

LIFEbeat PSHE Teacher Training - Wellbeing

March – June 2018



Introduction

Somerset County Council, Public Health commissioned LIFEbeat to design and deliver PSHE training to schools county-wide between March and June 2018. This training brought together 18 teachers, 3 members of the SHARE (Schools Health and Resilience Education Project) team, 5 school nurses and 1 member of the Avon and Somerset Police for a 3 ½ day training experience which stretched over a four-month period. One of the briefs of this training was focus on staff wellbeing as a priority, alongside the wellbeing of pupils. As such the participants were asked to complete a survey both before and after the training focusing on wellbeing in the following areas:

- Personal Wellbeing
- Wellbeing at Work
- Work/life Balance
- General Stress
- Stress at Work
- Wellbeing Skills and Practices
- LIFEbeat Self Care Plan

This document summaries our findings from the wellbeing evaluations taken during the LIFEbeat

Overall Summary

it is interesting to see that the factors which contribute to stress at work and the work/life balance remained almost the same before and after the training. However, participants indicated that they gained skills and strategies to manage stress in more effective ways and to find more balance. Mindfulness and taking time in nature were particularly strong as was the strengthening of personal boundaries and communication with colleagues and SLTs. There was also a significant rise in adopting an “attitude of gratitude”, affirmations and personal goal setting and intentions at the end of the course as take-away skills from the training.

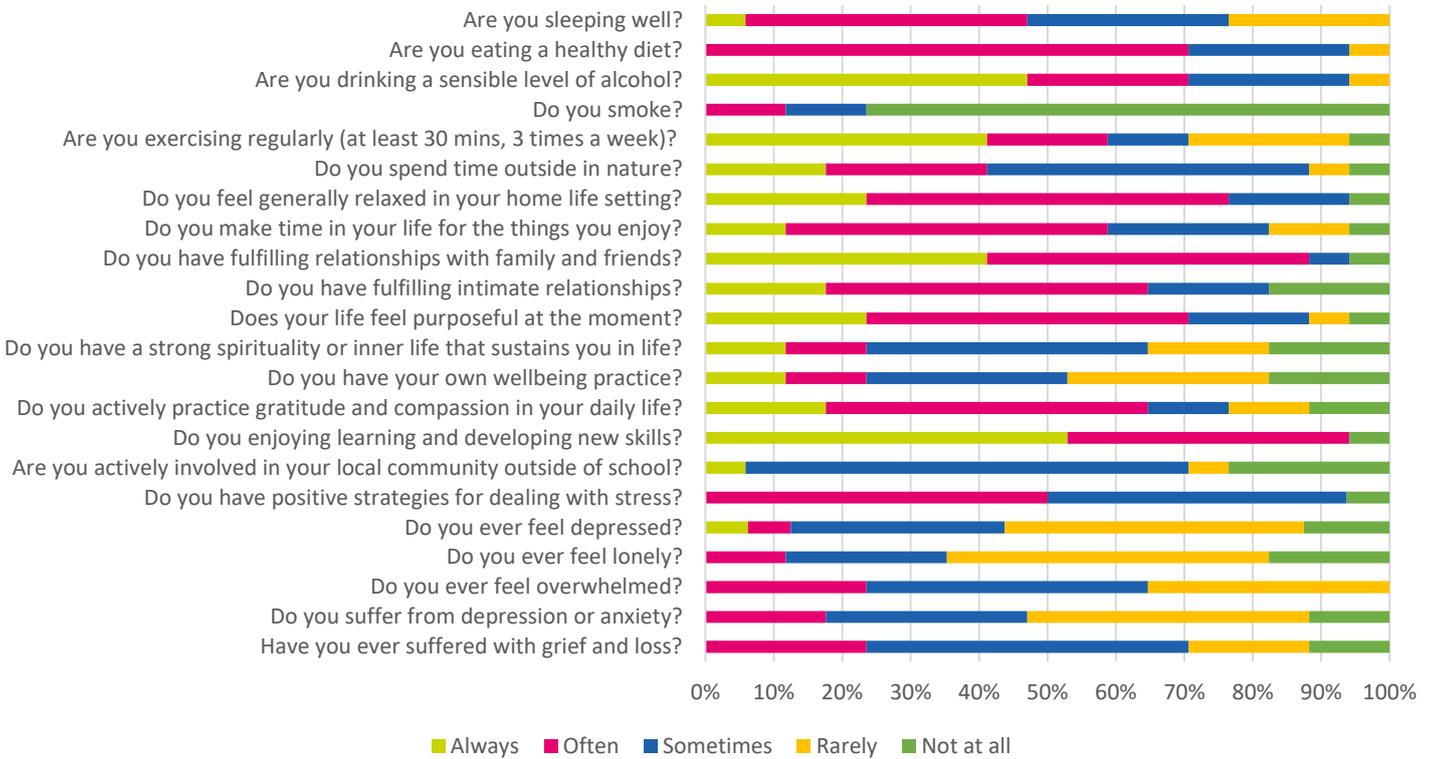
“A thoroughly enjoyable course that has an impact on you long after you leave the venue! Thank you to the LIFEbeat Team and also to the professionals from Somerset County Council/NHS who delivered quality information on a variety of issues, all very interesting and informative.”

