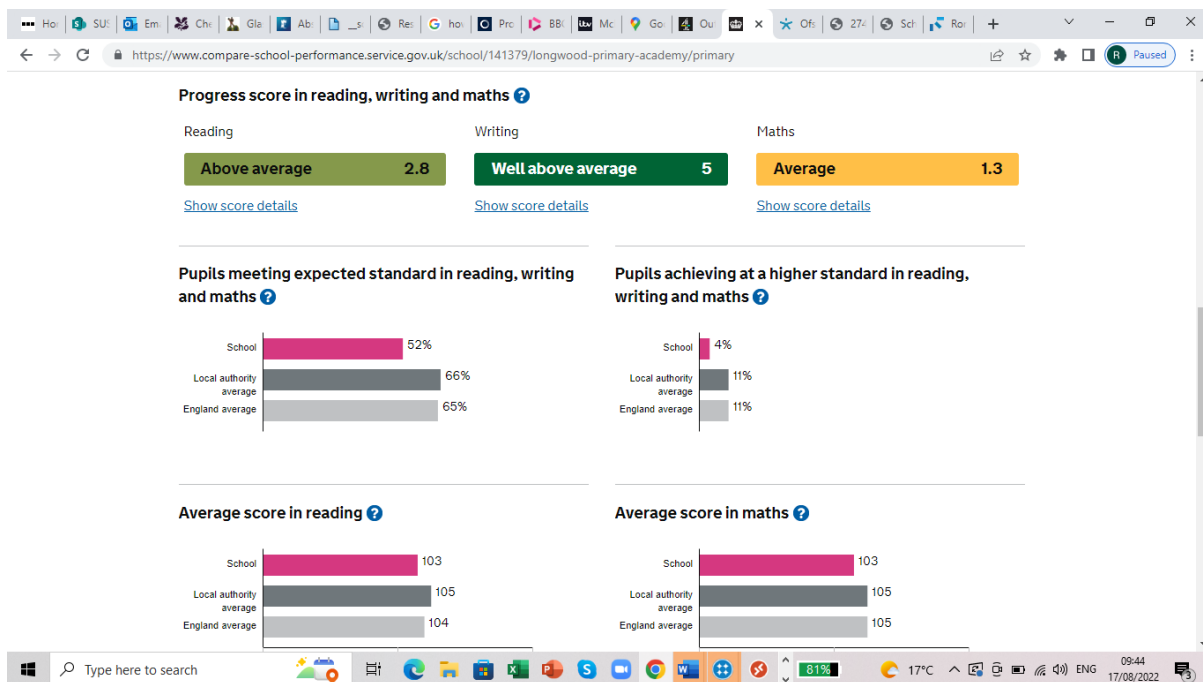
Pupil population in 2018/2019

The figures below are for the 2018/2019 academic year, which is the latest year for which performance results have been published. National figures are for state-funded schools only.

	School	England – mainstream primary schools
Total number of pupils on roll (all ages)	365	4727089
Girls on roll	49.6%	49%
Boys on roll	50.4%	51%
Pupils with an SEN Education, Health and Care Plan	1.6%	1.6%
Pupils with SEN Support	13.4%	12.6%
Pupils whose first language is not English	26.8%	21.2%
Pupils eligible for free school meals at any time during the past 6 years	38.6%	23%

About this data

You should be cautious comparing absence figures over time, as full academic year absence figures are only available for 2013 to 2014 onwards. In previous years absence data was based on the autumn and spring terms only.

	School	England primary schools 2018/19
Teachers:		
Total number · more info	22	260,096
Number of full-time equivalents · more info	21.5	231,728
Pupil to teacher ratio · more info	16.5	20.7
Average salary per full-time equivalent · more info	£31,620	£38,369
Teaching assistants:		
Total number · more info	13	274,954
Number of full-time equivalents · more info	10.2	178,546
Support staff:		
Total number · more info	3	91,158
Number of full-time equivalents · more info	2.7	61494.7

D.4.2   Ofsted inspection letter - extract

Personal development, behaviour and welfare Outstanding Personal development and welfare ν The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. ν Very nearly all parents agree that their child is happy in school. The school monitors the progress and welfare of all

its pupils, especially those entitled to pupil premium funding and children looked after. Pupils are exceptionally well cared for and feel safe. Bullying is very rare and pupils, staff and parents are confident that it would be effectively and quickly sorted out should it occur. Parents agree and one told inspectors, 'The school's focus on emotional intelligence and building social skills is hugely beneficial to my child.' ν Pupils are very aware of fundamental British values. Democracy is exemplified to pupils by involving them in decision making. Pupils challenge the term 'tolerance' as being too negative and actively celebrate difference. Work in pupils' books shows that they are aware of different faiths and Year 5 pupils have an appreciation of the warning signs of modern slavery. ν The school strongly promotes pupils' physical well-being. Pupils understand how to stay healthy. The school achieved 'healthy schools' and the 'school games silver award' last year. The 'gold award' is being assessed this year. All pupils participate in the 'daily mile' run. ν There are excellent home-school links through the family support worker. Her work enables teachers to focus on teaching and communicating with parents on educational matters. ν Pupils understand and can weigh up different views respecting difference. This was demonstrated through work in pupils' books. For example, some Year 5 pupils were able to write about the case for and against Catalonian independence from Spain, using sophisticated arguments to come to reasoned judgements. ν The careers fair and enterprise activities contribute well to preparing pupils for life as consumers, producers and citizens. This helps to raise pupils' aspirations, setting them up to do well at secondary school. ν Pupils are proud of their school. They wear their uniform smartly. They present their work well. Pupils are very polite and courteous to visitors and to one another. Behaviour ν The behaviour of pupils is outstanding Pupils work very well together and their behaviour plays an important role in the success of lessons. Pupils respond quickly and positively to teachers. For example, pupils respond immediately to the whistle indicating the end of morning break. Any low-level disruption is very rare. ν Before and after school, and at break and lunchtimes, pupils get on well together. Their conduct is exemplary. They are polite and welcoming to visitors and engage courteously in conversation, often instigating it. ν Exclusions are now rare and much reduced from the excessively high levels when the MAT took over the school. Pupils new to the school sometimes fall short of the high standards required by the school. Leaders work with these pupils to ensure that misbehaviour is not repeated. ν There have been very effective systems to improve attendance put in place over the last two years. These are implemented with consistency. As a result, attendance has improved sharply and is now at least in line with other primary schools. This is true of all groups of pupils. ν Very nearly all parents agree that behaviour is managed well.

School N

Welcome

Welcome to Xxxxxx Primary Academy and Nursery – a school that provides children with an inspirational learning experience.

Since opening in January 2015, we have developed a thriving, successful community where children's voices are heard and their interests nurtured. We are proud of our academic results and our achievements. The challenging curriculum we provide for all pupils is unique and, as you will see, something that builds lifelong character and resilience – in preparation for the workplace.

The recent Ofsted inspection verified that we are a **Good School with Outstanding 'Leadership and Management' AND 'Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare'. They reported the following in November 2017:**

The quality of teaching has improved markedly and the quality of care and contribution to pupils' well-being is excellent.

Parents are remarkably positive about all aspects of the school and very nearly all would recommend it. The reputation of the school has risen and, as a result, pupil numbers are increasing.

The school's work to provide care and support to enable pupils to flourish is exemplary.

There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities at the beginning and end of the school day, contributing to the school's 'the mind, body and soul experience'.

The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.

The school strongly promotes pupils' physical well-being. Pupils understand how to stay healthy.

Our building, constantly evolving like our learners, provides an exceptional learning environment. Our pupils, taking pride in all they do and displaying excellent behaviour and attitudes to their learning, are a credit to our outstanding and committed staff.

I am proud of the school and the consistent efforts and initiative used to provide the very best opportunities for the children of our school. Our 70 things at Xxxxxx is designed to give your child not only an education to scaffold their future but experiences that shape them as a strong person, belonging to something special.

Our wellbeing system, coupled with high quality teaching in pursuit of academic excellence, provides children with a place in which they can thrive as individuals – feeling safe and secure.

We know that providing a child with the building blocks very early on is fundamental to their success. Our outstanding Early Years facilities are designed to ensure the best possible outcomes before starting Year 1.

Appendix D

Visits to the school are encouraged – our door is always open. I look forward to meeting you and working with you, together enabling your child to look towards bright future.

xxxxxxxxx
Head of School, Xxxxxx Primary Academy and Nursery

Awards and Achievements

Xxxxxx has regional and national recognition for focusing on the wellbeing, behaviour, attitudes and personal development of our pupils:

HAPPIEST PRIMARY SCHOOL IN BRITAIN - Winner 2019 (National Happiness Awards)
- Place2Be Primary Community - Winner 2019 (Place2Be biennial awards)
- TES National Employer of the Year - Winner 2018
- TES National Healthy School of the Year - Finalist 2018 and 2019
- GOLD status for Mental Health and Wellbeing – 2nd primary school in UK (The Carnegie Centre of Excellence for Mental Health in Schools) 2018
- GOLD status for competitive sports (School Games Mark)
- GOLD status for Anti-Bullying (Anti-bullying Alliance) 2018
- Outstanding Leadership and Management – Ofsted 2017
- Outstanding Personal Development, Behaviour and Welfare – Ofsted 2017

- Enhanced Healthy School Status (Healthy Schools) 2018
- Outstanding Contribution to Emotional Health and Wellbeing 2017 and 2018 (Healthy Schools - Essex)
- Attachment Aware School (Essex Virtual Schools) 2018
- Place2Be Child Champion - Winner 2016 (Place2Be biennial awards)
- Place2Be Primary Community - Finalist (Highly Commended) 2016

Under learning and more

Curriculum
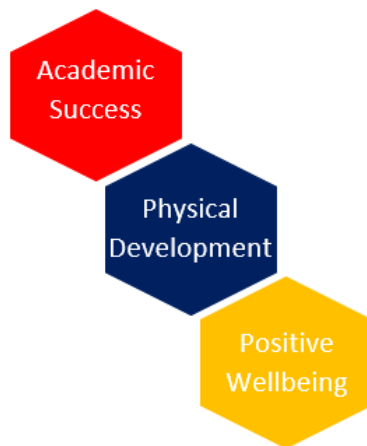
At Xxxxxx we believe that the development of a person into becoming a successful adult starts when they are very young. Our Mind-Body-Soul approach focuses on three aspects to becoming 'life ready', shaping the future of individuals.

Academic Success

Our rich knowledge-based curriculum means that pupils gain essential knowledge and have the opportunity to be experts in every su**bject.**

Knowledge to be taught each term is shared with pupils and parents at the beginning of the term through a Factfile. This knowledge can be 'quizzed' multiple times in a low pressure, high expectation environment to maximise progress.

Expertise is developed through skills- pupils will understand what it means to be a geographer, historian, scientist, writer, mathematician etc... and work on this throughout their time at Xxxxxx.

See our curriculum here.
Xxxxxx Long term Plan 2019-2020

Physical Development

Our specialist PE and sports team provide in-house physical development lessons where pupils have access to a wide range of equipment including:

- Archery
- Indoor Traversing Climbing Wall
- Boccia
- Curling stones
- Gymnastics Vaults

In addition to formal lessons with a specialist teacher we run 'Get Up Get Going', sporting excellence clubs, exposure opportunities and more. During social times pupils increase their physical development throughout organised games and free use of equipment.

The Pupil Athlete Pathway

Curriculum · Participation · Competition · Leadership

Exposure

Development

Performance
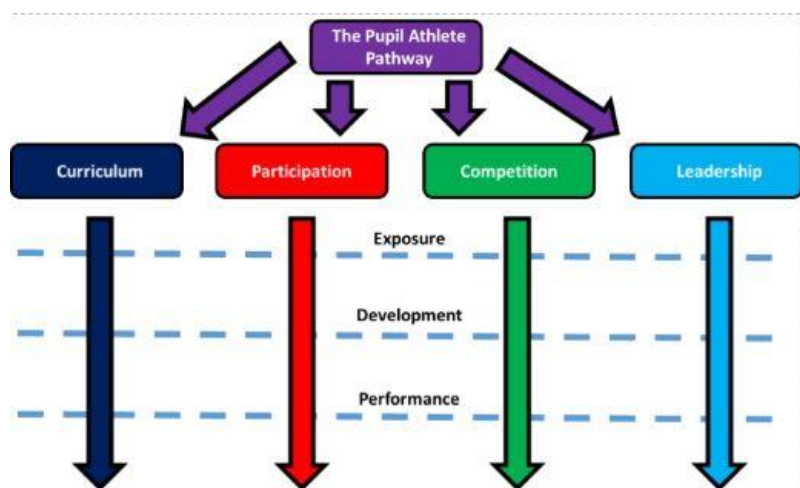
The Pupil Athlete Pathway is designed to enhance the Physical Education based experiences of pupils at Xxxxxx, both within and external to the PE Curriculum.
The Pupil Athlete Pathway is underpinned by the principles that sport should be accessible for all our pupils and that different pupils need to experience PE at different levels, or for different reasons whether this be for positive mental well being, a love of sport or the desire to compete and lead.
Ranging from exposure to new sports and participating in extra-curricular clubs to playing for a school team or refereeing a tournament, as part of the Pupil Athlete Pathway our pupils are given the opportunity to experience new concepts, develop their knowledge and progress their understanding to levels of greater depth that they can take beyond their time at Xxxxxx.

Positive Wellbeing

At Xxxxxx, pupils develop the tools for positive wellbeing, resilience and character development. We do this through our MBS (Mind-Body-Soul) Toolkit. The MBS Toolkit is a bank of whole school/phase approaches that can enhance a school's ethos and direction for the wellbeing of pupils. It facilitates the development of positive wellbeing whilst supporting an acknowledgement that physical development helps to enhance a healthy mindset. In turn, this enables the creation of a positive and proactive zone for wellbeing thus enabling those who are more vulnerable every chance grow more resilient and positive in their approach to everyday things. The 26 units include:

- 70 Things at Xxxxxx – 70 character developing and childhood defining experiences.
- An extensive Life Skills programme – from nursery to Y6 we have defined 80 key life skills to master.
- Online surgeries – supporting pupils with online problems and queries.
- Mr and Little Miss Successful – enabling pupils to define and identify success in themselves and others.
- It's Okay – developing a strong inner voice using 'It's okay…' as a sentence starter.
- Musicology Corridors – music filling the corridors to create a calming atmosphere across
- the school.
- Children's Charter – pupils defining their own sanctions for unwanted behaviours through a democratic process.

Curriculum Plans

Under Learning and more menu

Mind, Body and Soul Toolkit

At Xxxxxx, we are proud to be recognised for being one of the UK's best schools for wellbeing. We have been recently awarded:

- **TES National Employer of the Year 2018**

- **Place2Be Primary Community of 2019**

- **Happiest School of 2019 (finalists - TOP 4 in UK)**

- **Healthy School of the Year (2018 and 2019 finalists)**

(for more awards and achievements - please visit our awards page)

One of the key ingredients to our success is the Mind, Body and Soul (MBS) Toolkit. This is formed by a range of whole school strategies enabling children to thrive emotionally and socially.

We know that if we (and all parents) had one wish, it would be this:

'I just want them to be happy'

At Xxxxxx this is our main priority - lifelong happiness and achievement. Below is an outline of the MBS Toolkit.

Use relevant units to personalise your offer to children

MBS Toolkit©

Developing Mind, Body and Soul in Education

Area of Development	MBS UNITS			
Physical Development	Daily Mile	Boot Camp	Healthy Living	MBS Sports Experience
Atmospherical Philosophy	Zones of Regulation	Operation Longwood	Musicology Corridors	BAHAMAS
Safety and Guidance	Online Surgeries	Star Snappers	Wellbeing Advocates	Children's Charter
Aspiration and Focus	Mr and Little Miss	Bigger Buddies	Children's Health Project	Career Workshops
Character/Wider Experiences	70 Things	Life Skills	Leadership Programme	Brilliant Books
Child-based Realisation	The Media Bank	It's Okay...	Kenny Approach	The Book Shed
Attendance	VIP passes	Attendance Stars	Class Challenge	Weekly Wonders

70 Things at Xxxxxx

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.

Mark Twain

At Xxxxxx Primary, we believe that every child should have fantastic childhood experiences. We looked at over 300 activities that children could do, talked to our pupils and added in our own experiences too! At Xxxxxx, we are about more that great academic

results – we want to give your children experiences to cherish and to help develop happy, interesting individuals. Here are our 70 things at Xxxxxx that all children will experience between Reception and Year 6.

