

**Gwobr Ansawdd Genedlaethol
Rhwydwaith Cynlluniau Ysgolion Iach Cymru**



**Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes
National Quality Award**

**National Quality Award Report
of the visit to Trinity Fields School, Caerphilly**

22nd and 23rd March 2018

Introduction

Congratulations on achieving the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes National Quality Award. We are pleased to confirm that Trinity Fields School has demonstrated meeting all the criteria of the National Quality Award. These criteria are set out against 7 health topics which are shown below.

Schools that achieve the NQA are implementing wellbeing initiatives at the very highest level. In this report we highlight the particular strengths of your school's approach to promoting the wellbeing of everyone connected with the school. This report also identifies areas for continued development and consideration. We hope that the report is both an encouragement and a useful guide as pupils and staff at Trinity Fields School seek to maintain and extend the excellent approach and embedding it even further in to school life.

NQA Criteria

1. Food and fitness (nutrition and physical activity)
2. Mental and emotional health and wellbeing, including staff wellbeing
3. Personal development and relationships, including sex and relationships education
4. Substance use and misuse, including alcohol, smoking, and drugs (legal, illegal, and prescription).
5. Environment, including eco-initiatives and improving the school and wider environment
6. Safety, including a variety of topics such as child protection, sun safety, internet safety, and first aid
7. Hygiene including across school and non-school settings

The criteria are supported by a number of underlying principles, namely:

- The importance of pupil participation in core areas of school life which directly affect the health and wellbeing of children and young people e.g. teaching and learning, environment, pastoral care
- The importance of the understanding and commitment to action of the whole school community
- The existence of a positive approach to health
- Equality
- Links to other relevant national and local programme and policies.

(For further information on the NQA criteria please visit <http://gov.wales/topics/health/improvement/schools/?lang=en>).

John Griffiths

Summary of Visit

The key indicator of a healthy school is that the concept of health and wellbeing is truly embedded in the culture and ethos of the school. From the first moment of arrival to the conclusion of the NQA visit it was abundantly clear that this is truly the case in Trinity Fields School. The 'whole school approach' to health and wellbeing is comprehensive in nature and embraces the students, staff, parents and carers and those in the community who have contact with the school.

The evidence provided by the school for review, observations made during the school tour, knowledge gained from conversations with students, staff, parents and carers and representatives of the local community evidenced the amazing health promoting practice of the school, elements of which are featured in the remainder of this report.

The senior management team led by the Headteacher Mr Ian Elliot MBE has provided strong and consistent leadership that places health and wellbeing at the heart of school life. The healthy schools co-ordinator, Katie Rupnik (as did the previous co-ordinator Kellan Groves), excellently co-ordinates, facilitates and leads the healthy schools process and our thanks as verifiers go to her and Mr Elliot, together with all the other members of staff, for making the NQA visit such a straightforward process and such a pleasure.

Considerable credit must be given to the Governing Body which fully recognises the importance of protecting and promoting the health and wellbeing of everyone within the school community. As one governor stated, 'Pupils are at the heart of everything we do – they have to want to be here'. From conversations that took place during the NQA visit it is clear that the Governors are well informed, fully engaged and very supportive.

Of note is that the Headteacher has objectives for health and wellbeing within his role and responsibilities. It was very evident that the Governors strongly believe in pupil voice and that in doing so they proactively look for opportunities to involve and engage with pupils whenever possible. Governors have clear responsibilities as typified by the Vice Chair of Governors, Mr Brian Witchell who in addition to being the pastoral governor also has responsibility for health and safety and safeguarding. The Governing Body, through 'Link Governors' is actively involved in issues such as Digital Competencies and Investors in Families; as part of their role governors attend school-based training on these issues, as and when training is offered.

The school places a very high priority on the development of excellent relationships with parents and carers and this commitment has led to many positive outcomes. The primary form of day-to-day communication with parents and carers is through the mobile phone / text service and the diary that each child carries with them.

However these forms of communication are complemented in a number of ways, including the running of a variety of parent workshops, which include the 'Physio workshop', 'Sign Along' workshop, Touch Trust sessions to enable parents to more fully understand their children's educational goals and a 'Parents Workshop'. All of the workshops provide an opportunity for parents to meet and chat about issues facing themselves and their children.