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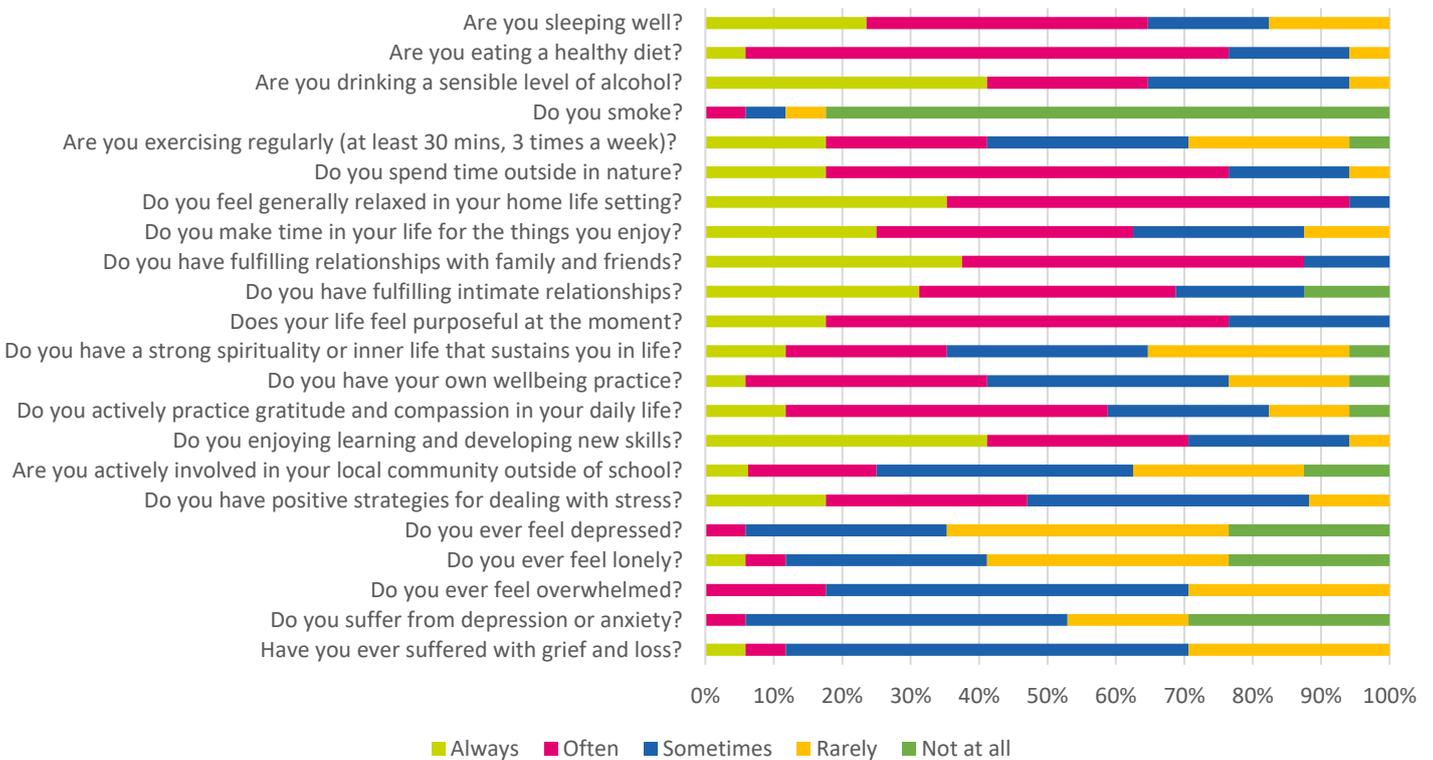
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Personal wellbeing