1. Have a picnic
2. Play in the sand
3. Bake a cake
4. Play an instrument
5. Perform a poem
6. Camp out in the wild
7. Make and fly a kite
8. Play conkers
9. Make something and sell it
10. Create some wild art
11. Jump over waves

12. Pick some fruit
13. Visit a farm
14. Go stargazing
15. Hold a scary beast
16. Hunt for bugs
17. Find some frogspawn
18. Track wild animals
19. Discover what is in a pond
20. Make a home for a wild animal
21. Bring up a butterfly
22. Catch a crab
23. Go on a nature walk at night
24. Plant it, grow it, eat it
25. Paddle in the sea
26. Go birdwatching
27. Find your way with a map and compass
28. Try rock climbing
29. Cook on a campfire
30. Take part in a team building activity
31. Have a speaking part in a play
32. Learn a new language
33. Eat a meal in a restaurant
34. Go to the theatre
35. Have a story published
36. Spend time at a university
37. Hold a position of responsibility in the school
38. Visit a place of worship
39. Try foods from around the world
40. Have a penpal
41. Learn basic first aid skills
42. Work with a senior citizen
43. Write to the Prime Minister
44. Go on a trip away for more than two nights
45. Have a water fight
46. Do something for charity
47. Join a school club
48. Visit a museum
49. Talk to professionals from a range of industries

50. Watch a chick hatch
51. Perform at the O2
52. Build a den/fort
53. Dress as an historical figure
54. Learn a song in sign language
55. See art work displayed in an exhibition
56. Grow vegetables
57. Learn martial arts
58. Cook a vegetarian meal
59. Make a mud pie
60. Take part in a puppet show
61. Learn to write in Mandarin
62. Race Pooh sticks
63. Take part in a mini Olympics
64. Create giant art
65. Make and fly aeroplanes
66. Take part in forest school
67. Learn origami
68. Learn a song in a different language
69. Take part in a spelling bee
70. Navigate your way around London underground

Life Skills Programme

Our Life Skills Challenge ensures that all pupils leave Xxxxxx with the necessary independence, skills and understanding to move to secondary school with confidence.

Life Skills Programme

Nursery

1. I can say please and thank you
2. I can tidy up my classroom
3. I can show I am sorry
4. I can share with others
5. I can wash my hands after I have been to the toilet
6. I can sit on the carpet
7. I can use the toilet independently
8. I can clean my teeth twice a day
9. I can describe how I am feeling
10. I can begin to hold a pencil

Reception

1. I can use a knife and fork
2. I can dress myself
3. I can help set the table
4. I can write my name
5. I can take care of a living thing
6. I can work in a team
7. I can clear my plate
8. I can name a range of fruits and vegetables

9. I can hold a pencil accurately
10. I can take part in daily exercise

Year 1

1. I can describe what makes a healthy meal
2. I can brush my hair
3. I know when my birthday is
4. I can pay someone a compliment
5. I have fire safety awareness
6. I can describe how someone else is feeling
7. I can make a phone call
8. I know when my birthday is
9. I know how to cross a road safely
10. I can practise reading everyday

Year 2

1. I can make a sandwich
2. I know my left and right
3. I know how to keep safe around strangers
4. I know my address
5. I know how to make an emergency phone call
6. I can point to where I live on a world map
7. I can dress appropriately for the weather
8. I can talk about different religions
9. I can use table manners
10. I can set myself a target.

Year 3

1. I can measure using the appropriate equipment
2. I can tie my shoelace
3. I can give reasons for a vote
4. I can wrap a present
5. I can bring my homework in on time
6. I can check the weather forecast
7. I can carry out research using a search engine
8. I can teach something to someone else
9. I know how many days there are in each month of the year
10. I can use a dictionary

Year 4

1. I can read a map
2. I can calculate the change from £1.00, £5.00 and £10.00
3. I can give directions
4. I can write and post a letter
5. I can swim a length
6. I can follow a recipe
7. I can say hello, thank you and goodbye in three other languages
8. I can read a bus timetable
9. I can tell the time on an analogue and digital clock
10. I can play a tune on an instrument

Year 5

1. I can speak publicly
2. I can type 25 words a minute on a computer
3. I can send an email
4. I can take part in a democratic vote
5. I can fill in an application form
6. I can prepare for an interview
7. I can use a compass
8. I can order food at a restaurant
9. I can covert currency
10. I can raise money for a charity

Year 6

1. I can make a cup of tea
2. I can give a presentation
3. I can make and sell something
4. I have an awareness of basic first aid
5. I can ride a bike safely
6. I can find out about a range of careers
7. I understand how to get into higher education
8. I have an understanding of drug and alcohol misuse
9. I understand the changes that happen during puberty
10. I can tie a tie

Under pupil voice menu

Pupil Advocates

At Xxxxxx we strive for the best by involving the whole community, including pupils, in our continuous school improvement.

Pupil Advocates are a group of individuals in year 6 who work closely with SLT to promote, monitor, evaluate and improve all aspects of our school. They are chosen through a rigorous application process. They write a letter of application based on a job description and then are invited to interview with members of the SLT. If successful they take up the post for the whole of year 6. They are identifiable by the blazers that they wear as additional uniform. Two exceptionable candidates are named as Head Boy and Head Girl, they lead the Pupil Advocate Team.

School Council

The school council at Xxxxxx is group of students who are democratically elected to represent the views of all pupils and to improve our school. They write speeches to persuade voters and every pupil then votes for their favourite.

The School Council meet to discuss and improve. They:

- Have regular meetings
- Have good communication between each other and their class
- Partake in training for school council members

Sports Leaders

 At the beginning of each year Sports Council candidates, to be leaders in PE, apply for the role to Mr Bailey. They are then chosen based on the strength of their application. Successful members of Sports Council then complete the Playmakers Award

Play Leaders

During their time in upper key stage two every child will have the opportunity to be a Play Leader. They will organise, facilitate and lead activities during lunchtime, under the guidance of Mr Bailey. This experience gives them the opportunity to use their leadership skills learnt in PE lessons including fair gamesmanship.

D.5 Theme development for qualitative analysis of the secondary data

D.5.1 Audit trail from coding to theme development for section 5.3.1.2

Theme | **Sub-theme** | **Aggregated codes** | **Second iteration** | **Initial codes (1st iteration)**

Scope and timeframes

Scope for wellbeing
- Integration into all aspects of school life
  - Considering wellbeing in all aspects of school life
    - Wellbeing policies and curricula
    - Adopting evidence-based wellbeing practice
- Community wellbeing through social interactions
  - Wellbeing for the whole community
  - Culture for wellbeing
    - Culture for happiness
    - Encouraging respect
    - Embracing uniqueness

Timeframe: short-term vs lifelong
- Wellbeing in school
  - Promoting skills and knowledge
    - Skills for emotional health
    - Skills & knowledge for wellbeing
    - Developing healthy minds
  - Starting young
- Foundations for lifelong wellbeing
  - Foundations for successful adulthood
    - Skills for lifelong wellbeing
    - Developing transferrable skills
    - Facilitating life experiences

Theme | **Sub-theme** | **Aggregated codes** | **Second iteration** | **Initial codes (1st iteration)**

The relationship between learning and wellbeing

Learning and wellbeing as key school goals
- Strategic approaches for integrating learning and wellbeing
  - Integrating learning and wellbeing
    - Evidence-based approaches
  - Holistic development
    - Whole-child approach
    - Focussing on multiple domains of child development

Interdependence between learning and wellbeing
- Benefits of wellbeing for learning
  - Supporting pupils' social, emotional and psychological domains
    - Readiness to learn
    - Skills & knowledge for wellbeing
    - Promoting a culture for wellbeing
  - Promoting personal development
- Strategies which promote learning and wellbeing simultaneously
  - Skills & knowledge which benefit learning and wellbeing
    - Building resilience
    - Supporting risk-taking
    - Facilitating problem-solving
    - Promoting self-evaluation and reflection
  - Values and strengths led learning

Theme | Sub-theme | Aggregated codes | Codes

Caring

- Developing a culture of care
  - Developing culture through social interactions
    - Embracing individuality
    - Promoting respect
  - Developing a caring approach
    - Philosophical underpinnings
    - Promoting religious values
  - Promoting care through a shared language of wellbeing
- Empowering pupils through self-care
  - Facilitating self-knowledge and self-reflection
    - Facilitating self-knowledge and self-reflection
  - Providing opportunities for applying skills and knowledge
    - Building & maintaining friendships
    - Providing periods for self-reflection
- Opportunities to promote caring and nurturing
  - Caring for the school community
  - Caring for animals
    - Caring for animals
  - Caring for the environment
    - Gardening
    - Eco activities and recycling

D.5.2   Audit trail from coding to theme development for section 5.3.2.2

Theme | Sub-theme | Aggregated codes | Codes

Pupil voice

- Raising issues
  - Feeling listened to
    - Staff listening to pupils
    - Non-judgement in interactions
  - Sense of safety
    - Pupil-teacher interactions
  - Non-verbal communication
    - Worry boxes
    - Classroom worry monsters
    - School wellbeing assembly
- Feedback on whole-school wellbeing promotion
  - Discussions for wellbeing
  - Feedback from pupils
    - Learning walks
    - Encouraging feedback
- Peer to peer voice
  - Peer to peer feedback
    - Pupil mentors
    - Pupil champions

D.5.3 Audit trail from coding to theme development for section 5.3.3.2

D.5.4   Audit trail from coding to theme development in section 5.3.4

Theme	Sub-theme	Aggregated codes	Codes

Planning
- Aims and strategies
  - Consistency with before Covid
  - Facilitating families as wellbeing promoters
    - Providing wellbeing resources
    - Schools signposting families
    - Communication to parents about wellbeing
  - Wellbeing as a priority
    - Creativity for wellbeing
    - Social connection with family
    - Prioritising physical wellbeing
- Recognising and managing feelings
  - Reflecting on feelings
  - Normalising feelings
    - People have different feelings
    - Feelings change over time
  - Schools explaining children's behaviour in response to feelings
- Focussing on positive emotions
  - Positive emotions
    - Finding happiness
    - Feeling grateful and appreciative
    - Being kind and caring
    - Focus on optimism
    - Taking time to reflect
  - Methods for generating positive emotions
    - Practising and communicating gratitude
- Maintaining a sense of connection
  - Schools contacting families
    - Weekly phone calls t families
    - Online meetings with teachers
  - Families contacting schools
    - Achievements on social media
  - Benefits of connection
    - Staff missing children
    - Maintaining peer friendships

Theme	Sub-theme	Coding

Implementation
- Motivating pupils
  - Benefits of engaging in activities
  - Volunteering as a motivation
- Modelling behaviours associated with wellbeing
  - Reflecting on what goes well
  - Maintaining optimism
- Celebration for wellbeing
  - School celebrating achievement of pupils
  - Families celebrating with children
- Connection as a driver for motivation
  - Engaging in same activities as peers
  - Schools setting challenges for pupils
- Developing a routine for wellbeing
  - Building weekly timetables
  - Maintaining school routines online eg assemblies

Theme	Sub-theme	Coding

(Technology for promoting wellbeing)

Platforms for home-school connections — Multiple platforms eg Zoom, Teams

Making videos — Head teachers delivering wellbeing messages; Fun videos from staff

Technology as a mechanism for connection — Showing pupils life at school during school closure; Videos made by staff for children

(Challenges for engagement)

Lack of online connection

Conflicting family roles — Parents' job roles; Other caring roles

(Review and refinement)

Informal methods — Phone calls to families; Online connections with teachers

Formal feedback — Little use of formal methods; Parent surveys

D.6   Supplementary information for the refined conceptual model

Pre-planning checklist

Purpose of wellbeing initiative

- Does the initiative take a salutogenic (improving wellbeing) approach, not remedying deficits?

Vision of initiative

- Does the initiative consider pupils' lifelong wellbeing or focus on a child's wellbeing whilst at this school?

- Will the initiative provide pupils with life skills and experiences which may have the ability to influence later life choices, with the potential to improve social and cultural capital?

Existing solutions

- Are there schools which have already implemented a wellbeing initiative which may be suitable?

- Are there schools demonstrating best practice which can be contacted?

Questions to guide design and implementation

Designing key components

Define components

- Seek stakeholder consensus on definitions of concepts

- Define the aims, content & outcomes of each concept

Integrate learning & wellbeing

- Where do skills & knowledge of learning & wellbeing overlap?

- What opportunities exist to promote wellbeing in existing curricula & school activities e.g. English, history, science?

- Is it suitable to take a whole-school approach to integrating learning & wellbeing e.g. values-driven curriculum?

- What weighting will be given to learning versus wellbeing?

Adapting existing activities to promote wellbeing

- Which current activities are suitable to promote wellbeing?

- Can activities be expanded to maximise their potential to promote wellbeing?

Appendix E Appendix to chapter six

E.1 Transcript of narrative interview with head teacher

INTERVIEWER

So, thank you for agreeing to talk to me about your school's journey, its biography if you like, of how pupils' wellbeing has been and is promoted. My research aims to highlight how schools have undertaken their health and wellbeing journeys, and so I'd like to hear the story about what has happened at [name of school]. Please feel free to tell me anything your think is relevant. I don't want to be prescriptive as I understand each school's story will be unique, but it seems as if there are some key features of their journey that schools have been through. These include the starting point, creating a vision, building enthusiasm, implementing changes, and keeping going. It would be really helpful if you could say something about how your school has moved through these stages, as well as what you consider to be the most important factors in promoting wellbeing and what has helped or hindered the process. Furthermore, the disruption of Covid-19 has had a major impact on both the wellbeing of pupils and the way in which schools operate, and I wonder how this has changed what you are doing. Overall, please tell me your school's story about how pupils' wellbeing is promoted.

HEADTEACHER

Lovely, thank you Rowan. So, my name's [headteacher's name] and I've been head teacher at [name] primary school um for 23 years, um err and it was my second headship. Um, and during those 23 years I've also, um, supported another school, um, as an interim head for a period. And one of the reasons I was asked to do that was, um, exclusively it was a school where they had, um I think it was 10 heads in 11 years or 11 heads in 10 years I'm not sure which, but I was specifically asked by the local authority because of those skills to, um, I guess to empower and to enable staff, and to be able to, um, create a school culture that values, that values its people, and that's staff and children and families as well. Um, and so that's really nice that um that that is recognised and you know just

in a term I was able to if you like put the basic into practise and make a difference very quickly in have a school um culture much more ready to take a journey with a new head as well. So in a way that allows me to sort of think about what were the key elements that need I needed to put into place. But the biography I guess goes back a little bit further than that. If we if if we go back to my beginnings um I started teaching in ILEA and it was a time when um um I feel really privileged to have taught in a school in [area of the city] just off the [name] road at a time when when the inner London education authority was so, um, in themselves so empowering, so committed to training new teachers um as a sort of um year long development of of I suppose both their skills but also helping to support their identity as well. That's something I'm particularly interested in around teacher identity um and and I think it certainly, maybe I was just lucky that the schools that I went to, that it was very much around um I guess a sense of equality um through the staff as well. And that everybody, you know, had a voice. So as a starting point that was that was really um ENABLING for me as well. I then moved to another school where actually it was quite a, a very top down model um so although there were formative um elements of well being, um, because they were imposed they didn't actually produce the well being that you'd want. So a really good example of that was all staff ate together in the school every lunchtime and then the onus was on, through a rota for that, for a staff member to then buy all the lunch for the week and it was – you know, you weren't allowed not to go to lunch with everybody else. And whilst that has probably was in its origins a good, [sigh] a good beginning – actually it isn't you know that was the decision of one person and um and that I think really being clear in my mind about when is it OK as a leader to say absolutely that is a must-do and when is it not OK to do that? Um and I think um certainly staff well being um really does um is very dependent on the decisions that leaders make in in respect to those sort of

INTERVIEWER

Mmm, yes…

HEADTEACHER

um aspects. So so I then worked for a while at another inner city school in [name of city] erm and then took on a deputy headship at a very small inner city school with um really high deprivation um and again it was a wonderful community of a school and because we we really were key to making the difference for lots of those children and for lots of the families. Um so again one of the things that I set up while I was there if you like was a really early Sure Start. Was um we looked at what was

called the house by the school so we worked with health visitors and um dentistry and um family support workers to have a what used to be the caretakers house we turned into a sort of drop in

INTERVIEWER

Okay, mmm…

HEADTEACHER

 and and and again so that was that thinking of the well being of the community. How do we - and knowing that you can't do it on your own It's not about us setting up a room and saying right we can solve all your problems so it's knowing when to go to others as well

INTERVIEWER

Hmmm, hmmm

HEADTEACHER

INTERVIEWER

Yes, yes

HEADTEACHER

and how to how to work together um with um you know with expertise within the community and that may include peers, you know it may include other parents we certainly included um uh trying to build those support networks as well. So, so again we're starting within my own um philosophy I guess my vision is building on a sort of really strong sense of equality a really strong commitment to offset disadvantage, um and you know through that starting to build up strategies and methodologies that would tie in with that and then I've always felt that policies should should be written to um to embed the practise and not to dictate practise. so you make your practise good and then have your policy that reflects that and enables people to stay within a a framework then um within that policy. Um so when I am um, when I came here though what had happened was that the previous head had had to go and um and in going there half the staff had um made complaints about the head and the other half supported them. So I arrived to a completely divided staff and um and what was really hard about that was that um the previous head's methodology was that sort of you're either with me or you're against me but then in those he decided he didn't like their practise his methods of managing that were um were unpleasant

INTERVIEWER

Ok

HEADTEACHER

and and caused huge hurt but and difficulty. Of course the problem being that [chuckles] that's in some of those cases the the people that um the reason that he had been trying to address the practise was because the practise did need addressing but because of the way he'd addressed it [laughs]

INTERVIEWER

[laughs]

HEADTEACHER

so but of course my methods were very very different you know I'm not a I'm not a um… I'm not somebody who just says right we're all doing this now

INTERVIEWER

Hmmm

HEADTEACHER

or we all do this it was It was precision to the extent that everybody, every class had the same set of drawers and they all had they all had to lay their draws out in the same

INTERVIEWER

Right…

HEADTEACHER

order complete control and CONTROLLING behaviour and I I am very much the head so in that s…, I don't delude myself that I I hope I use I mean like Spiderman with great power comes great responsibility

INTERVIEWER

[chuckles]

HEADTEACHER

I hope I do use my power responsibly and I I'm not a fool I understand but I do have power BUT I do try not to control others

INTERVIEWER

Yes

HEADTEACHER

or be controlling. Um so, so what then happened was of course those staff who had liked those methods or appreciated those methods or or being comfortable because they were in and that's a really interesting thing within school cultures of course if you're in you don't necessarily want to be outside, do you? You don't want to be an outsider.