As one parent noted, 'being a parent is quite isolating, especially for children who travel by bus or taxi to and from school, as there is no opportunity for interaction with other parents at the school gates'. Other workshops have included 'Sensory on a string', feedback from which indicated a desire for separate 'mum and dad workshops' to better empower and give confidence to mums; the 'Better Out Than In workshop and the workshop on 'Positive Looking'.

The school actively supports the PTA which has grown in strength in recent years. The PTA runs a number of parents' events and seeks feedback on them. Parents commented on the challenges they face in taking their children to the cinema and from these observations it was suggested that a film night for families could be organised. The suggestion was taken up, space was made available in school and film nights are now a successful part of the PTA programme. Christmas Shopping trips are organised and teachers and parents / carers participate. These trips have helped to increase parents / carers involvement in the school and it was noted that as a result of the trips parents / carers feel more able to approach school staff on matters relating to their child. Parents are encouraged to attend Sports Day(s) and groups of parents have been formed to take forward specific tasks, such as developing areas of the school grounds.

Conversations with parents revealed a very positive appreciation of all that the school is and does, with mention made of the 'open' ethos and culture and the very positive attitudes of the school staff. Several comments related to the fact that Trinity Fields School is a happy place. The care and concern shown by staff was highlighted and as one parent said, 'everyone takes time with you; you are made to feel really welcome and comfortable'.

Trinity Fields has held the Investors in Family Award for some time – it has been re-accredited three times, indicating the school's absolute commitment to supporting and working with families. Again exemplary practice.

The school has fabulous links with the community and community groups. Among these is SNAP Cymru, a parent-led organisation that has been in existence for 30 years. The main aim of SNAP Cymru is to, '*advance the education of people in Wales and support their inclusion. SNAP Cymru offers free and independent information, advice and support to help get the right education for children and young people with all kinds of special educational needs (SEN) and disabilities*'. SNAP Cymru works very closely with the school and is very willing to assist parents / carers in exploring any issues that they and their children might be facing.

Other community-based groups that benefit from the open door policy at Trinity Fields include the local 'Water Babies' group and the Spondylitis Club.

The school also hosts two external agencies and the visit included conversations with representatives of both. The first provides support to children and families in their homes; the Home Support Worker described the nature of the work undertaken, with work taking place with up to 55 families at any given time. It was pointed out that the role sometimes means working in challenging circumstance, where empathy, counselling and bringing a sense of calm are all-important features of the work.

The second organisation hosted by Trinity Fields is the Caerphilly Autism Service (CAS). The service provides assistance and support to young people and families who are dealing with autism. This support includes training for families, individual home support and individual support for children in schools across the Caerphilly area. A particular emphasis is given to communication issues and techniques. Children are observed at home and at school, triggers are identified and tailored training is then provided to lessen the frequency and impact of the triggers.

Trinity Fields has been working with the Children's Commissioner for Wales to become a pilot school for the UNICEF Rights Respecting Schools Award, and achieved Level 2 of UNICEF's Rights Respecting School Award at the beginning of 2017, the first school in Caerphilly County Borough to do so. This work has directly impacted on life in the school in a number of ways and the values that shape and underpin the life of the school are clearly evidenced across all school activities. We were very impressed by how polite, caring and kind pupils were with staff and visitors and particularly with each other.

Article 12 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that, '*Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously*'. Evidence presented at the visit clearly showed that this article is fully embedded. Wherever possible pupils are encouraged to fully engage in the life of the school and to 'have their say' on matters that affect them. The active school council provides an excellent vehicle for pupils to be represented and heard and the presentation from the members of the school council indicated very clearly how passionate they are about their role and how they see themselves as advocates for health. Meetings of the school council are now being videoed to facilitate record keeping and the dissemination of information.

Much work has been undertaken to produce pupil friendly policies that enable pupils with less complex needs to access key information about their school. The school council has played a key role in the development of these policies. The policies themselves and the manner of their development are both exemplary practice.

There are approximately 135 staff at Trinity Fields School, with this figure including Saturday and holiday staff. Special mention must be made of the steps taken by the school to protect and promote the wellbeing of staff. A truly comprehensive approach has been adopted and this is underpinned by the absolute commitment of the Headteacher, senior management team and governors to protect and promote staff wellbeing.

Team bonding sessions have been run and staff can access and participate in a wide range of health enhancing activities, including the Fitness Club, the Running Club and massages – for which they are released from class for 30 minutes. 20 staff have participated in a taster session on Mindfulness and another session is planned.

