

# HOW TO SUPPORT SUSTAINABLE STUDENT WELLBEING IN SCHOOLS

**CLIENT:** YSGOL CAER ELEN

**BRIEF:** STATE OF MIND WELLBEING PROGRAMME FOR YEARS 8 AND 9

Ysgol Caer Elen is a Welsh Medium school for ages 3-16 years located in Haverfordwest, Mid-Wales.

## CHALLENGE

**Enhancing internal wellbeing programme with external expertise**

Ysgol Caer Elen already had weekly wellbeing classes as part of their wider emotional health and wellbeing curriculum for all its students but, particularly post-Covid, they recognised an increased need for specialist mental health and wellbeing support.

The return to full time school and rise in pressures around social media use and the cost-of-living crisis was creating increased need for additional emotional health and wellbeing support.



## SOLUTION

**6-week bespoke State of Mind wellbeing programme**

Platform Wellbeing delivered our 6-week State of Mind wellbeing programme which comprises a set of weekly modules that can be selected from our suite of training subjects based on the needs and age group of the students concerned.

The State of Mind course material has been co-produced for young people by young people, ensuring relevance and

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*The SOM sessions have definitely helped the pupils. It gave the pupils a real opportunity to discuss different topics around wellbeing and provided that safe space for them to discuss different coping strategies*

Gareth Davies, Health and Wellbeing Leader



*Without doubt we would recommend the SOM course to every school because we've utilised it a substantial amount in the past few years as part of our curriculum offering here. The feedback we've had from the sessions has been really positive. The pupils enjoy working with external people who bring in different expertise and viewpoints.*

Gareth Owen, Deputy Headteacher

accessibility. By putting young people at the core of the training, we recognise the value of their perspective, knowledge and experience and ensure the best level of participation and engagement from students.

Ysgol Caer Elen's Year 8 and 9 students received our State of Mind training which covered the following modules using a combination of presentation and practical group/individual exercises:

- Mindful activities
- Keeping active
- Nurturing friendships
- Healthy living
- Positive thoughts
- Reaching out
- Helping others
- Being organised
- Healthy sleeping habits
- Setting realistic and achievable goals

## RESULTS

### Increased engagement and understanding around emotional health and wellbeing

The activity-based material was used to both educate and encourage students to find their pathways to better wellbeing. During the 6 weeks, the students were encouraged to connect and share their experiences in a safe space. The groups listened and worked together to find ways of identifying and overcoming any challenges they might be experiencing.

Often bringing in an external trainer allows students to be more open to sharing and participating as Ysgol Caer Elen's Deputy Headteacher, Gareth Owens explains,

*"Sometimes the impact of an external facilitator has a huge impact on the pupils - they really buy into it. They enjoy and they listen to people who have different expertise from outside.*

*Sometimes it gives them the opportunity to look at things from a different perspective that they wouldn't necessarily get from their peers or the teachers in the school"*



*It's something we want to implement year on year in school as part of our wellbeing offering and actually develop even further*

Gareth Owen, Deputy Headteacher

## WHAT THE STUDENTS SAY

*“What I liked about the wellbeing sessions is that you all got together as a group and shared your ideas of what a good friend is”*

Year 8 student

*“I learnt that you have a lot of people around that can help you – teachers, receptionists, friends mostly”*

Year 8 student

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

**83%** of young people felt that the support they received has helped their overall wellbeing.

**83%** said that they had a better understanding of mental health.

**44%** of young people showed an improved WEMWBS (Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale) score.