INTERVIEWER

No, its like that in many situations, isn't it?

HEADTEACHER

yes of course yes um and so um so they swiftly went actually

INTERVIEWER

Ok

HEADTEACHER

because because what I was instead of saying to this I was like well what would you like to do how would you like to do this how do you think we should do this what do you feel would work and very much they sort of a developmental approach to, to training and that um for those people who've been used to saying you know hearing jump and then saying how high

INTERVIEWER

Yes

HEADTEACHER

it's it's very making them very anxious to suddenly have their parameters taken away

Mmmm, unsettling…

HEADTEACHER

Appendix E

Yeah. So, so I had a school who did them some, some survey work in the first term or so because I was doing sort of um ma national qualification it was pre-mqh um and you, you could see that staff wanted change they really did want change but they the distance between where they we're at an where they wanted to get to was SO immense um so so it really - I had no choice to work out how to do this in a sustainable way in a and a fair way um and I think you know there's there's lots of things that we've done over the years and I'll try and build those into the biography of the school but I think primarily they have been consistent um consistent traits of of kindness and of compassion and love um [sigh] of listening

INTERVIEWER

Hmmmm

HEADTEACHER

of ofrecognising when you don't get it right - you know and I suppose that that does come from a confident sort of leadership to be able to say you know only this morning I [laughs] had a couple of very anxious parents in quite a difficult online meeting

INTERVIEWER

Hmmmm

HEADTEACHER

and they were being supported in that and I thought I'd be helpful and and you know ease some of the tension by just offering a offering a drink this is not maybe for transcribing but it gives you a sort of flavour and um but in doing so of course the parents with um a personality disorder as well that cutting in was too much for him and say he was he was like you've got no right to be in here and you know I'm like I'm really sorry I'm really sorry I I'll withdraw straight away

INTERVIEWER

Yes

HEADTEACHER

and there were several lessons in there for me. And one is, of course I just assume I have the right to go anywhere I'm the head [laughs]

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INTERVIEWER

[Laughs]

HEADTEACHER

so that's a good example of I do feel quite powerful you know there's no door that's closed but a really good reminder that actually although I did it from trying to be supportive of the needs

INTERVIEWER

Hmmmm

HEADTEACHER

I wasn't respectful of um - I didn't make the right approach given his particular mental health needs

INTERVIEWER

Yes

HEADTEACHER

to to manage that although I think potentially it it may have then um eased the situation in the room because then he directed his hostility towards me and that had been, sort of eased

INTERVIEWER

Hmmmm

HEADTEACHER

some of the tension it was inadvertent

INTERVIEWER

[Laughs]

HEADTEACHER

and if that did happen I wasn't um it wasn't planned but you know I think it's about being reflective reflective practitioner is, is massively important to that as well I'm sure we'll sort of pick up other traits along the way um . So um, so I suppose in the first place it's about um building pupil voice you know making sure that [sigh] we did a lot of work around the rights of the child. So I was very lucky in going to Canada it's a very common um for err for schools to talk about now the rights of the child

INTERVIEWER

Yes

HEADTEACHER

but it wasn't

INTERVIEWER

Right

HEADTEACHER

at all so I went to Canada in a sort of to meet with some researchers in the university of Cape Breton who had been putting together some materials to specifically teach the rights of the child to children in schools in

INTERVIEWER

Ok

HEADTEACHER

near Sydney and it was um it was really- I just found it really empowering because actually all of the way in which I'd learn how to teach in ILEA was familiar and all of that fairness and um

INTERVIEWER

Hmmm

HEADTEACHER

being respectful had this sort of made absolute sense so I came back… What, what was really interesting about it as a method um was that a number of schools who went over at the same time a

number of leaders in the same group were doing things like assertive discipline which is very much you know you do what we say otherwise this happens if you don't do that this happens so it's a very clear behaviouralist approach

INTERVIEWER

Hmmm, hmmm

HEADTEACHER

to and you know it's still used in different not called that anymore but you know a behaviouralist approach to managing

INTERVIEWER

Yes

HEADTEACHER

children

INTERVIEWER

Yeah

HEADTEACHER

and managing behaviour

INTERVIEWER

Yes

HEADTEACHER

is quite common and you know we've always geared much more towards restoration and to making behavioural change and giving children the skills to change um which takes time um but actually again being respectful um in how we um how we model um our approach to sanctions and to um repairing relationships

INTERVIEWER

Yes

HEADTEACHER

and restoring justice if that's what you want to call it um so but what was interesting with taking on these rights of the child for example was these schools that had gone with a very behaviouralist view – it was transformative for them they like OK we've gone from doing this and now we're doing this you know

INTERVIEWER

Hmmm, hmmm

HEADTEACHER

and some of them did it in quite a linear way but but for us it was a much more subtle change it just gave us a different framework on which to um align what we were already doing so it wasn't transformative but it was certainly enabling and you know

INTERVIEWER

Yes

HEADTEACHER

and and validating as well

INTERVIEWER

Yes, yes

HEADTEACHER

it was what we were already doing was good. Um, so for quite a number of years we were t the forefront and obviously Oxfam then picked that up and we were one of the first schools to get um get a rights respecting school award and then in my view it became very again tick boxy performance and we just didn't continue that because for me it's the process not the product. It's about living it. It's about walking the talk - that's another theme. That's something I do often say we do walk the talk um and and err I suppose another key part in our in the biography which be that because I'd um, with the exception of a year in [name of county] I had also worked in, with you know with um err children with high needs so a really good understanding of special educational needs and the importance of meeting those needs. We were, we did – although the school when I came

didn't have that many special needs [laughing] over [laughing] a few years we did start to attract because people get to learn that you are you know

INTERVIEWER

Hmmm, hmmm

HEADTEACHER

 it's not just about compassion it's about skills it's about – that we are professional and we have the skills to meet those needs. All schools should do that but they don't.

INTERVIEWER

Yeah

HEADTEACHER

um so we built up a little following and then we were asked by the local authority whether we would take on a resource provision for children with social emotional and mental health needs

INTERVIEWER

Ok

HEADTEACHER

um which we did, which is the [name] room and that was in 2005. Um, so I came here in '98 um so um so that sort of I guess is the way in which we developed that resource over time. It didn't happen overnight and we made mistakes along the way. Um, um but even in the way we talked about that from the early days was really key in – as an exemplar for, for how we manage a culture of wellbeing. So, for example the local authority wanted us to have a room either built on the end or built additionally to the school and I was um adamant that that wasn't going to happen. If we were going to have it it had to be at the heart of the school it had to be you know we had to um again don't necessarily quote me but we had to make bad behaviour sexy really you know we had to make it um acceptable appealing - not the bad behaviour but the approaches to making change to meeting the needs of children with social emotional and mental health needs. We had to make that as as acceptable and as as [..] commonplace as you would for a learning difficulty. For dyslexia, you know, people don't baulk at meeting the needs of a child with dyslexia in the class they do if they've got a child who's acting out and trying to communicate but they're not coping with anyone inparticular sing at anyone particular time absolutely

INTERVIEWER

So, bringing it in to normality

HEADTEACHER

Absolutely, yeah, absolutely. And not normalising the poor behaviours – we are always very clear on that. But, but normalising our adaptive strategies for managing it.

INTERVIEWER

Hmmm, hmmm

HEADTEACHER

So um [..] So I suppose – again a commitment to safeguarding is massively important and always has been and a really good relationships with children services I'm really good understanding of you know how to keep children safe in education you know these are your these are your planks if you like their your there you are I don't know the joists in the ceiling aren't they the bits that you can't do without um and I suppose that things like that are understood by everyone in the school and say you've got your you've got your overarching I'm fishing which again I'm happy to share that with you it's on our website anyway but the overarching vision which does talk about inclusion it talks about the rights of the child it talks about the you know the it also recognises that rights come between we talked about that last week didn't we you know but between the rights of the of the one child 2 see education and how you balance that with all children I'm being honest about the rights conflict because she know you get times where you know so I think again probably another common thread is that around relationships as well so relationships between the children and relationships of course between staff and children and between staff and your families and your staff so I think again an example of how whole school well being works in relation to those individual children who have very high needs whether that social emotional we've got children for example with very high medical needs who achieved fat who have a stoma we've got children with very high needs and relationship you know moderate learning difficulties as well non verbal children there's a hole variety and it's about how we how we include those children and think about how one really good strategy a couple of years ago it does need doing again so I guess another really important aspect is that you can't see these things once you have to come back and we do them so would be that people like us I'm really thinking about what do our personal communities look like if you like say enabling the children to think about people like me go to mosque people like me have a birthmark people like me I have two dads and then starting to think about who else might be logging that tribuno who else might be and

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it's surprising for children that they Others who are like them you know they had no idea that those children hat also you know we have a number of looked after children now on the whole we don't make a group of looked after children but actually enabling children to know that they are not the only child that doesn't live with their you know their birth parents in school is a really helpful thing children can feel very isolated very alone so and then you can also think that actually even if you're the only one here and there was a child that I remember really powerful assembly a child who had not really talked about it before with others but actually turned up and said people like me have one hand with a hand shorter than the other and he had a medical condition that he had one hand that was smaller than the other quite a bit and he went into that with everybody and then we talked about you know that although you are the only child in the school with that condition there are there will be other children you know in Hampshire with that condition away and other children within the world say you know tribe across the world so you know that is really key that we do enable children to have some to have a connexion with humanity to have a connexion with I I guess with threats to spirituality as well so I'm not suggesting that got his God necessarily but he's not present for most children in most of their lives in a way in which they live their lives now so I think not as a religious hypothesis but actually is a as a practical I suppose a practical philosophical one is there actually I think we missed that and I think you know that and I'm not even sure that schools is the place to is the place to make religion err to teach children about a personal route to religion I do think that that is the role of families but that no longer happens and not for most families certainly I'm certainly for more of all a Muslim families but even less so there then would have been 10 years ago or suddenly less forcing families for example so although it's going through a similar from my observations here from our families is going through a similar trend the Church of England or Catholicism said that is you know it suddenly becomes a bit more about community and then tails off entirely but it's what's left in its place isn't it but I think it's important to mention that in relation to well being becausr I think it's about you do have to be very careful that you don't you don't hands up with imposing you know the religion of well being Justin does that make sense you know that there's a real danger to some of the mantra is to sambhav the how tos there is a religiosity about it sometimes and I think we just have to remember what our role is really definitely and I think just picking up on that sign posting that again is really important part of the school in that we don't assume that we can solve every but his problems and we don't seem that way if a child is you know not is feeling low or sad or anxious you know we certainly have a whole raft of provision of what I would call our universally available provision for well being and those are some of the things that I'm picking up through this narrative but then we also have fat next bit which is you know I need a little bit of help here which is our pastoral profession which is our emotional literacy support For instance

It it would be a we have things like true and talk for example is there another programme we have a whole range of interventions such as books of feelings and suchlike say that's just where children are starting to sigh to give signs and signals that they are you know they they are not their well being isn't as healthy as it might be but you know and that might be temporary it might be bereavement it might be loss it might be you know you know it might be changes within the household um so and they will only have the last sort of tranche which is you know we actually um you know we need somebody else to be helping here so we can refer to camhs we can refer to to play therapist that we work very closely with for example so we can Commission work or we can we can make referrals to other professionals who may be able to help so I guess it's really that first tranche that we're talking about that universally available that makes a difference so um celebration I think that's really important lots of ways to celebrate erm but also ways hopefully that aRE empowering and helpful and we do a lot around you know what does what does encouragement look like to enable children to build their self esteem Say actually that empty praise well done great so I'm not saying don't do it we are all human you know lovely but we have to recognise that it has a limited purpose and isn't you know it's a bit like it's a bit like eating chocolate isn't it you know it has a quick buzz and then you're like oh I wish I hadn't done that really or it doesn't have a long term effect so yes exactly yes it's really really true so it's about keep reminding staff keep training on specific praise you know so I really like the way you spoke to me just then so the children can latch on to what it is that was good and then to build on more of that and that all goes too support to have a good understanding of how to to make long term improvements in their self esteem rather than quick fixes and quick sort of top ups so pause I'm just thinking about in terms I'm thinking I think I mentioned before I may not have done in terms of risk assessment so we are we have a our motto is we're here to learn and through that we've had a big push for many years around you know taking good learning risks and we don't put ourselves at risk but we do take sure that we take good learning risks so language is really important too the culture of well being as well the right language and so adults can play with words and they understand the nuance in the context but often we have to be quite specific with children so because we're teaching them those differences so I think risk is a really good one for that so so in taking good learning risks and you know in support of their well being them we do we are a forest school we do go out we take children out every week a day and a half a week we commit to using our school minibus and either using stoke park woods or we we used today they've gone to Moores valley so although profession source material children and have all gone to Moores valley today they were so excited but it is about it's about all children having those opportunities as well and being able to benefit from those and again building on those relationships with parents say both both overtime and also individually it's it's if a parent is anxious about their child going out we don't just

say Oh well that child needs to sit in the corridor for the day it's about well what can we do to reduce your anxieties around this how can we support and help and and we have to have say few of those conversations now but in the beginning we to it and you know it was really important and we would never respecting parents views is really important but still say making sure that we are able to give them the right information in the right way that maybe helps them too make more informed decision um so cough so lots of residential's we normally do residential's across in three year groups as well ah man I think these things are really important and well being certainly because they are active healthy bodies certainly helps a healthy mind as well yes there's lots lots of research that goes we are a whole person and we also do a lot of sport and we employ a coach full time and she's brilliant she's lovely And she's again binner she's probably been working about five years now but she's played sport for GB she plays beach soccer for the GB team she has a again we tried to build people around that children can want to be like as well you know it's good to have role models as well so I think that that's really important as well and recognising when children are role models for each other and being able to celebrate that part of that celebration as well so I guess another key part of the well being journey was beginning my journey with the Anna Freud centre and that started with doing a few courses and have been really interested in trying to build my school skills as well as other peoples and I suppose that yes of course the real connexion to that was doing my doctorate in which of course was all about Freud and and freudianism really I'm looking at early psycho analysts and say through that going up to the Freud museum and going through their archives as part of my data collection reading letters and such like and so I began to realise that there were these opportunities too mental health and learning more about mental health through amazing courses that Anna Freud puts on and in the old days they were in the building next to the Freud museum so they had this really lovely amazing house and then in more recent years they've moved 2 brand new building just up from Kings Cross so through that three big on those courses I got asked to be on the quality assurance panel and so we've always had early early advanced sort of um notice of a lot of things but they are developing say for example the five steps 2 well being mental health and well being witches a more recent initiative um and um also very conscious of actually walking the talk so it's no good me being on the panel and then talking or sharing information with them if we're not actually doing it back here if you see what I mean so it's a good impetus so maybe that's what you do needs you do need you know people do you like to have recognisable aspects recognisable frameworks maybe that's why people often go for awards isn't it you know a well being award or a special needs award or an inclusion award I'm not particularly my my ego is not that fragile maybe maybe and I I'm not immune to it in the sense of trying to do things for the school But I think we do communicate really well to parents what we're about and we do