The staff room has recently been refurbished, with staff being given the opportunity to comment on the designs. Staff reported a very positive attitude to the school leadership team. Aspects of the work of this team that were appreciated included the 'open-door' policy, the provision of time-out after an incident and the way in which debriefs were

undertaken.

Staff also highlighted the healthy workplace ethos, noting that there were good staff facilities and that Trinity Fields was a happy place in which to work, where confidence and self-esteem were promoted and that collectively they were, 'a strong team'.

A whole staff-training day on healthy schools was run in January 2016. This 'whole-school' training highlights the priority that is given to protecting and promoting health and wellbeing. Staff training and professional development are seen as being of vital importance and the school has great processes in place to enable staff to access relevant training and CPD.

Good links are in place with external agencies, whose involvement complement classroom activity, included among these are South Wales Fire and Rescue and South Wales Police.

The school has very good facilities and makes excellent use of them – of note is the way in which the school allows use of its facilities outside the school day and the steps it takes to actively facilitate and encourage this. Parent groups are able to use the hall and café; Rebounders have a presence within the school as do Splash. It was very positive to note that the siblings of pupils are able and encouraged to attend weekend and holiday activities.

The tour of the school, brilliantly led by the Head Girl, Tilly Doman and Head Boy, Luke Pickard further evidenced the excellent school facilities. Highlights included the recently upgraded playground, the sports and physical activity areas, the teaching rooms, the sensory room and sensory gardens and the swimming and hydrotherapy pools.

Even though not specifically 'health related', a wide variety of the actions described in this section have directly impacted on the health and wellbeing of the school community and those associated with it. This broad based approach has led to the creation of a stable platform on which the schools' sustainable health and wellbeing initiatives have been built.

The remainder of this report highlights some of the strengths in each of the 7 health topic areas. It goes without saying that it is impossible to set out in this report the number, depth and scope of the activities being undertaken at Trinity Fields School that directly and indirectly promote the health and wellbeing of the school community and all associated with it.

The NQA is fully deserved and Trinity Fields School is an excellent exemplar of what it truly means to be a healthy school.

Highlights of the visit

Mental and Emotional Health and Wellbeing

- A wide range of appropriate and relevant policies and plans are in place. These policies underpin the very positive actions taken across the school to protect and promote the mental and emotional health and wellbeing of pupils and staff. Examples of these policies and plans include The Strategic Equalities Plan 2016 – 2020, the Safeguarding Policy, the Equalities Policy, the Inclusion Policy and the Health and Wellbeing Policy.
- The ethos of the school is overwhelmingly positive. In describing the school staff used phrases such as, “wanting to be here”, “a happy place”, “it doesn’t feel like work”, “small achievements are so important”, “the children feel safe and their progress is so important for future life”.
- Proactive steps are taken to demonstrate worth and value to the pupils and their parents and carers. The weekly ‘Star Award’ assemblies and the summer ‘keys to Success’ events celebrate pupil achievements. The use of the ‘Seesaw App’ enables parents and carers to be informed of and view their children’s successes.
- The use of the ‘WOW’ Boards provides further opportunity for pupil self-esteem to be built up.
- Older students use red / green reversible wristbands as part of the THRIVE Project to indicate whether they are feeling ‘OK’ or ‘not OK’. This enables staff to appreciate how the student is feeling and tailor their interactions with them accordingly. The THRIVE approach is based on the principle that ‘every child needs to feel valued, involved and appreciated’.
- The Better Out Than In (BOTI) Programme that is being run in Trinity Fields aims to ‘support children and young people to build resilience and inspire learning through connecting with animals and nature’. An observed BOTI session indicated just how much the pupils were gaining from their experience and how engaged and participative they were.
- A very high priority is placed on the mental and emotional wellbeing of staff with a number of debrief and support measures in place that can be quickly activated should the need arise.
- Excellent procedures are in place for dealing with bereavement and providing pupils and staff with support, care and compassion.
- We observed a music therapy session with an individual pupil. This was so effective in improving mood and encouraging him in pre-speech sound making – a fantastic example of person centred education and planning in action.