Initial Survey

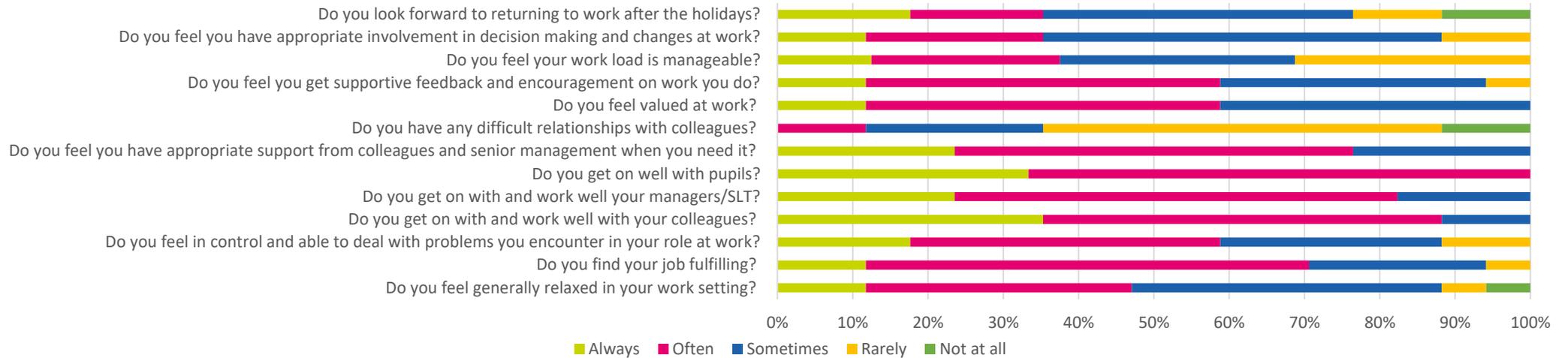


Final Survey

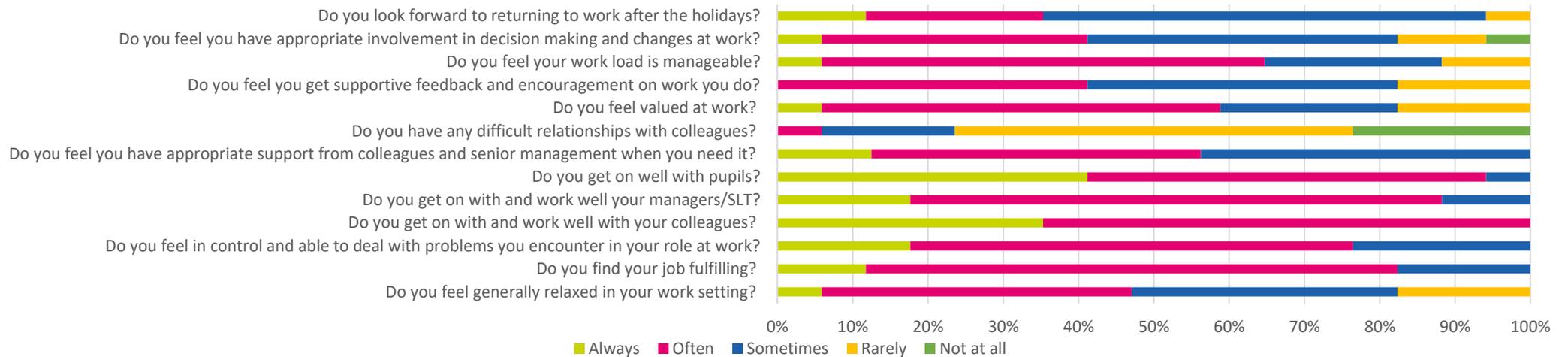


Wellbeing at work

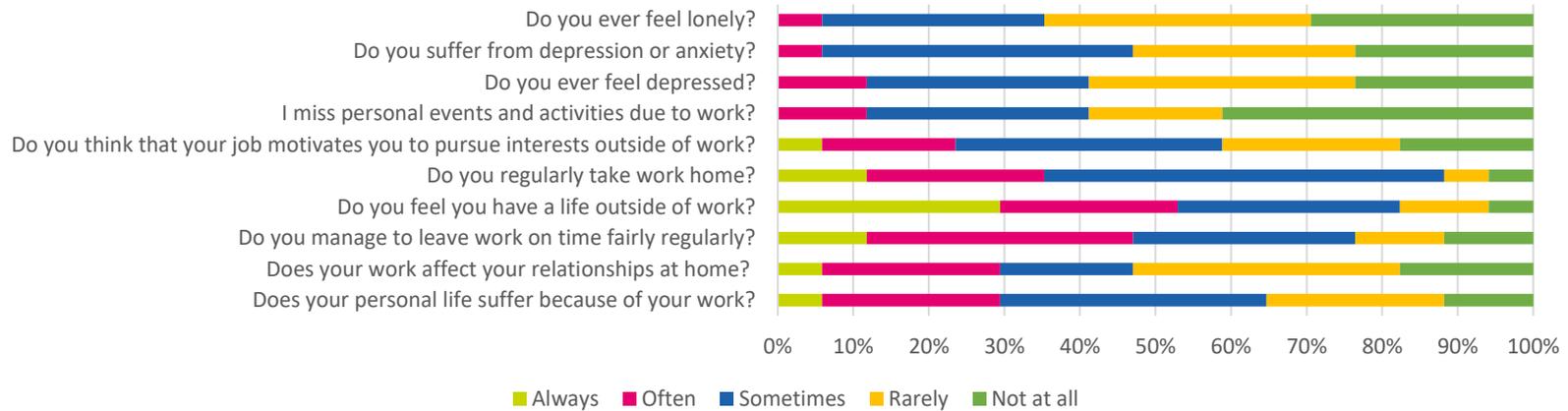
Initial Survey



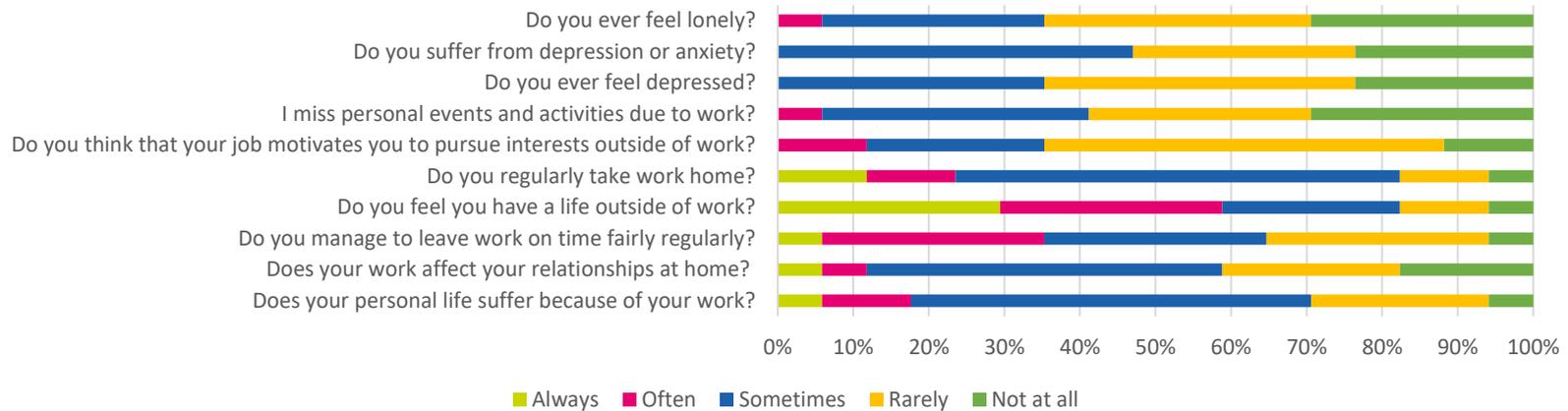
Final Survey



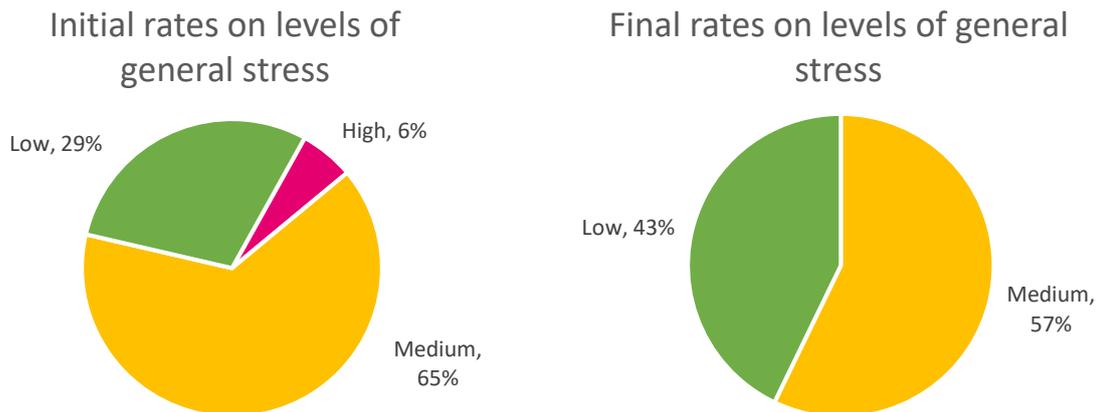
Initial Survey



Final Survey



General stress levels



We can see that perceived levels of stress improved over the period when the training took place, with a higher number of participants reporting low stress levels in their life on the final evaluation, as well as no participants reporting high levels of stress.

Initial results – participant’s feedback before the course

Participants were asked what they perceived as the **greatest contributing factors to stress** in their lives in general. Interestingly, even when asked for their personal levels of stress, most of the feedback that came back was work-related. Below are some common themes found:

- Balancing workload and personal life.
- Uncertainty / lack of direction at work
- Parental concerns
- Getting older and changing roles

“Having so much to do at work and seemingly not enough time to do it all so having to also regularly work at home.”

Final results – participant’s feedback at the end of the course

When asked about these stress contributing factors at the end of the course, a lot of the feedback was still work-related, though we saw participants bringing in more of their personal worries. Some of the themes found were:

- Difficult relationships with some work colleges.
- Personal issues
- Not enough time to do anything well enough
- Not knowing or having control over changes in my job.
- Getting older
- Balancing work and home responsibilities

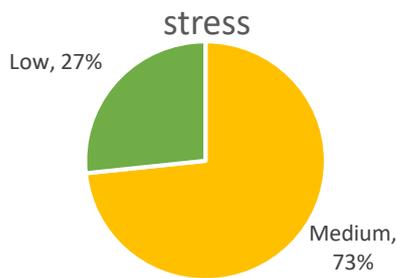
“I am too busy, I try to fit too much in to my life”

54% of the participants expressed they had noticed changes in their stress levels as a result of attending the PSHE course. Some of these changes include:

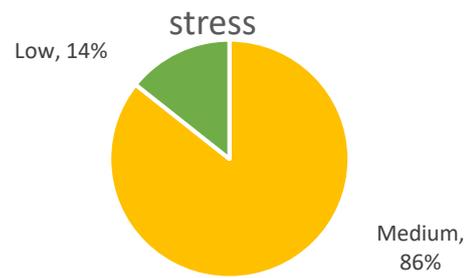
- Taking more time out for themselves
- Increased awareness of their feelings and potential stress sources
- Practicing some of the wellbeing tools included in the course (*“mindfulness, reflection time, being grateful for what I have”*)

Work stress levels

Initial rates on levels of work



Final rates on levels of work



As opposed to their general stress levels, the number of participants who perceived a *medium* level of stress slightly increased, which we can attribute to the closeness of the end of the school year.