that right from the outset when they come and through our website as well so I think that's the more important thing then saying our schools has got her in this school community is not particularly impressed with you know I very rarely used my title do you know what I mean there not they're just not impressed by it in fact there probably works the other way and so there is a bit of name your school community and I'm sure if we were in there you know in a different place in a but I respect him for that as well that feels right to me that feels fine so yes through ah annafreud link we help totrial and I was on a committee with the royal foundation as well setting up the mentally healthy schools website which is now run entirely by um the Anna Freud centre and but again great resource is on there say staff have access to a lot of resources and a lot of information which again is really important writing the policy was to a certain extent if culmination of all of that but going back to people voice as well I think that's really important so one of the strands that we've had from quite early on I don't know when we did our first one we do issue of the month it doesn't generally workout every month but it works out enough time so it's a really good way rather than having a school council which I often feel you end up with the same children on the school council and often it however much you plan it you often end up with you know popularity contest as opposed to and often you ends up with the most articulate children rather than trying to give opportunities to you know more children he may be able to make a contribution so through this a child will bring the views of the Class 2 then a meeting relating to a particular issue and that issue changes through time so that's been a really good way and often those issues do relate to well being and mental health and aspects related to that as well as in do they bring issues too yes they can yes quite often they will come through various routes but it would be aspects you know so for example we're about to do one around erm racism and being you know an anti racist school which you know that would be something that we would definitely say that we were but actually with it all everywhere sometimes you need to re calibrate where we as a school stand in that say the issue at the moment also gives a framework to how those conversations can be held by staff as well so you can you can set a tone I can set that tone in how it's written in the wording that I use in the language that I used the way it's phrased and that's really important in the cohesion around well being as well I'm so and I suppose another key point might still be on the website but we were asked by a little surgery a few years ago if we could put some artwork up four from the school for their waiting brings an say through an issue of the month children considered mental help them well being an how they could depict that in a in a poster form in an art form and they were just they were amazing they were really and stunning and they're still up now so every now and then you do need those yes this is and of course through that we can add advertise that and we can celebrate that's an we can you know and again those key moments are really good for Our families and four the community so they know what we stand for

and they can see that this is how we you know put our money where our mouth is if you like and then there is the aspect of and this is something as well that the Anna Freud centre are very keen on and that's this aspects of how do you measure you know so actually we do have an annual survey so that's currently being done at the moment but it's for staff and for children as well and this year we've got with the questions that the Anna Freud centre suggests for their questionnaire for children but we have also made some adaptations we adapt it and put it on Google forms I also ask questions around cavid because I think that is quite important to recognise but it is also trusting you know this stuff one is anonymous and it's it's trusting stuff that they would trust you with that information as well and also being open to the fact that they may you know they may not think the school is as you know healthy and full of well being as we'd like to think and that's why you know you have to be you have to be reflective you have to be you know often really like oh okay I haven't actually looked at this years but but my we do have a well being lead as well and he said we've only had one return but I'm really confused because all of the questions suggest that this member of staff it's like really happy but the question where it says you know do you think you could go to anybody in school about ur mental health needs and they've gone write down the other end to know so he said I'm really confused but I said well maybe that is how they feel you know you can't there's naked asking people if you're not going to validate what they give you back absolutely absolutely yes they really important say we will look to analyse that as well um so I think I think I've covered most of the bases I don't know if it sounds much of a biography but Oh my goodness I told you I could talk Yes so if I start with covert I think I think the last year because it's another annafreud connexion in the sense that I was working at annafreud and they last January or February and they were putting together a risk assessment for closing the building for I think for 912 and 18 months and I thought well what are you doing but the penny clicked very quickly so I then put into place an 18 month plan risk assessment for here and it just has been really really helpful and there was namely to be reactive we planned well in advance we and I've only had two again the rate the risk assessments on our website if you want to have a look and it only needs tweaking because it works and so much of that was about addressing the anxieties of staff and our families and actually what did we need to do certain power them to reduce their anxiety and say one of the things we did was a vulnerable adult risk assessment form which I completed with a number of individuals as well and again that was really helpful and supportive and part of that was who is the team around you who is there to help you and being able to say you know actually I'm worried about this and being respectful of the effect that some people might not want to wear a mask but actually we need to be respecting each other but we did make the school as safe as we could in the sense that we also need it's a feel like a bubble in which people could walk around without masks and we haven't worn masks inside from beginning

to end some stuff use viruses and that's absolutely fine that's their choice to do so but that also comes you know from her a sort of personal responsibility trying to make sure that everyone understood their own personal responsibility say we were open to all vulnerable children right from the start we were open to many more children than you know my schools were doing at that time and that stemmed from I believed that we do mitigate risk of infection all the time that's our job we do that anyway we do that if there's you know if there's a tummy bug we know how to we know how to do this why are we like all going mad about all how to tackle this we do know and just like we do know we do know it's okay and leading was massively important through that as well accomm but serious presents who was making good decisions so we I did arrange for all stuff to have a flu jab I did we did have lateral flow test before anybody else say these things that we near woods help to reduce and partly because I'm oppositional and I do think now most people are double jabbed I don't see the point of it really it then becomes there not least for the economic you know the cost of it so so that was all good and just again lots if you lots of things on the website if you just have a look at arcoverde button that'll show you some of the letters that I wrote children which I think it will be really important and again doing a sort of an issue of the month out to children and families and using our online platforms so really engaged to make sure we were I was reading stories online I was making sure that staff were brilliant online they really were and responding to children actually manyavar childrens learning you know we haven't seen the dip that lots of places we had a good covert as people say about the war we had to get cavid I often think you know you can quote me on but I think it's but actually that sort of seeks my style as well we will do this we can do this and we have such trust there's such a Bank of goodwill and trust that they will you know as long as I don't F it up then it will be OK strong leadership yes yes well it's his key to well being really But not I tactically and and what hinders what helps I suppose I've covered lots of things that help I think that what helps I think what us help sometimes is that outside recognition I know that I Pooh poohed the award type thing but actually you know the thing that we have those Connexions with Anna Freud centre I think stuff like that I think it helps so and then passing that over so are well being lead is part of the pioneering schools group not me so it's about making sure that it's sustainable isn't it sustainability actually is really key to all of this and is a massive full down in lots of schools because they give it to one person and then that person goes and they it's gone say sustainability and embedded throughout the school that you know consistency of message and approach what hinders I suppose what can hinder coz bear in mind we've been doing this forever in a day but we had to do it against you know with with others coming in an note really understanding the bigger importance of it people do understand that now but they didn't win we were doing it Ofsted unlike Hampshire inspectors we've often been accused of doing it there share bug way to big extent so you know

people would come in and say you're very caring and I would say but it's not about caring it's longer term we're looking at those children being able to be good learners and healthy learners and you know throughout their lives we're just not doing short termism we're doing like it's about how do we meet the needs of all children so I think sometimes external but now Ofsted have got really clearly messages say this should be happening that wasn't there it wasn't there and the green paper made a big difference or did it make a big difference it made a big difference to Ofsted having to say it now but yes definitely and that's good that's really exciting so in that sense it's us being pioneering I like to think chipping away there but then what often happens is you're ahead of the curve and then everyone with then overtaken you've got to find something new so I guess part of my leadership style is his innovation but yes but it'll be I think it is imperative that whoever takes over this is my last term whoever takes over I think it will be hard to breakdown for a while I may never think and change concept say but I no the governors were really keen in terms of that They did a point ahead that had similar values and that's because they do want they do value yes that wider leadership is a really important part of that so I should have mentioned them a bit more strongly but they are really key too making that happen as well so yes I'm sure there are I'm sure press you could argue is both you know the media is a hindrance and also a help unique and you've got this sort of big push at the moment on mental health but it could easily twist through the Prince Harry Uday it's a war bling isn't says about how people are feeling about that I think he's trying to do I think he's trying to get a message out there but because it's so personal it's not really yeah and it's not really about making a difference too others is it really I think it's I think yeah it's unfortunate because he still being taken advantage of isn't he really and I think that's quite important to remember that people have vulnerable it's the easiest units easiest thing in the world to get people to talk as you proved today but what are you going to do with that once people have talked say you can but you can get people to open up ticker light parents who've had terrible lives but do you know what you're going to do with it once you've got them to talk about that can you same post them too because actually if you just doing it for some vicarious interest that's not helpful yes absolutely so it's being again that responsibility but we are powerful people so we can get people to talk but we shouldn't unless we are genuinely able to help them I'm not a therapist oh brilliant thank youIt is a passion I'm passionate about

E.2   Transcript of semi-structured interview with wellbeing lead

General introductions take place.

Researcher

So if we just work our way through the questions. Thank you very much. What would you say is the school's overall vision for promoting well being?

W.L.

So I mean I think it's tied in with the school's ethos of what's right for every child - in terms of that's for the learning, that's for the provision we give in terms of what does every individual child need and that's tied in with what, you know, what is going to help them access learning. And if that's the well being need, well that's foremost - it's about what's a personal. Yep - the needs of the child, the individual child as opposed to - well this is our approach, and we will stick to it, you know?

Researcher

Yes - and so in terms of well being are you thinking about their well being during their time at school or more broadly?

W.L.

More broadly as well. Because what happens at home affects what happens at school, and they're not going to be in the right place to learn if they come in having, you know, not had breakfast or having witnessed issues at home, or all sorts of things. It's all a part of their well being and their ability to be able to engage with the learning.

Researcher

And in terms of a sort of a longer term outlook in thinking about them as becoming adults?

W.L.

How do you mean, sorry?

Researcher

So, I wonder if… is it all about their well being for learning or about their well being as people?

W.L.

Yes about people certainly. Not necessarily well being for learning, but that's sort of tied into it, isn't it. That is obviously… an obvious basis as a school. But it is their well being as a person which affects not necessarily just, you know, making sure they are able to sit and listen but it is, you know, happy and healthy as much as they can be.

Researcher

And then the next thing that I was going to ask you - it's about some of the school policies that relate to well being

W.L.

Sure. Have you been on our website?

Researcher

So I have had a look on the website, yes, yes.

W.L.

So, we have - yes we have positive mental health for students policy for, you know, for pupils in terms of our general approach to where there might be a more specific mental health need for the

people - in terms of how would we respond to it. I suppose then, just in a broader sense obviously, you know there's the staff well being policy as well. There's the anti-bullying and behaviour policies which are all on part of pupil well being in the school environment.

Researcher

Lovely. And they're all available on the website, aren't they?

Yes - they should all be available on the website. Especially, I mean we are at the time of year in which everything is going to be reviewed, so I mean they'll be ((chuckles)) - the new ones come out in September. But the current ones are largely the same I think. Probably the mental health and well being policies because you know obviously the role has changed. Before being mental health lead I was a well being champion kind of thing. I'm well being champion but now it's more formalised and that was done in expectation of the government bringing in the mental health and well being lead role – and, you know, by sort of getting ahead of the game - and that sort of carried over into the more formal position.

Researcher

And so how long have you been in that sort of role?

W.L.

So that was… that was more of a sort of staff focused role. So it's been two years, you know. So it was a year before, you know, roughly. Transitioning this year into the sort of mental health and well being thing is coming in too, in fact, next year with the training from government. So I've been setting up sort of - been interested for a couple of years. You know initially the idea of a well being champion, we're sorted for staff mental health and well being but that's kind of actually that's transitioned to saying let's take responsibility you know for pupil mental health and well being as well .

Researcher

Great, thank you. And what do you consider to be the most essential components of promoting well being ?

W.L.

Well that's quite a tricky one, and I was trying to think of … And I think what I came to was probably trust in the school from the pupils and parents. And the trust to engage in dialogue with us to recognise that we are here to support them - to support their needs for them to, you know, to open up to us when there are issues, you know. Or if there were issues that we notice for them then, for them to trust us to help them to engage with them on those issues. So that was kind of I think what came to mind - and I think it is something that we promote. That idea of there are, you know, - that all the children will be able to point to a few safe adults that they ??? confident talking to you if they had an issue that they needed help with. So, yes I think… I think that that trust. An ability to have a conversation about it and a part of that is keeping it on the agenda. Keeping it, you know, something that they're always thinking about - referring to in terms of mental health support. What they need, how you're making sure that that's there, yeah, for them to come and to talk to us. Yes, so it's always in a thinking - so they know that it's something that we care about in order for them to come and talk to us about it.

Researcher

Yes that sounds really important. And do you find families are receptive?

W.L.

Yes. I mean there's obviously… there's families that are harder to reach. But yes, generally, I think parents are understanding and supportive of what we do. And obviously the parents that need support know that but know this and know we are part of the community. And I think that the head has made sure that the parents know that – and, you know, I'm particularly - this year during lockdown we wanted them to really know that we are still a part of the community and we're still here to be, you know, to be supportive of them with various needs. Whether that was sign posting them to services or just listening to concerns that they have, or, yeah, that they need help with. And as I said some parents are more likely to take that up. But quite frequently there will be parents in and I think the school know parents who they need to reach out to as well.

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Researcher

Yes. And what's the sort of nitty and gritty of that? Have you got an open door policy at school that parents know that they…?

W.L.

Well - that's been more difficult obviously over the past year. And essentially yes - there's always management available and visible at collection and drop off times. And, you know, anytime to come in and have a meeting with management, or teachers and management. Or often, you know, members of management will develop those relationships with families as they go through school. So, you know, 'I know I need to speak to this person about that' or, you know, keep up to date with those things really.

Researcher

Yes, thank you. And any other sort of important…?

W.L.

Well I think - I mean I just alluded to keeping it on the agenda. Really keeping these conversations up about, you know, … I think obviously that's something that has been higher profile in recent years. And I think normalising mental health and well being alongside, sort of, physical well being as well. Really keeping both of those as sort of equally important in the pupils minds.

Researcher

And it's becoming more important on the national agenda as well

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W.L.

Yes, of course. And as well, you know, - I mean I don't have facts and figures - but in terms of the rising mental health needs of you know of people in the country…

Researcher

Yes - even primary age children

W.L.

Yes, and younger down

Researcher

Yes, thank you. And perhaps to go into a bit more detail… so Julie provided a lovely overview, but perhaps to talk a bit more specifically now about some of the things in terms of the curriculum?

W.L.

So, we have, you know, the PDL curriculum which is the personal development learning which is what used to be the sort of PSHE personal social and health education. So that - it's coming into force over the last year. So change - we changed our the curriculum over the last couple of years. [Name] is the person who's - one of the assistant heads - who's really been behind the redesign of the curriculum. So, I've not had a great deal of input in curriculum beyond, you know, the fact that all the teachers were involved in picking out from the national curriculum what do we think is most important for the pupils we teach. What is it that they are going to need to be, you know,? We all knew our children the best and so if we will pick out the things that we think again to be most important, for emphasising, you know. And it is taught both discretely and in amongst other sessions as well. So we will have sessions that are blocked out - so this is our, you know, PDL or or PSHE. Whatever it is today we are learning about - you know, peer pressure or keeping safe on line, you

know as a discrete block but then those are things which will then be blended into English, you know, in stories …

So could you just - that's really, really interesting because that's one of the things that's coming out some of the work I've been doing already is this idea - of integrating into other things. So are there any examples that you can give me about that?

W.L.

So, what would be a good example? I mean one thing that we're always looking for is, you know, promoting diversity. So that - so understanding that, you know, attitudes to people based on race, religion, gender have been shifting. So when we're looking at something from history… so, you know, one thing that worked quite well actually was looking at Shackleton, which is a unit on Shackleton exploring the Antarctic. I am looking at the advert where he said we want men for this. And that turned into quite a long discussion about gender and you know would that be acceptable today? And how would you respond to that? All those sorts of things - but I mean it is simple as choosing books for English. So, for example, in year five we're reading Wonder, which is a book about a boy with facial deformities, and things like that. So, it's just about sitting down with those opportunities to discuss. What are the issues he faces? What's OK about this person's behaviour? And what do you think he is feeling? I just make sure that we are having those sorts of conversations throughout, really. Whether it is, you know - it's challenging stereotypes in history or it's when we are doing art for instance - looking at artists. It's about choosing a diverse range of people to promote that - in terms of not always just looking at the same pantheon of artists or writers as well.

Great - that's really helpful, thank you. I am sorry just going back to the PDL curriculum - is that taught - is it a certain number of times a week or how…?

W.L.

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It does sort of vary. Quite often it will be something that we will block. So rather than having sort of one session a week - I mean at the moment it is up to teachers' choice. A lot of classes will have at least one sort of circle time a week, where it will be a chance for children to share achievements or concerns - things like that. Assemblies, as well, are part of the PDL curriculum. So that is more of a weekly thing where issues on the PDL curriculum will be addressed in assemblies, you know, - by year group teachers or by management. You know, we have still been having virtual assemblies in class even though they were all back at school because we can't all go in the hall. So we have someone in the office you know streaming to multiple classrooms kind of thing rather than mixing us all together. But, yes, often it will be blocked. So we will have - at this time of year- at the moment we are in the middle of doing the relationship and sex education part of it. So, that tends to be something that we would block and do, you know, every afternoon for instance for a week. We would do something on that because it goes quite well just to keep it all together and to keep it fresh. Obviously there is an issue if there's someone who's off sick that week for instance - so we need to make sure that they have the opportunity to catch up. But when it's something like that I think it can be quite beneficial to, you know, if it's a shorter unit… you can't explore a topic in one session to keep it all together.