Personal Development and Relationships

Trinity Fields School has adopted an excellent and comprehensive whole school approach to personal development and relationships that is built on the excellent policy framework that shapes and informs process. Particular strengths of the approach include:

- The school has developed an excellent SRE policy, from which a pupil friendly version has been derived.
- All national and local guidance is being met.
- Schemes of work are comprehensive, age appropriate and facilitate tailoring to meet the individual needs of pupils.
- Pupils in the 14 – 19 learning pathway can access a range of courses from ASDAN and Agored Cymru courses. ASDAN is an educational charity and awarding body that ‘provides curriculum programmes and qualifications that equip learners to thrive in 21st Century education, work and life’.
- An excellent SRE session was observed, with pupils working at different levels and able to choose tasks once the first set task has been completed.
- Awareness-raising sessions and information leaflets are provided for parents so that they can understand the material that their children will be using, and are able to discuss the issues that might arise with their children.
- The learning tasks are individually designed according to the ability and cognition of the student – examples included “what is mine and what is someone else’s”, “what is private and what is public” and the names and position of the parts of the body.
- The delivery of the SRE programme is dealt with very sensitively and is delivered by experienced school staff.

Food and Fitness

Fitness

The topics of food and fitness are very comprehensively addressed by Trinity Fields School, with excellent use being made of the wide range of facilities available across the school campus. A very positive emphasis is placed on physical activity and the promotion of exercise for all. Actions in these topic areas are underpinned by the Trinity Fields ‘Food and Fitness Policy’. This policy has been agreed with staff and the school council and has been signed off by the Governors and Headteacher.

Particular strengths of the approach at Trinity Fields School include:

- The excellent facilities including the Rebound Therapy Room, the recently refurbished tertiary playground with the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) and outside gym equipment, the soft play room, the hydro swimming pool and the splash pool.
- The way in which pupils were involved in the selection of equipment for outside areas was very positive practice.
- The excellent links the school has with Caerphilly Sport.
- Trinity Fields School host an annual ‘6 Nations’ Rugby Tournament which in the Spring of 2017 was attended by 17 special schools and units. In total over 170 pupils from across these schools participated. The 2018 event was taking place at the time of the NQA Visit – and in addition to well-known rugby players being present so too were a TV news crew! Caerphilly Sport provides assistance to the school in the organisation of this major event.
- The Daily Mile which involves circuits of the school and the pupils using tokens to

record how many circuits they have completed.

- The annual 'Sports Week' that combines learning about a country with team games and other exercise related activities.
- Mention must be made of the fact that many of the resources used by pupils, together with the exceptional facilities available to them, have been funded and / or improved by monies raised through fundraising by the community and the generosity of local benefactors.

Food

- The advocacy role of the school council in putting forward the case for even more healthy choices at lunchtime.
- Trinity Fields School operates a café, Café Oren, which is open to the public and is very popular with staff. Older students are involved with the preparation and serving of food and this presents them with a very good opportunity to acquire experience of food hygiene, food preparation, healthy eating etc.
- The ways in which healthy eating is addressed through the taught curriculum from the Foundation Phase, through Key Stage 2 and then PSHE materials, science and the Agored Cymru accreditation programme for students in the 14 – 19 learning pathway classes. All work is tailored to the needs of the pupils and whenever possible learning is enriched through visits (e.g. to local shops) and practical activities.
- The school participates in the annual 'Big Grow', where each class grows fruit and vegetables in the allotment – food that is subsequently used in school.

Environment

As previously mentioned Trinity Fields School makes great use of the school environment and it is very positive to observe how the need to care for the wider environment is shared with the whole school community and to see how the pupils are taking this message to heart.

Particular strengths include:

- Trinity Fields is an Eco-School and is currently working towards its second Green Flag.
- A section of the school website is dedicated to environmental / eco issues.
- The very active eco-committee and the very interesting and important projects that it is involved in. This includes the move to separated recycling (different bins for different types of recyclable materials). Two members of the eco-committee created a presentation on separated recycling. The school adopted the message so that classes now separate rubbish during the week and the Friday Volunteers separate it further. The school has won the Caerphilly County Borough Council's 'Pride in Your Place' award for recycling in schools.
- Having identified the need to have more recycling bins across the school the eco-committee undertook fundraising to help fund the purchase costs of the bins.
- In 2015 members of the school council and eco-committee made a presentation to the management team at the Sainsbury's store in Pontllanfraith. As a result funding was won for the school and this was used to update resources used in the woodland garden.