Researcher

Yes, thank you for explaining that. And then thinking in terms of the school culture with well being?

W.L.

So, in terms of - I think I've touched on that sort of idea of, you know, the idea of what individual child needs. We've got resource provision here which is all about, you know, children who wouldn't necessarily be in mainstream education without the resource provision because they have individual needs. Actually, it is fantastic. And since I started working here I've been consistently impressed with how it teaches the children - the other children in the school - about the fact that different children need different things and that's okay. And, you know, not everyone can have the same expectations. And actually I think it makes them generally more compassionate, understanding young people. You know, and that understanding of different people might need different things and how do we approach that. Really and that's the ethos of the school it's very much about well being.

Researcher

Yes, that's a really lovely to hear isn't it? And to see that two way benefits.

W.L.

Well you really see it. When you have a new pupil - when you have someone in the class who might be exhibiting behaviour, you know, that in another school would be 'that's not acceptable' - you must be doing this and this at this time. They spend a few weeks eyeing them - that everyone's just accepting that they are you know doing something that in my previous school would have been quite odd. And then, you know, they have a bit of curiosity after that and then they want to go and speak to them and spend more time with them. And maybe go and have a look around the resource provision and then after that then they're just completely accepting of them but yes they are different but that's fine.

Researcher

Yes and that's great. And a really good example I guess of children modelling to other children.

W.L.

Yes absolutely. And they're thinking why are people finding this amazing. And I think that ethos… that's really nice to think about actually. It's a nice reminder that the ethos of, you know, it's all about the individual child - and everyone… what everyone needs is reflected by the children.

Researcher

Yes, that sounds a really strong thread running through everything, definitely. And I'm just thinking in terms of - I'm focusing on children's well being. I'm thinking of staff well being at the same time and thinking whether you can separate them or you just can't separate the two?

W.L.

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It is worth thinking we obviously have the staff well being policy as well. And, you know, we ????
both the people under staff well being survey each year. What we have done for the last couple of
years as well and then we do those at the same sort of time as well. Just to sort of keep staff in
general have a similar sort of … the staff tend to trust the school as well they tend to accept that this
is somewhere that cares about well being. And they trust that there are people on management who
are always sympathetic if they have something that they need to talk to and they need to address.
They… I suppose yeah and it is promoted as well by management in terms of reminders of what we
need to do. And you know keeping a professional acceptable workload, and all of those sorts of
things. But I think that idea of management being open and trusted to have that dialogue is reflected
in the scores on the well being chart. I know that if I approach management with an issue with a
mental health issue it will be well supported. But it's also about understanding what works for
different people, so other people might have other people who they know on the staff – who, you
know, not in a formal system but you know everyone sort of has someone keeping an eye out for
them or someone who they know they can go to when they're feeling a bit of stress. We also have
been trialling supervision I don't know if [the head teacher] has spoken to you about this?

Researcher

No she hasn't, no.

W.L.

Oh okay - we have somebody called [name], a social worker, who's been coming in. That [the head
teacher] sort of brought in for staff to have some time for professional supervision which is
something that we talked about in the past. You know, and it's been a bit of a sort of trial this year -
sort of finding out what would work for people as a form of coaching, for dealing with stress and
workload. It's been, yeah, quite fluid. I was one of the people who was trying it out. But I think
everyone has taken something different from it and it's going to be available and will continue with
that in the autumn.

Researcher

And is that something with regular sessions?

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W.L.

Yeah for a term - so to meet two weekly for a term. Then try and take those things forward. So I think what we might try in the autumn is a group across the year team, joint across the year session with the idea that if you're dealing with about then you're more likely to be asking each other the same sort of questions you asked in the session. Going forward as a way of supporting each other.

Researcher

Yes ,sure yes. Well that's really interesting to hear about. And then sort of moving onto other sorts of activities which aren't strictly the curriculum, but other ways of promoting well being ?

W.L.

So, sort of playtime's things like that? So our playtime and break times - lots has been changed. So it's something that we started doing in lockdown and partly, you know, by necessity - where we can't have everybody just out on the playground at the same time. It's a more sort of a more guided play session led by the LSAs who have been taking them out as a play to learn session - where it is a guided activity which could be a team leading activity, a physical sort of game, you know, all sorts of different… So the structured as opposed to a wider free play session. In a broader sense of playtime as well - we've been doing a lot of - we often talk about restorative practise. So when there are issues that arise in the playground, having a sort of time to cool down and debrief. The classrooms have got a poster up of a brief script of - you know, what happened? what was I doing? how did I feel at the time? how do I feel now? you know these sorts of things. Debriefs for incidents during play times and lunch times when tensions arise and things like that.

Researcher

Is that really effective?

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W.L.

Yes, you know for different people I think there are well, I think it is something that does tend to work well but obviously I mean in the same way that I've alluded to the idea that the teachers know their pupils the best. And this is a massive factor particularly for me and my well being but for staff - that idea as teachers we are trusted as professionals to see and know what's best for the kids. So there is something about… we are trusted in our professional judgement about what helps the children the best. It's something that I found quite effective with quite a few of my… and we've had some training on what I'm doing so it's been quite helpful.

Researcher

So part of the thing about friendships is about maintaining the relationships and they can't always be good the whole time can they and how to deal with when there are more tricky times. And so with they play to learn is that something that you take forwards?

W.L.

Yes. So we started the play to learn sessions in lockdown when it was key worker pupils and vulnerable pupils in school so smaller groups because it wasn't so many hours teaching in school. There were longer sessions of sort of that were a bit unstructured to start with so we started looking at more structured activities and things like that. And then when we returned to school, when everyone came back to school, we thought we were going to carry this forwards to keep maximising that time - particularly as you know there is a lot of lost time really over the last 18 months. That we need to make sure that we are making the most of now we've got them back in school.

Researcher

And I guess some children benefit from more structure?

Appendix E

W.L.

Yes, yes they do, yes. I think we will keep elements of it. Bubbles I think will be coming to an end, we'll see. But that will potentially be something that would - that wouldn't be quite as simple if they are mixing a bit more, which I think is something that they're going to be. I think they will need some help remembering how to do that.

I suppose especially for the younger children it's a huge proportion of their lives that's been saved disrupted?

W.L.

Yes, I mean children getting into year two this has been their whole time in school that's been like this. So that's nearly a third of their time at the school - well it will be, but it's 100% at the moment but it will turnout to be that.

So I don't know how much we've touched on this already - but the social environment, I mean I think we've talked in terms…

W.L.

Yes I think a lot of it is around trying to understand, you know, understanding each other and respecting each other and understanding that different people have different needs and feel different things at different times. You know, we do have friendship groups that run for people who need a bit of help or who have had disagreements. So [name] one of the other ELSA trained staff will run those quite a bit with children who find it more difficult to - not necessarily make friends or keep friends - but solve those disagreements amicably.

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W.L.

So that will be a focused intervention over I think it's 6 to 8 weeks. It's a once a week session where they will address different things each week, and will learn how to sort of - how to get along, how to… it's a very positive thing and generally children come out of it - it's really positive for them.

Researcher

And actually [the head teacher] mentioned a couple of other things like draw and talk

W.L.

Yes so that's a more of an individual intervention. So we have the ELSA trained emotional literacy and support assistance. So that would be a more targeted intervention for someone who maybe we are concerned about. You know, if they are struggling with coping at school or if there are issues at home which are causing them to be unhappy or anxious. It is something that we do in-house. We would refer them as teachers to management saying we have these concerns and we think they would benefit from this. But it's not a full on referral externally to CAMHS. It's more… there are other ELSA sessions as well - things that would be delivered at an individual level.

Researcher

And another one that she mentioned fleetingly was books of feelings?

W.L.

Yes that's a small group one as well. I haven't done it before. [Name] is doing it with children at the moment - it's about sharing feelings, about helping to communicate when things aren't right for you with friends with teachers, and also space to step out and communicate worries.

Appendix E

I can get that sense just coming into the school building... that idea, well you've got 'Are you OK?' haven't you, as a big introduction into the school?

W.L.

Yeah I'm just changing displays but we did have a... Yes, I've made a display all about the 54321 way of calming down. Five things you can see, four things you can hear, three things you can touch, two things you can smell, one thing you can taste. Sort of counting down. There's plenty of things around in terms of the environment - you need to have to change them regularly, otherwise they become background. That's always a thing in terms of keeping the agenda.

Researcher

And also are there other things you do, like mindfulness?

W.L.

That's something that I've done in the class with them. We use resources from the Anna Freud centre in terms of supporting mental health and well being. There's a lot of resources - we all have mental health. I'm part of the pioneer school with the Anna Freud centre - part of the pioneer schools group where we're talking about the things that we're doing. We meet every half term or so to discuss what we've been doing and how it's working, those sorts of things.

Researcher

Right, OK. I didn't know that, so that's really interesting to find out. And then, in terms of passing that onto other schools, do you share?

W.L.

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I mean in terms of… we haven't clustered so much. But we are part of a cluster of local schools which is generally about sharing work, but we share general practise. And certainly we have other schools come and look at the resource provision as well, to see how we do it.

Researcher

And just thinking a bit more about the physical environment?

W.L.

Yes, we're talking about displays and things like that. We had a session every so often and we would talk to pupils. We give them apps and we ask them what are areas where you think you are safe. And we give them a space to calm down and somewhere to go when they feel anxious. And for them to have their say on their environment as well and what's a good place for them to go in, a good place for them to be.

Researcher

And are they able to go to those places? How does that work ?

W.L.

So for pupils who are struggling in class, if they are particularly anxious we have take out time where they have to ask to have a break and they communicate to us. And obviously if they are part of the resource provision or resource provision have umbrella children who are not officially a part of it, but we know our children who need more support they can go there as well. But I think they know as well that there are areas - outside [the head teacher's office], there are spaces outside the little office and [name] in the office is one of the ELSAs. So they are the adults that they would say would be trusted adults if they need some support and a place to go. If they need somewhere to sit and again that's something that would be more likely to be on a child's individual plan if they have one, if they need some time they know that they go to a safe place to calm down or to have a break.

Appendix E

That's really interesting. And what about outside spaces in terms of well being?

W.L.

Physical well being. We don't have a great deal of green space unfortunately – a field to, you know… we have a playground. We were, when everyone was out at once before Covid, we were trying to do not quite a mile but we would have a track at lunchtime and if they wanted to join in they could run a couple of laps. You know we are a Forest school as well. So once a term they go to [name] woods and do general outdoor activities which is always a really positive day for them actually being able to go outside and, you know, it has a massive impact on well being and behaviour as well.

Researcher

So that's really interesting isn't it? That one day can have a really big impact

W.L.

Well, yes. It's partially because they have been doing it since… I've only ever taught at key stage two here, yeah five. So the ones I've taken to the woods they've been doing it since they've been here, so it's interesting seeing them – 'Oh yes, I remember all of these things that we do'. And knowing what to do in the woods and you know how they communicate with each other, how they solve disputes - things like that. It's very free and open in terms of choosing activities. It's very lightly guided but it's very interesting to see.

Researcher

And in terms of risk taking as well?

W.L.

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Yes. You know we often talk about safe risks and positive risks in terms of work and we encourage that in other things as well.

Researcher

and making mistakes?

W.L.

Yes. Extracurricular we've talked about forest schools. Yes, so that's something that's been quite difficult as well - clubs this year. We've kept a couple of sports clubs going but it's been harder, it's all in year groups as well. But other clubs that we normally do haven't really been running so much, unfortunately. But you know there's allsorts of things. We had a Pokémon card club which was really just a chat and a catch up with the cards and the finance officer did knitting and chatting which was nice. It's been quite hard it's been quite a shame not to have a lot of those things going on.

Researcher

And, again, in terms of thinking about inclusivity ?

W.L.

Yes, so when we have clubs that we think would benefit children we do send invitations out. It's open but we would often invite children who we think if they are from hard to reach families or we think they would benefit from a certain thing we say we think it would be a benefit. And I must say music has continued. Music lessons (which you obviously heard on the way through) - we have [name] who works for [name of county] music service. She does some music teaching in school, you know, some teaching of classes. And on those days she also takes individual lessons and [the] service will provide instruments for children during the duration of having those lessons. And that's another thing that we invite children to, and that's a real confidence builder. That's something that management and teachers do, that someone who's not going who would not get these opportunities necessarily and who might really benefit. And that's something that is worth considering and saying some of them as well in lockdown who were struggling to engage so much

with some of the learning, if they were able to get some of those video calls still going to have music lessons - that [name] carried on doing lessons over zoom. And that was a really nice link for a lot of them actually.

Researcher

I can hear from what you said and what [the head teacher] said about how important music is in the school

W.L.

Yes, it is the arts in general. I mean two weeks ago it was just arts related things all week. So lots of making and painting and sewing, things like that… music.

Researcher

And that sounds quite an unusual thing for a school to do, is it? Are you quite innovative?

W.L.

Yes for a whole week. Yes, it's being increasingly phased out under pressure to be focusing on other areas. But we are looking to have Artsmark accreditation - that this is a school that actually takes the arts seriously. Make sure that it's encouraging that creativity and you know a phrase that was very much part of… a buzzword - giving children cultural capital. Giving exposure and those experiences that children might not otherwise have.

Researcher

And I think going back to the very beginning - where I was talking about well being in terms of the longer term, that's vital isn't it ?

W.L.

It is, and again this is pre Covid. There was a time when there was the Da Vinci exhibition at the [name of gallery]. It was a couple of years ago now, and [the head teacher] was just very encouraging for the children to go. And she said anyone who went and bought tickets, she gave them a notebook and a pencil. She was really trying to encourage as many people to go and see those things.

And is there anything you think, talking about these components, you think that we haven't touched on yet?

W.L.

I'm sure I'll think of things. I think that covers a lot of it to be honest. I've only just mentioned art and music, but actually they really are a part of developing well being. That idea of communicating that there are issues, keeping it in the forefront of your mind - a pillar, that this is vital you know cultural capital, dialogue with each other as well as school, and understanding and accepting, you know.

Researcher

That's great. That's really, really interesting. And then, this is always a tricky one isn't it, but measuring the impact of what you're doing?

W.L.

As I say, we do a pupil impact survey each year. So that's only started relatively recently, in the last couple of years. So I'm in the midst of writing a report about it at the moment. You know we have got a couple of sort of the headlines from and so it's just a very simple kind of… These are some of the responses from lockdown (showing document on laptop), those ones were Covid related. About lockdown things, like hopeful that things will get better, being optimistic for the future, you know, sort of anxieties and hope - things like that. These were questions that I took from the Anna Freud

centre as well. So from their survey that they recommended, in terms of the general 'where are you at really?' Obviously we all monitor things like how many people are we having to refer etc. Less formal - how many people do we think we've really got concerns over? You know, we do a well being survey each year.

Researcher

Yes - I can hear from what you're saying that there is a lot of observation - yes, like you're saying the informal stuff?

W.L.

Yes - and I mean in terms of things like we have our behaviour system where they earn their golden time on a Friday. So we keep track of who's maybe not earning their golden time and if there's a pattern. If someone is clearly having a difficult time that would be something that we would look into - say 'hang on a moment, why is this person not earning so much golden time as the others?' It's just things like that.

Researcher

So, again, I'm hearing that culture is not about punishing by taking that away - it's about understanding what's going on. I get that really strongly. So in terms of the context thing, what are things which help and hinder the school in terms of promoting well being?

W.L.

So, I alluded to hard to reach families. So you do need family support if it's someone whose going to be an issue. It's always better to be doing something in conjunction with family or carers, whoever it is. Obviously that can be both a help or hindrance. Lots of families are really positive about the things we are doing and working with us, and bring their own perspectives which works really, really well. Obviously if someone is going to be really resistant and not going to engage with it, it can be hard. In terms of other hindrances, we do refer within school to the pastoral interventions - the box of feelings, there's ELSA, the draw and talk. But actually there is almost a waiting list within school. It

would be ideal to have more funding and more space to be able to do that for more children in an ideal world. And then those things at the same time are a massive help in terms of well being and children. [name of ELSA support] - she is very much someone the children know. The main focus of her job is talking to children - helping children with their feelings and promoting their well being. And the children know that, and the children know there is someone in the school and they know those people within the school who are looking out for them. And that's a massive help and ????? in school obviously the external support - if there's someone who really is needing support - and so things like CAMHS. A long waiting list to get appointments and I think you know there's a new role coming into place. I don't know how much it's going to be primary school focus but a mental health practitioner. And they're going to be working for Camhs and CMH in terms of helping create another link between schools and mental health services. So I think that's going to be based around helping schools deliver interventions that are recommended or things from CAMHs. And also helping facilitate that communication because it can be quite hard sometimes. You know for we don't have a sort of ed psych on staff, so it's always done on someone to come in and try to judge the situation which is difficult. It's about creating a better link I think between external services and what we can do in school.