- The school has a 'No Paper Day' when the photocopier is switched off.
- Classes using the least amount of paper receive a certificate.
- Excellent use is made of the open spaces surrounding the school; there are gardening activities, many opportunities for outdoor exercise and sports and the fantastic Forest School BOTI (Better Out Than In) programme (described previously). We were privileged to see part of this – students had gone for a walk accompanied by staff and a PAT dog, made a den, put up and used a hammock, lit a fire in a fire pit and cooked and eaten food.
- The School is involved in the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Currently 8 students are organising a camping trip and associated DoE activities. The school is working with the DoE Award to ensure that the processes for volunteering, developing skills etc. are adapted to the specific needs of the students.

Safety

The safety culture at Trinity Fields School, by necessity, has to be excellent, and this it truly is.

- Risk assessments across the working areas of the school, including those for educational visits are comprehensive and detailed. However risk assessment is not confined only to paper based risk assessments – important though these are. There is a culture of continuous appraisal of risk across the school site, with action being taken to reduce the risk in a very speedy manner. Risk awareness is high.
- Training on risk awareness is excellent.
- Incidents of challenging behaviour are recorded in Behaviour Watch.
- Safeguarding procedures are exemplary.
- A lone working policy is in place (relating to those making home visits) and procedures for monitoring the safety of lone workers are in place.

Hygiene

Due to the very complex needs of many of the pupils in Trinity Fields the issue of hygiene is more significant than it might be in other schools. The provision made to meet these needs is of the highest possible standard in terms of staff training, facilities and care for the children and young people.

- All facilities seen were immaculate.
- The school works in a very cooperative and collaborative way with parents and cares on issues relating to hygiene.
- Very clear information on hand washing is displayed in the toilets and classrooms. Lessons have included the use of UV lamps to highlight to pupils the importance of thorough hand washing.
- The school has a "Designed to Smile" award.
- Older pupils working in Caffi Oren all have food hygiene certification.
- Caffi Oren is registered as a business and for the second year and has an FSA rating of 5.

Substance Use and Misuse

- Trinity Fields School has a very clear substance misuse policy in place.
- The school council has led the development of a child friendly version of the substance misuse policy.
- Older Students have benefited from workshops on alcohol awareness and substance misuse and also worked with Crucial Crew on these.
- Programmes of learning that address substance use and misuse are individually tailored to the needs of pupils, with an emphasis being placed on making healthy choices.
- Parents / carers of students in the 14 – 19 learning pathways are closely involved in working with their child in the selection of learning options. This enables the parent / carer to have a clear insight into the curriculum.

Areas for further consideration

1. Maintain this excellent and exemplary approach

We are particularly mindful of the role of the governors and senior managers in protecting and sustaining the ethos and practice of the health promoting school. We would strongly encourage the Governing Body and the Senior Management Team at Trinity Fields School to continue to facilitate, support and encourage the excellent work that is being undertaken to protect and promote the wellbeing of all those connected with the school.

2. The following points identify a small number of areas where the excellent practice across Trinity Fields School could be further complemented

- Caffi Oren is a marvellous facility introduced by the school that is widely used by members of the public and staff. Consideration should be given to identifying ways in which an increased number of healthier options could be offered, such as fresh fruit, baked snacks, an increase in salad choices etc.
- Consideration should be given to further collaborating with the school's catering staff and Caerphilly County Borough Council in terms of lunchtime food provision. While the quality of the food and the nutritional value of the meals are beyond doubt some work could be done to present food differently and also to look at how appetising it is.
- Check that all policies have (future) review dates.
- The ESDGC Policy is excellent but could be strengthened to reflect the school's approach to global citizenship – we saw and heard evidence of good activity in this area, so policy needs to reflect practice!

Feedback to pupils

At the end of the Easter Term Mrs Christine Edmondson and I visited Trinity Fields School to learn about what you are all doing to make your school a healthy place in which to learn, develop skills and build relationships.

From the moment that we arrived we could see beyond any doubt that protecting and promoting everyone's health and wellbeing is a very important part of life at Trinity Fields School.

We saw your work, we chatted to some of you and we visited the amazing facilities that you have and all of these things showed us how positive and how healthy a school Trinity Fields is.

We would especially like to thank your Head Girl, Tilly Doman and Head Boy, Luke Pickard for the fabulous way that they showed us around your school and told us about the amazing things that are happening.

We would also like to thank the members of the school council Luke and Tilly for their excellent presentation.

We are therefore delighted to be able to congratulate everyone connected with Trinity Fields School on your school achieving the Welsh Network of Healthy School Schemes National Quality Award.

The Award is richly deserved!

With very best wishes,

John Griffiths

Feedback to local Co-ordinator