Researcher

Covid - you've talked a lot about as we've gone through - but perhaps… what are the major changes?

W.L.

Well, it has been a massive dominant force for all of us over the last couple of years, hasn't it? You know, I think that idea of using the playtime as well as the time in school. How can we use that time while still giving children a break from the classroom? And these sorts of things. The main thing I think about it in terms of learning and it's the same for well being, is its heightened all the divisions that existed already. I think Covid and I think that is ??? well being, and I think that's not completely true. I think there are people who, and I think Jane* mentioned it on those slides, some children who did benefit from more time with families over lockdown. And, you know, there were those people with anxiety who felt some sort of control and calm. So I think there were benefits in that sense, but and I think also re-forging those community links and getting those people involved. But I think it has widened some divisions. So in a learning context, I think we've been looking at how to close that gap. And I think that's probably true in the world ??? as well. You know there are people who are

now behind in their development socially and people who might have been isolated and how we can support in closing that gap really.

And anything else? It's been really helpful - thank you very much [name]. One thing would be with Jane* leaving…?

W.L.

It's hard at the moment because it's the end of the term. It's the end of the year, so there's so many things to get finished. So I don't think it's the time of year when I'm very good at looking forwards really. I had a transition meeting this morning and I was thinking 'oh hang on a minute, I've got a whole new class of children in September'. I think a lot of it's just going to have to be waiting and seeing. And I'm definitely feeling - I haven't met the new head yet really, only in passing - so I don't know to get a feel in terms of how things are going to go in terms of continuity, in terms of what's going to change. And the children are really aware of it as well. They will pick up on how passionate Jane* is about arts and music. So they've been asking what's the new head interested in, that kind of thing. So they are aware of those kinds of things. It's just going to be interesting to see how it changes things really. So I'm going to be continuing my role for a year at least so we'll see.

The interview ends here.

E.3 Year six pupils' drawings from the mapping activity

Child 1

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

Learning peoples names and making friends. This made me feel happy

When I started school

Having a year beneth us and feeling more mature. This made me feel good about myself.

In years 1 & 2

Having more people join and being able to make new friends. This made me feel safe.

In years 3 & 4

being remembered by my past teachers for football knolledge. This made me feel good about myself

This year

Being one of the best football winger in the school. It made me feel proud.

In year 5

Child 2

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

Year R

My first bread ___ R and I ___ always ___ it safe aroun ___ we ___ always ___ our time ___ and always ___ to ___ in the ___

Year 1

I remember going to a tiny garden a me ___ used to ___ the doors to open and I always felt safe round them

Year 2

I remember do the great fire of london and improved alot in my writing and spelling.

Year 3

I had Miss ___ and she always made smile then we did the stone age and I soon started to have more friends

Year 4

We went to bakly and I felt safe from home and I remember people got chased by a turkey and ___ to make them go away

Year 5

We spent most of it in lockdown and we found out Mrs ___ was pregnat and it made me happy.

Year 6

I have had a great time year 6 and I cant belive its nearly finished

I have now got more friends and cant wait to go to ___ barn and to this day ___ has still made me safe with being her friend

Child 3

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

FR⌀ZEN

In year R, I made a cardboard tube Elsa, and I got a lot of praise. This made me feel happy and good about myself. It also was safe for me as I knew my best friend was coming.

When I started school
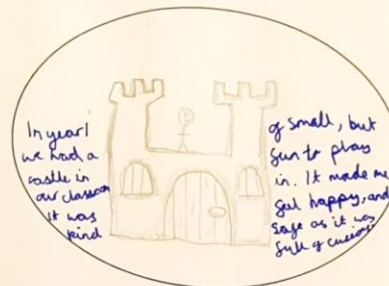
In year 1 we had a castle in our classroom it was kind of small, but fun to play in. It made me feel happy, and safe as it was full of cushions.

In years 1 & 2
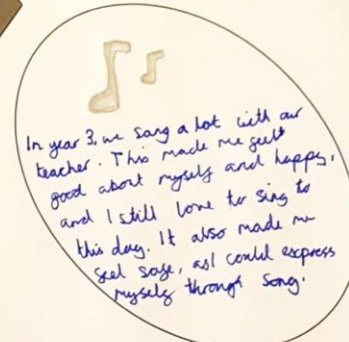
In year 3, we sang a lot with our teacher. This made me feel good about myself and happy, and I still love to sing to this day. It also made me feel safe, as I could express myself through song.

In years 3 & 4

I feel good about myself this year, as I have several friends who are really nice and help me out, I feel happy, as again, all my friends are very supportive, and I feel safe as I always have someone to talk to.
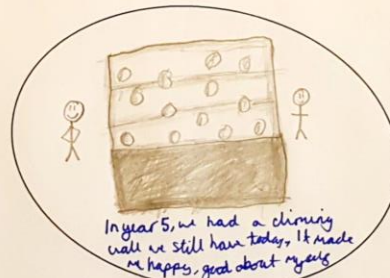
This year

In year 5, we had a climing wall we still have today, It made me happy, good about myself and the ast black staff underneath is pretty soft.

In year 5

Child 4

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

(I joined in year 5)

HAPPINESS

In year 5, the things that made me happy were my friends, my teacher and maths. My teachers always kept the spirits in the class high. My friends had great sense of humour.

In year 6, my teachers and friends still make me happy (so does maths) but my & class's L.S.A Mr. ▇▇▇ makes me laugh a lot and he makes fun games. The certificate

Climbing Frame

Playing Catch

O - mr ▇▇▇

SAFETY

In year 5 there were teachers everywhere which made me feel safe and in year 6 Mr ▇▇▇ is always supervising us and the makes me feel safe - The office has a function where you can't come in until keep intruders a button is pressed.

Child 5

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

When I started Yr What Made Me feel happy Was being friends with ▓▓▓. And all the Teachers Made me feel Safe. Miss ▓▓▓ be careful girls.

When I started school

In Y2 I felt very happy and enjoyd the year we did s for most of the year we did a lote of crafting and I always went in a Little red riding hood caple which made me feel safe. Little red riding hood caple. we played role plays.

Y2 Was a fun year because We lernt to swim and all the teachers really helped me YIK my x table wich made me feel good about myself.

In years 1 & 2

I enjoyd Y3 with Miss ▓▓▓ because she always sang which made me laugh. ▓▓▓

I Loved Y4 because we had the best teacher Mr ▓ and we had a eygept day which was the best.

In years 3 & 4

In Y6 What made Me feel safe again Was doing online learning for the first couple months and what made me happy Was doing the show it boost my confidence with stage fright. Show

This year

What made Me feel happy Was seeing my freinds before Lockdawn and what made me feel Safe was doing online learning. ONLINE Working

In year 5

Child 6

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good
about myself

When I started school

In years 1 & 2

In years 3 & 4

This year

In year 5

Child 7

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

Year R

In Year R I was very good friend with ███. We would always play together and did everything together. I always loved every teacher in Year R because they were all so kind. I loved that they always read books before we went home.

Year 1

In year one I cant remember much but I think my teacher was miss ███. She was very loud but very supportive in work. I think I started to make some different friends like ███. She always made me laugh. We went on a fairy door place I loved all the doors and it made me happy.

Year 2

In year 2 we did have miss ███ again but she got married so she became Mrs ███. We did the great fire of london reports it was really cool I loved it, it was really fun. My other new friends were wilo and nicola.

Year 3

In Year 3 I loved it because I had Mrs ███ she was so kind she made me safe and happy. She really helped me with my maths and made my alot more organised. :)

Year 6

This is the year that I had Miss ███. She really really made helped me improve in my maths she was very helpfull. We had this vcoin you could earn if you get dojos I chose table tennis and I used to play matches with her but she always won but it was really fun. We did a play cinderella rockapella I was cinderella I learned all my lines and the results was good I had so much fun doing the play.

Year 4

this might of been my favourite year or atem all because of so much happened. My teacher was Mr powell he was the best! he had a secret stash of crisps and and choclate, we went to bewin and I liked so much me and my set sheet was in the same room.

Year 5

In year 5 my teacher was Mrs bartley every day at the end of school we had put our play list on we are music. we all found out that she was having a baby only because Alisha asked why she was getting fatter.

Child 8

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

Year R

was the year that I made all of my friends (I am still friends with them now) My teachers helped me fit in and learn the basics of the ABC and numbers. they made feel happy by giving us fun thing to play with our friends.

My friends were: ▮▮ (♀) ▮▮ (♀), ▮▮ (♀) & ▮▮ (♀).

Year 2

In year 2 I made lots of new friends. And improved heaps in my spelling which made me feel alot better about myself and my learning. we also learnt about the great fire of london.

Year 4

in year 4 we went to buely and the teachers made me feel safe and warm away from home. We also had Mister Powel who felt pot noodle and crisps.

Year 5

we spent most thee year in lockdown and online learning. But the teachers made us feel safe.

Year 1

was when I started to understand reading (i now still love it) Our teacher was miss ▮▮ She helped me start my spelling, even tho I wasnt very good she always made me feel better about it. We also went to fat ▮▮ Gardens wich was a realy fun day.

Year 3

In year 3 My favrout thing to do was. reading And the school library was really helpful for me finding new books. Miss ▮▮ also had lots of books for us to read this made me happy

Year 6

we also spent nalf the year in lockdown, but we had lots of fun on the zoom calls reading Hugo Cabret (I really enjoyed it.) we are also going to be going on a trip to ▮▮ Barn which will be really exiting We also did our SATS which was difficult at time but our teaches made it fun.

Child 9

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

Year R

I felt safe because there were teachers around, when we felt sad or lonely they always were there.

Year 1

What made me feel confident and good about myself were the people who were around me who supported me. What made me happy were my friends. And when we went to fury gardens.

Year 2

When we were going to ocean centre and what made me feel safe were the teachers. So we wouldn't get kidnapped.

Year 3

In year 3 we went to Fish born palace. Where we saw And Mrs ████ said there Lots of was a dragon in the old things attic and that made me and we Happy. When we were worried did lots she had a worrie monster of activi to eat our worries. ties.

Year 4

Wh We had Mr ████ In year 4 and what made me happy was when we exposed his secret good stash. We went to ████ and it was lots of fun there

Year 5

We found out Mrs ████ was pregnant and half way through the year we did online learning.

Year 6

Whats made me feel good about myself are the grades I got for sats. Scores What changed through the years were the teachers and how they made us safe.

Child 10

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

Year R:
I felt safe and happy because of all the teachers that were around the school and all the people. And when we were sad or someone was being mean they would always be there. I was proud of myself because I was scared of the goats and now I am not.

Year 1:
In year 1 I felt safe and happy because of I became friends with alot more people. I was proud of myself because I was mostly on the sun. We went to ▇▇▇ gardens and we all loved it.

Year 2:
In Year 2 I felt safe and happy because when we went to trips all the teachers wouldn't let anything happen to us.

Year 3:
In year 3 we went to ▇▇▇ palace and Mrs ▇▇▇ would say that there is a dragon in the attic and that made me happy because it was funny.

Year 4:
In year 4 we had Mr ▇▇▇ and he had a food shash that told everyone about and we went to ▇▇▇ I was proud because I was scared to go but I went.

Year 5:
In year 5 we had to do lockdown school but I was safe because of my mum and dad. What made me feel happy was that Mrs ▇▇▇ was having a baby and that she would come back when she had her baby.

Year 6:
In Year 6 we done online lessons and it made me happy because I would race on to the calls and it made me safe because we were still heaving and seeing the teachers. I was proud because I improved in my maths.

Child 11

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

Yr R
In year R I was friends with only a few of the people i'm friends with today, but the teachers encouraged me to be more sociable and I made alot more friends, knowing I had people who care made me feel safe.

Yr 1
In year 1 we went to these gardens where they had fairy doors, I remember that made me feel happy. We were put into groups with leaders which made me feel safe.

Yr 2
Yr 2 we went to the Sea Life centre and we were put into groups. The teachers made us feel safe. My friends made me feel happy.

Yr 3
There was a joke that we all shared and ▇ Mrs ▇ said she had a pet dragon up in the attic and when there was works on the roof she said it was just the dragon.

Yr 4
Mr ▇ had a secret food stash for his lunch and people would always try to see without getting caught! He never caught us. this was probably my favourite year but for more reasons.

Yr 5
Mrs ▇ had a good sense of humor and really good singing voice, I remember joking around with her she always sorted out everything which made me feel happy and safe. My teacher helped us alot through lockdown

Yr 6
Last year at shool, I have lots of friends and when we were in lockdown my teacher and friends helped me alot and even through we were still in lockdown I enjoyed it.
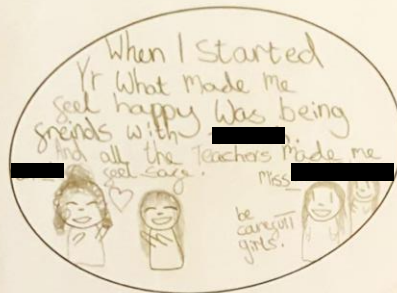
END!

Child 12

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

My teachers in Y6 always made me feel safe and good as they were always cheerful.

I always felt happy when I was either on the bikes or climbing trees.

When I started school

In year 1 I had my happiest moment when I went to ███████ gardens, I felt safe and good with my friends.

In years 1 & 2

I year 3 I was happy when I went to sonton palace for a trip with both classes. I felt safe as in year 3 we had 3 teachers.

Year 4 was cool as we had Mr ██ he was a good teacher.

In years 3 & 4

This year has been heard because of covid but I felt safe at home doing online learning and made me happy as I could spend time with my mum.

This year

Year 5 was cool as we had Mr ██ again who made every one feel good and happy. We also had miss ██████ who let us do ipads sometimes. — Ipad

In year 5

Child 13

My journey through school
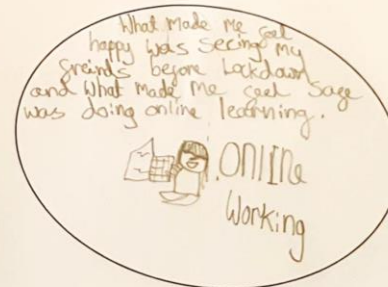## What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

Year R:

In Year R I was friends with ██████ and ██████. I remember Playing outside quite alot. We had ████ went to long down dairy farm. We also had a water fight the teachers made me feel happy.

Yr 1:

I remember being sand and not wanting to come to School ██████. We ████ the Gfot (Grfont) fire of (London) we did say gardits, the had miss.

Yar 2:

We had MrS ██████ for the first half of the Year and for the Second half we had Mr. ██████. We did the great fire Of London. we also went to sea ██████ cinema in ██████

Year 3

In Year 3 we had Mrs ██████ She told us Stories about dragons on the roof of the School, we also Did storeage, the dragon Storys made us laugh. We went to ██████ Palace I fell safe because there were teachers there.

Year 4

We had Mr. ██████ we ████ discovered his food stash and he used to stay wash your feet and change your hands. We went to ██████ I was safe because there were teachers there. So it feel worried I would go Self Safe because there were teachers there. But I felt ██████ teachers

Year 5

We had Mrs ██████ and, I remember her pulling up She was having a baby this made me really Happy. We had Bestie day and did online learning. But then we did online learning

Year 6

we have ████ miss ██████ we had to do some online learning but what made me really happy was doing our play...... Cinderella Rockerfella I felt safe being at home learning because I knew I could protect my family and friends. I felt good after completing my SATs.

Child 14

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

year R at the Start

I rember on the first day I was scared and didn't want to come but then the teachers said that they would help me and be with me the whole year.

— me

year 1 in the middle

year 2 the Start

I remember when there was a new kid and the teacher chose me to look after them and we became realy good friends, We also went to an aqarem and I touched a fish and over came my fear.

I remember In year 1 our teachers would always give us certificates if we were good witch made me realy proud.

— certificates

year 3 end

I remember when it was christmas and we had a calender and who ever was realy good would get to open that day witch made people lucky.

— raffle ticket for

year 5 middle

year 6 now

— bottle

I remember when we first started and we wrote our worries down on paper the we would open them on the last day.

I remember when we had to go into lockdown but the teachers still helped us and made sure we were ok.

— house

year 4 the Start

I remember when we went to ■■■ and the teachers stayed up to just incase we were board and couldn't sleep.

room

Child 15

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

Year R:

I always felt safe because of all the teachers and my friend's that would always help me. Whenever I always got hurt and the teachers would help me. When I first came to this school I was very nervous and I only had 1 friend ████ and she made me very happy she would always make me laugh. My favourite memory was going to ████████ farm and loved feeding the cows which made me very happy but I was scared because the chickens were running ever were.

Year 1:

I can remember always being happy and I could always felt safe and when we went to ████ gardens and we saw all the fairy doors which made me very happy about that because I loved fairys. We ████ we had Miss ████

Year 2:

We went to the sae life center and saw all the sea animals and loved having a look in the shops and really wanted to get something but had no money. I loved being happy in year 2 and I felt very safe. I also felt good about my-self because ████ I felt I had achived some thing

Year 3:

we went to ████████ Palace and saw all the setitons and old mummy and tomes the the Expectations hade I Loved Year 3 because I felt good for myself because we hade to learn a lot and I overcame my fear of talking which my iclas made me very happy

Year 4

We went to ████ ████ which was our frist resadentchel and we all were so happy about satying away from our mums and dads for a week and was very felling good about my-self and very brave

Year 5:

We went into Lockdown and hade to do home learning Which ment it was very difficult to learn when we come back into the Year 5 we had covid busters and wicht made me feel very safe

Year 6:

We are going to ████ born we have done our leaves Play wichic made me very happy because I have overcome all my fairs about everything thraight out the years so over all I am very happy

Child 16

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good
about myself

When I started school

In years 1 & 2

adult timetable makes me feel safe, knowing who I'll be with.

little room makes me feel safe.

getting better at a skill or work makes me feel good about myself.

▢ my teacher
→ Pod
→ 1:1 adult.
→ adults step in when I could hurt myself or others.
→ adult contact/hug
→ completing work makes me feel good
→ certificates/ stickers/ praise from adults
→ daily points earns treats which makes me happy

In years 3 & 4

worked as a small group every lesson.
↗ good about myself
→ simple work
and had short
lessons (20 mins)
↳ found work easy

lockdown

modified timetable that helped me succeed in class. made me feel happy and safe

adults → feel safe.
→ consistent with rules
Do as they say - I can trust them

In year 5

'circle of friends' group with Mrs ▢ and ▢

earning friends for lunch/JJ time makes me happy

makes me feel happy and calm

My room (safe, personal space)
make me happy and feel safe.

Sensory circuit makes me feel happy.

Friends
drawing
typing P.E.
Help me succeed by keeping me calm.
fiddle toys
sharing jokes with adults

visual timetable to help me know what I'm doing and when.

This year

Child 17

My journey through school
What made me feel happy, safe and good about myself

At first it made me had a buddy but when it made me feel sad. The adult tried to find me and me friend called ▮▮▮ (now 14) found me. I felt reassured.
At first it made me feel safe

In Y5 we had online school. It was okay I guess.

They gave me a buddy who was supposed to show me around but she didn't and I ended up getting lost.

me when I got lost.

When I started school

I got a friend named ▮▮▮ and she always played with me. She made me feel happy.

We had a castle in year 1 that I liked to go in. It made me feel safe.

▮▮▮ always makes me feel excited, happy and safe.

In years 1 & 2

The head teacher, Mrs ▮▮▮ let's you do colouring at Lunch if you don't want to play outside.

This made me feel happy + safe.

In Y4 I made another friend named ▮▮▮. I still keep in touch with her now.

In year 3 I started bringing Y's to school. They are small toys about the size of an adults hand. They made me feel safe happy.
In year 3 I also made another friend named ▮▮▮. I didn't really like her.
In year 4 I met ▮▮▮. She my best friend now.

In years 3 & 4

moved to Hamble but thankfully didn't move schools.

There's a fish tank near reception that makes me feel calm and safe.

moved schools. I was very sad and devastated.

▮▮▮ moved schools. I was happy about that.

This year (year 6) ▮▮▮ moved schools and I was extremely sad but atleast I still have ▮▮▮. I still have ▮▮▮ number so we still keep in touch. We also recently had a sleepover.

This year

We hardly ever get to go to the fish tank though.

In year 5 we Every year we had to do a flu vaccine thing. They squirt a liquid into your nose.
In year 5 I brought in a Y named 'Peewee' and the lady who did the vaccine gave Peewee a sticker. I felt very happy about that.

In year 5

The friendship bench blew down from the weather and I never saw it since.

There was a friendship bench in the playground. When you sit on it it would snow that you had no one to play with and other people would ask if you wanted to play with them.

It had pillows *

This made me feel safe + happy.

E.4   Field notes from observations

Field notes: observations about the case study school

Background

I visited the school on four occasions in the summer term of 2020. Visits took place during Covid-19 disruptions at a stage where schools had to teach children in bubbles. Children and their class teacher where one social bubble. Many adjustments were made to the daily activities and environment of the school. Lunch and break times were staggered so space could be used in bubbles. This resulted in some children eating lunch in their classrooms. The playground was also used in rotation to ensure bubbles remained separate. Adults wore masks to move around school and could choose to wear masks in the classroom. Physical spaces were changed with some items removed such as soft-surfaced items to avoid cross-contamination.

Users

Children, teachers, other staff, families, governors and visitors have access to the school building.

Activities

- **Social interactions**

I witnessed many informal social interactions between adults and children. Children were seen freely engaging with Jane and other staff when informal opportunities arose moving around the school. Encounters appeared positive and often light-hearted involving laughter. Both pupils and staff were involved in initiating and maintaining conversations. There was a sense of genuine warmth during many interactions.

- **Music**

On the tour a well-resourced music room was observed. During repeated visits there was evidence of music lessons taking place and children were heard singing. There were large numbers of certain instruments, such as ukuleles, which appeared to be available for whole class music sessions. Jane

explained that all children had the opportunity to experience playing five instruments during their time at the school. Jane explained that children can borrow instruments free of charge for the duration of their involvement in lessons with the peripatetic music teacher.

- *Art*

There are large, colourful sculptures of animals in communal areas such as the main hall evoking a fun and sense of play. In addition there was lots of colour including display boards with pupils' creations.

The school website has an article about the purpose of introducing the large animal sculptures into school:

> *'Meet Cherby the [school name] Zebra*
>
> *Cherby's design has been chosen to represent the exciting and stimulating art techniques experienced by the children at [school name] Primary School. The vibrant and varied colours in the zebras coat reflect the inclusive ethos of the school and the children's creativity, excitement and enthusiasm for learning.*
>
> *Children in Key Stage One and [school name] Pre School have enjoyed contributing to the variety of mixed media and materials on the stripes that cover Cherby's coat.*
>
> *The zips reveal the zebra's true colours underneath-reminding us that we can still stay true to ourselves while taking occasional risks and expressing different sides of our personality.'*

Environment

The school comprises a Victorian single story building which has been extended. There is a limited outside space, which predominantly comprises a hard surface. Internal and external environments are clean and well looked after.

- **Internal space**

Wellbeing information in the school

There is a display presenting the golden rules in the reception are which is visible to all visitors to the school including children and families. They are additionally available on the school website. It appears that these rules are familiar to the whole school community.

Displays about wellbeing were prevalent around the school, being found in the reception area, hallways, classrooms and the staff room. Content has been changed between the initial and final visits'

By the final visit a 'wellbeing wall' was being constructed in the reception are. There is a prominent banner in the reception area of school asking 'Are you ok?' Its situation makes it visible to children, staff, families and other visitors. Additionally, a small table next to the seating in this area is resourced with leaflets related to wellbeing which may be taken away by pupils and families

There appeared to be a celebration of diversity. One display in the reception area entitled 'People like me' used a variety of vocabulary which appeared conducive for wellbeing. Words included 'special', 'love', 'unique', 'kindness', 'compassion'.

There was a further wall display involving a school polo shirt with many stains on it. The display reframes the stains as the activities the child has participated in giving a sense of the energy, fun and learning that has gone on.

Reception area

It appears that the reception area was used to show case important aspects of the school to visitors. There were many wall displays with an emphasis on wellbeing, embracing diversity (people like us), the golden rules and the analogy of the polo shirt.

There is a fish tank which evokes a calm, peaceful feeling.

Staff room

The semi-structured interview took place in the staff room. A central, large table enabled a space to eat lunch, work and chat. More comfortable seating was also available. The room had a small kitchen area. Tom explained that a wellbeing display has recently been taken down and was awaiting a new one in its place.

Other

Resource provision is at the centre of the school and strategies are used for children to take part in as much of the school day as possible.

Appendix E

- **External space**

Despite being relatively small, it is clear that the space has been carefully designed to incorporate separate areas with distinct functions. There is also a sense of fun, for example using Frog-shaped litter bins. There is an outside amphitheatre space where things like circle time can take place. Others areas included wooden built play structures, painted templates for games on the playground surface, a climbing wall. Other features included a gargoyle adapted for water play, and a traditional gypsy caravan. Small play items were scattered around the playground such as Duplo. This suggests that a number of different ways of play are accommodated by the school eg. noisy play, physical play, quiet play. Boat shaped climbing frame & other big play equipment. Sand pit. An astro-turfed area for playing games which also had the effect of introducing a calm, natural colour into the playground.

From the website:

> 'A brief was prepared with staff and children to develop a small external play area for outdoor learning and play.
>
> The space was sub divided to provide areas to sit in shade, perform and socialise. An area to teach cycle proficiency was enclosed with a bespoke timber screen, which was scorched to create attractive patterns on the face.'

There is a traditional Romany caravan in the playground which children are free to play inside and around. Two younger children were observed playing with Duplo under the caravan during one playtime. Jane explained that this object was introduced at a time where a travellers' site was being proposed in the local area. Jane wanted to encourage pupils to understand this different way of living ahead of these new children attending the school. She used the caravan as a symbol around which a conversation could be developed. This gives a sense of reflecting the school's vision of inclusion, embracing different, respecting everybody and living with kindness and compassion.

During data collection
- Jane's interview

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On the occasions where I met Jane in her office, Jane encouraged meetings to be conducted in casual chairs rather than formally at the desk. Between the chairs was a table with collections of natural objects such as stones, shells and twigs. During our meetings it was evident that Jane maintained an awareness of things going on outside office. She broke off conversation at one point to listen in to raised adult and child voices in the corridor outside her office. At another time she smiled and conveyed warmth in observing children playing outside the office window. It appears that Jane is very connected into the daily activities of the school.

Jane appeared a very energetic and enthusiastic advocate of wellbeing promotion and clearly had a long track record in designing, delivering and evolving practice in this area. Furthermore, she demonstrated strong opinions and had a clear vision of what she considered to work and not work. She was overtly critical of practice which she felt fell short of her high standards. Jane was very honest about instances where she felt her own thoughts and actions had resulted in mistakes and showed how she reflected on these moments to find different solutions for the future.

- Tom's interview

Tom's interview took place in the staff room. As Tom kept his mask on for the duration, I copied his lead and left my mask in place. The mask made it more difficult to pick up non verbal cues such as facial expressions during the interview. I also felt that the masks were physical barrier to our dialogue and wondered about the psychological impact they had on the interview. I wondered whether they inhibited Tom talking more candidly or whether they allowed him to reveal things he may not have said otherwise.

Tom had obviously prepared for the interview having reflected on the interview schedule I had sent beforehand. He appeared to seriously consider his answers, appeared genuine in the content he gave and appeared to value being asked to give his opinions. Tom's authenticity for the importance of wellbeing amongst children and staff was very evident throughout the time I spent with him.

- **Children during the mapping activity**

The activity took place during Covid. I was able to be in the same room as the children but could not be within 2m of them. Due to the size of the room I was only able to stay in one spot close to the door. I could not move around whilst children were doing the tasks. It felt like I was on the outside of the teacher/pupil bubble.

Children were able to sit where they wanted. They appeared happy. The session was quite noisy but was done in the last two weeks before they were leaving school. The following week they were going on a residential trip. Most children made eye contact or spoke to me.

The activity took place in a room where there were two big tables. The classroom teacher was present. One child with a SEN worked behind a screen with an LSA for the duration of the activity. There was no interaction between themselves and other pupils.

Children chose where they sat. I encouraged them to be experts of their own thoughts and feelings and to complete the map individually.

There was one hour 15mins for the task. Most children started to return to their classrooms after an hour.

Children were animated in their groups and chatted throughout the task. All children completed the task at the same time. The class teacher quietened and refocussed the group at several points within the task. The teacher asked the children to think about the different years they had been in school, focussing on the key words of the task. Some children vocalised that it was difficult to think back to when they were young.

E.5   Documents included in the analysis

- Behaviour policy
- Equality duty for schools 2019-2021
- Ofsted inspection letter 2018
- PDL curriculum 2020
- PDL RHSE policy
- Positive mental health for pupils policy
- Wellbeing policy

E.6   A worked example of the analytic process using extracts from Jane's narrative interview

A worked example of the reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) process

This worked example is illustrated using the narrative interview with the head teacher. Braun and Clark's (2013) RTA analysis process was used for all qualitative data across the phases of the PhD project. Whilst an Excel workbook was deemed most appropriate to manipulate the large volume of data and data sources associated with the case study, Nvivo version 12 was used to organise and explore data in the systematic literature review and secondary data analysis. In both instances, the analytic process remained the same.

Step one: Identifying relevant and meaningful data extracts

The step presents an excerpt from the full narrative interview transcript in E.1. Where data were identified as relevant and meaningful an extract number was allocated by using the comments function of the Word document. The extract was highlighted using colour coding to identify different topics. In this example: yellow = changes in wellbeing practice, green = strategies for wellbeing, blue = leadership practice and purple = pupil voice.

'you could see that staff wanted change. They really did want change, but they - the distance between where they felt they were at and where they wanted to get to was SO immense. So, so it really - I had no choice to work out how to do this in a sustainable way, in a fair way (J15)

and I think you know there's, there's lots of things that we've done over the years and I'll try and build those into the biography of the school, but I think primarily they have been consistent (3), consistent traits of, of kindness, of compassion, of, ((sigh)) (4) of listening, of, of recognising when you don't get it right. You know and I suppose that that does come from a confident sort of leadership, (J16) to be able to say… You know only this morning I [laughs] had a couple of very anxious parents in a, quite a difficult online meeting and they were being supported in that, and I thought I'd be helpful… [*headteacher narrates a scenario which is excluded from this transcript at the head's request*] (J17)

and there were several lessons in there for me. One is - of course I just assume I have the right to go anywhere I'm the head ((laughs)) (J18)

So that's a good example of - I do feel quite powerful, you know, there's no door that's closed but, a really good reminder that actually although I did it from trying to be supportive of the needs -

I wasn't respectful of - I didn't make the right approach given [*the reason is excluded from this transcript*]

Although, I think potentially it, it may have then eased the situation in the room because then [*the reason is removed from the transcript*] towards me and that had been, sort of eased some of the tension ((laughs)). It was inadvertent

and if that did happen, I wasn't, it wasn't planned. But you know, I think it's about - so being reflective. Reflective practitioner is, is massively important to that as well, (J19) I'm sure we'll sort of pick up other traits along the way. So, (3) so I suppose in the first place it's about building pupil voice, you know - making sure that ((sigh)) we did a lot of work around the rights of the child. '(J20)

Step two: coding the extracted dataset

The data extracts were entered into an Excel spreadsheet for easy manipulation to aid the analysis. Extracts were allocated a descriptive code. After considerable immersion in the data, a second interpretive code was employed to explore how the head teacher made sense of these topics related to whole-school wellbeing promotion. Over time codes were aggregated into sub-themes and overarching themes. This process was not linear but involved toing and froing between the stages.

Extract Number	Extract from transcript	1st iteration: descriptive code	2nd iteration: interpretive code	Sub-theme	Theme
J15	you could see that staff wanted change. They really did want change, but they - the distance between where they felt they were at and where they wanted to get to was SO immense. So, so it really - I had no choice to work out how to do this in a sustainable way, in a fair way	Momentum for change	Momentum for change as a tipping point	Change in practice	Continual change in wellbeing practice
J16	I think primarily they have been consistent (3), consistent traits of, of kindness, of compassion, of, ((sigh)) (4) of listening, of, of recognising when you don't get it right. You know and I suppose that that does come from a confident sort of leadership,	School's traits	School culture as a series of traits	A leadership vision for promoting whole school wellbeing	Leadership and wellbeing

J17	You know only this morning I [laughs] had a couple of very anxious parents in a, quite a difficult online meeting and they were being supported in that, and I thought I'd be helpful… [headteacher narrates a scenario which is excluded from this transcript at the head's request] and there were several lessons in there for me. One is - of course I just assume I have the right to go anywhere I'm the head ((laughs)) So that's a good example of - I do feel quite powerful, you know, there's no door that's closed but, a really good reminder that actually although I did it from trying to be supportive of the needs - I wasn't respectful of - I didn't make the right approach given [the reason is excluded from this transcript]	Leadership power	Leadership power as an illustration of not getting it right	A leadership vision for promoting whole-school wellbeing	Leadership and wellbeing
J18	there were several lessons in there for me. One is - of course I just assume I have the right to go anywhere I'm the head	Not getting it right	Not getting it right as an opportunity for reflective practice	A leadership vision for promoting whole-school wellbeing	Leadership and wellbeing

J19	I think potentially it, it may have then eased the situation in the room because then [the reason is removed from the transcript] towards me and that had been, sort of eased some of the tension ((laughs)). It was inadvertent and if that did happen, I wasn't, it wasn't planned. But you know, I think it's about - so being reflective. Reflective practitioner is, is massively important to that as well	Reflective practice	Reflective practice as a driver for leadership	A leadership vision for promoting whole-school wellbeing	Leadership and wellbeing
J20	so I suppose in the first place it's about building pupil voice, you know - making sure that ((sigh)) we did a lot of work around the rights of the child.	Pupil voice	Pupil voice as respecting children	Strategies for children's wellbeing	Strategies for wellbeing

<u>Step three: sorting the data by themes and sub-themes</u>

The extracts were sorted by theme and sub-theme to group Jane's narrative by the developed themes.

Three extracts related to leadership vision as a mechanism of school culture including extract J16.

Extract Number	Extract from transcript	1st iteration: descriptive code	2nd iteration: interpretive code	Sub-theme	Theme
J63	so for example we're about to do one around racism and being you know an anti-racist school which you know that would be something that we would definitely say that we were. But, actually, with it all	School culture	School culture as a driver of school values	A leadership vision for promoting whole school wellbeing	Leadership and wellbeing

	everywhere sometimes you need to, sort of, re calibrate where we as a school stand within that. So, the issue at the moment that also gives a framework to how those conversations can be held by staff as well				
J16	I think primarily they have been consistent (3), consistent traits of, of kindness, of compassion, of, ((sigh)) (4) of listening, of, of recognising when you don't get it right. You know and I suppose that that does come from a confident sort of leadership,	School culture	School culture as a series of traits	A leadership vision for promoting whole school wellbeing	Leadership and wellbeing
J22	we've always geared much more towards restoration and to making behavioural change, and giving children the skills to change which takes time but actually again being respectful in how we how we model our approach to sanction and to repairing relationships and restoring justice, if that's what you want to call it	School culture	School culture as restoring relationships/justice	A leadership vision for promoting whole school wellbeing	Leadership and wellbeing

A further three extracts related to leadership power within the theme of leadership and wellbeing, including extract J17:

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Extract Number	Extract from narrative interview transcript	1st iteration: descriptive code	2nd iteration: interpretive code	Sub-theme	Theme
J11	I am very much the head so in that sense I don't delude myself that I, I hope I use - I mean like Spiderman with great power comes great responsibility ((smiling voice)) I hope I do use my power responsibly and I, as I say I'm not a fool I understand I do have power BUT I do try not to control others or be controlling.	Leadership power	Leadership power as a requirement for responsibility	A leadership vision for promoting whole school wellbeing - power	Leadership and wellbeing
J85	that responsibility. We are, we are powerful people so we can get people to talk, but we shouldn't unless we are genuinely able to help them. I'm not a therapist	Leadership power	Leadership power as responsibility	A leadership vision for promoting whole school wellbeing - power	Leadership and wellbeing

| J17 | You know only this morning I [laughs] had a couple of very anxious parents in a, quite a difficult online meeting and they were being supported in that, and I thought I'd be helpful… [headteacher narrates a scenario which is excluded from this transcript at the head's request] and there were several lessons in there for me. One is - of course I just assume I have the right to go anywhere I'm the head ((laughs)) So that's a good example of - I do feel quite powerful, you know, there's no door that's closed but, a really good reminder that actually although I did it from trying to be supportive of the needs - I wasn't respectful of - I didn't make the right approach given [the reason is excluded from this transcript] | Leadership power | Leadership power as an illustration of not getting it right | A leadership vision for promoting whole school wellbeing | Leadership and wellbeing |

Step four: developing an audit trail from coding to theme development, illustrating how extracts J16 & J17 were subsumed into sub-themes and themes

Theme　　　　　Sub-theme　　　　　Codes

- Leadership and wellbeing
  - A leadership vision for promoting whole school wellbeing
    - Leadership vision driving practice
      - Meeting wellbeing needs
      - Language for wellbeing
      - School culture as a driver of wellbeing
      - Traits of school culture　　J16
    - Leadership power
      - Taking responsibility
      - Not getting it right　　J17
    - Leadership styles
      - Adopting reflective practice
      - 'Walking the talk'
  - Distributed leadership style for promoting wellbeing
    - Collaboration with staff

- Strategies for wellbeing
  - Strategic tools for promoting wellbeing
    - Facilitating risk taking
      - Learning
      - Forest school
    - Belonging/connection
    - Promoting all domains of wellbeing
    - Providing role models
    - Challenges to promoting wellbeing
  - Strategies for children's wellbeing
    - Self-responsibility as a mechanism for wellbeing
      - Pupil voice
      - Celebration
      - Specific praise
    - Additional opportunities for promoting wellbeing
      - Residential trips
      - Day trips
      - Offsetting disadvantage

Theme　　　　　Sub-theme　　　　　Codes

- Continual change in wellbeing practice
  - Change in practice
    - Change as a mechanism for innovation
    - Change as continuous
    - Tipping points for rapid change
  - Embedding and sustaining practice
    - Embedding practice as a mechanism for sustainability
      - Formalising practice
      - Adopting frameworks for guiding practice
      - Using outcome measures
        - Formal measures
        - Informal measures
    - Adapting practice as a mechanism for sustainability

- Context and wellbeing promotion
  - Context and leadership
    - Importance of head teacher's context
      - Previous experience
      - Existing expertise in promoting wellbeing
    - Developing partnerships for wellbeing
  - The school's internal context
    - Relationships of trust
      - Trust as a driver of wellbeing
      - Relationships with parents
  - The wider context: factors which help promote wellbeing
    - Partnerships with external organisations
    - Recognition of good practice amongst the local community
  - The wider context: factors which hinder wellbeing practice
    - Lack of understanding amongst other educational stakeholders
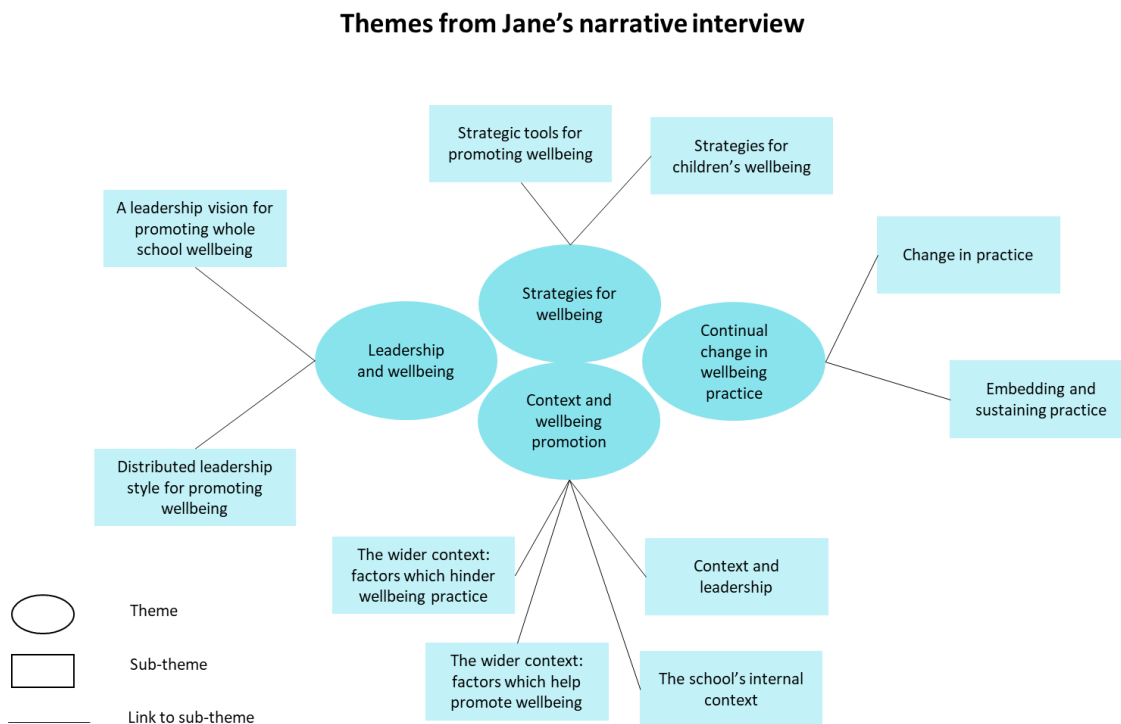   - Opinions of public/media

Step five: Reviewing potential themes

Braun and Clarke's (2012, p. 65) series of key questions was used to review potential themes:

- Is this a theme (it could be just a code)?

- If it is a theme, what is the quality of this theme (does it tell me something useful about the data set and my research question)?

- What are the boundaries of this theme (what does it include and exclude)?

- Are there enough (meaningful) data to support this theme (is the theme thin or thick)?

- Are the data too diverse and wide ranging (does the theme lack coherence)?

Step five: Creating a thematic map

Themes from Jane's narrative interview

E.7   Audit trail from coding to theme development for the case study analysis

Theme   Sub-theme   Coding

Theme one: A whole school vision and design for promoting wellbeing

- **The vision**
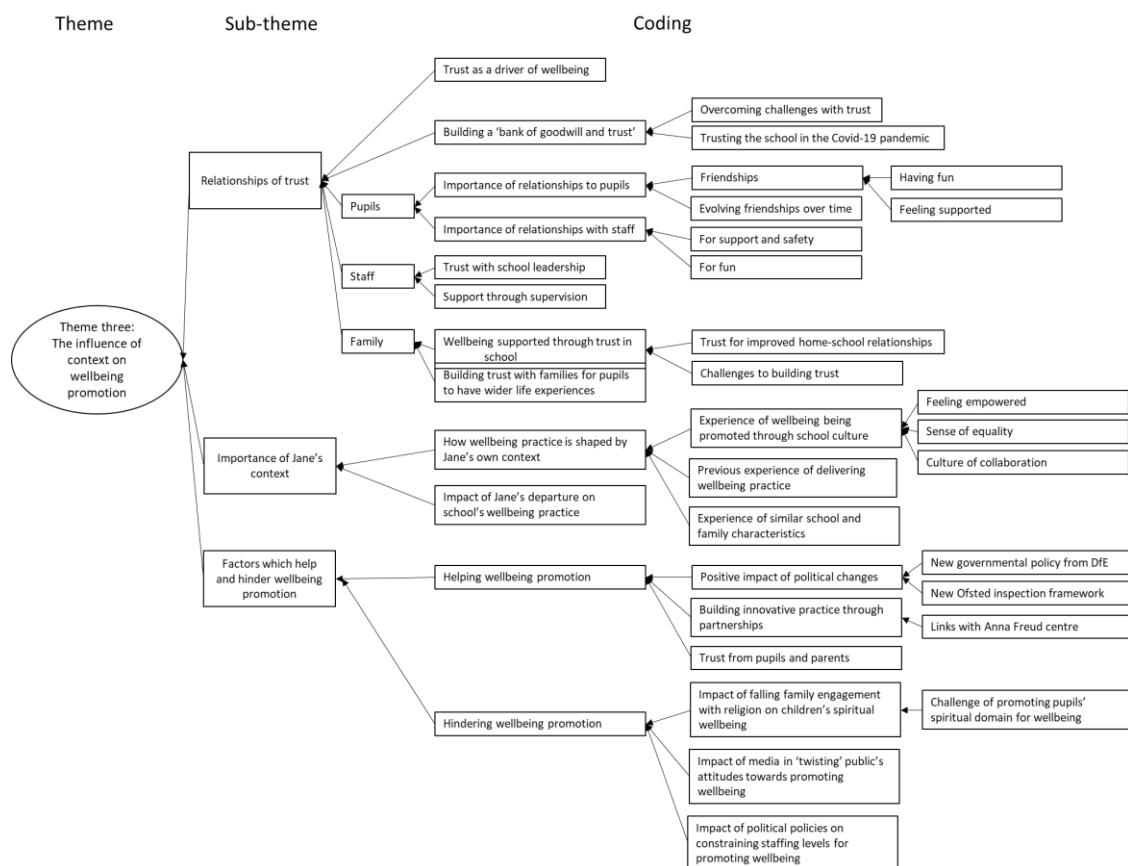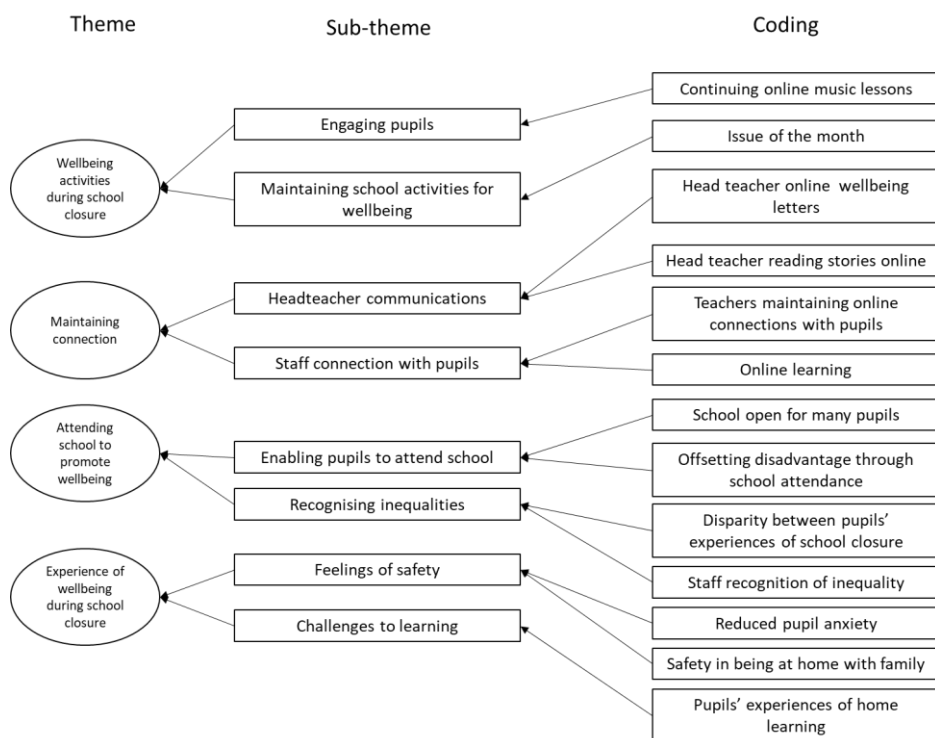 - Whole-school approach → Focus on pupil, staff and family wellbeing; Involving everyone
  - Whole child → Embeddedness in environment; Embracing individuality
  - Meeting needs → Addressing individual wellbeing needs
  - Pupils' lived experiences at school

- **A design for whole school wellbeing promotion**
  - Teaching and learning
    - Teaching and learning → PDL curriculum → Developing skills and knowledge for wellbeing; Meeting class needs
    - Integrating wellbeing into other curricula → Practising skills related to wellbeing; Promoting satisfaction and achievement
    - Celebration → Reward schemes → Pupils' enjoyment of rewards; Celebrating connection
    - Specific praise → To promote self-validation for pupils; To develop pupils' self-worth
  - Additional opportunities
    - Pupil voice → Promote respect; Facilitate inclusivity
    - For wider life experiences → Through arts and music; Forest school; Residential stays and school trips → Addressing negative emotions; Overcoming challenges

- **Culture of wellbeing**
  - Shared language of wellbeing
  - Traits of school culture → Culture as a mechanism for developing values
  - Culture for belonging → Staff-led strategies; Pupil-led class belonging
  - Pupils' lived experiences of school culture
  - Importance of environmental objects for pupil wellbeing

Theme   Sub-theme   Coding

Theme two: The process of implementing and sustaining wellbeing promotion

- **Leadership**
  - Traits of leadership
    - 'Walking the talk'
    - Power in leadership → Responsibility and power; Using power wisely; Not getting it right
  - Distributed leadership
    - As a mechanism for trust
    - For staff wellbeing

- **Embedding and formalising practice**
  - Guidance for implementation → Building fixed 'joists' for wellbeing practice; Using evidence-based theories and models
  - Outcome measures → Adapting existing measures; Formal measurement → For strategic planning; Informal measurement → Address short-term needs

- **Evolving and sustaining practice**
  - Speed of change → Tipping points → Rapid change; Regular wellbeing practice ← Slower change
  - Continual change in wellbeing practice
  - 'Keeping it on the agenda' → Through social interactions; Changing displays
  - Environmental influence on changing practice → External environment → Political policy change; Innovation through partnerships; School environment → Organically adapting existing wellbeing practice

Definitions and Abbreviations

Theme   Sub-theme   Coding

Audit trail for theme development relating to promoting wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic

Theme   Sub-theme   Coding

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