Initial results – participant’s feedback before the course

When asked what the **greatest contributing factors** to stress in the work place were at the beginning of the course, two factors that stand out were workload and work-life balance. Other factors that participants mentioned were:

- Having enough time for all aspects of the job (“*Mock exam marking, progress report writing, book marking, lesson planning...*”)
- Juggling different roles/responsibilities
- Poor communication
- Issues with team members and relationships with colleagues
- Student behaviour
- Parental concerns
- Uncertainty around change and lack of training / direction
- Short staffing
- Feelings of not doing the job properly
- Difficulties dealing with conflict between students and parents involved

“Some parents take their child's point of view as the only truth and expect/threaten me to make changes – it is always the other child's fault and their child cannot be disciplined, according to the school's behaviour policy because their child says they didn't do anything! (Even with evidence to the contrary)”

When asked about their **current strategies to deal with stress**, these are the main categories we found in the participant’s feedback:

- Exercise (*go for a walk, go to the gym*)
- Hobbies (*read, cook, watch TV, go to the cinema, holidays, weekends away*)
- Social interactions (*spending time with family and friends, speaking to family and friends about issues, attending social events with friends*)
- Self-care (*take baths, take time for oneself, switch off, mindfulness, meditation apps*)

Participants also mentioned *smoking, having an alcoholic drink and eating chocolate* as ways to deal with their stress.

At the beginning of the training, **56% of the participants reported suffering from stress-related symptoms**. The symptoms mentioned include:

- Anxiety
- Headaches
- Tiredness
- Depression
- Low moods
- Difficulties falling asleep
- Migraines
- Irritability
- Feelings of being overwhelmed
- Inability to “*eat, sleep, relax or enjoy life properly at the moment*”

Final results – participant’s feedback at the end of the course

When asked about **stress contributing factors** at the end of the training, the majority of the themes appeared again, with workload and work-life balance still being the most present ones across attendees. Some issues mentioned that hadn’t previously appeared were job security and budgetary issues.

Only **33% of the participants noticed changes in relation to these factors** as a result of the course. Participants who noticed a change generally reported a better work-life balance thanks to better management of work expectations, as well as increased self-esteem and more determination to take time to look after themselves.

“Attending the PSHE course has definitely boosted my confidence. I felt very much at the edge of my comfort zone when I attended the first meeting. However, I now feel more confident and able to speak in front of large groups of people. At our SHARE Event last term, I delivered a presentation on Self-Care with a trusted colleague and delivered a poem to the audience. In fact, today I co-delivered a workshop to 60 staff at a school and felt very relaxed about speaking in front of such a large group. It has really helped in my personal and professional development.”

Even though changes in relation to stress contributing factors weren’t noticeable for most participants, **91% of them reported noticing changes in how they deal with stress** as a result of the course. These changes include:

- More awareness of stressors and triggers
- Taking breaks when needed
- Taking time out to evaluate stressful situations
- Communicating with other people
- Using some of the wellbeing tools included in the course (*relaxation techniques, meditation, mindfulness...*)

“I went to SLT (Senior Leadership Team) and said I needed to postpone lesson observations. The SLT member was very worried as they could see I was behaving in a more emotional manner than usual. I am very good at appearing calm and in control when this is not always the case, so to actually show some level of not coping, sent a few shock waves through the SLT. They all came to check I was ok at different times and expressed concern. The support was much appreciated – talking helped.”

Finally, though **69%** reported suffering from **stress related symptoms** at the end of the course, **56% of participants noticed changes in these symptoms as a result of attending the PSHE course.**

“From attending the course, I met with a group of people, outside of the college, who hold similar values to me and who encounter similar obstacles to me when carrying out their roles. The course gave me a sense of validation and also made me feel more confident that I am meeting the needs of our community of students, in my area of knowledge.”

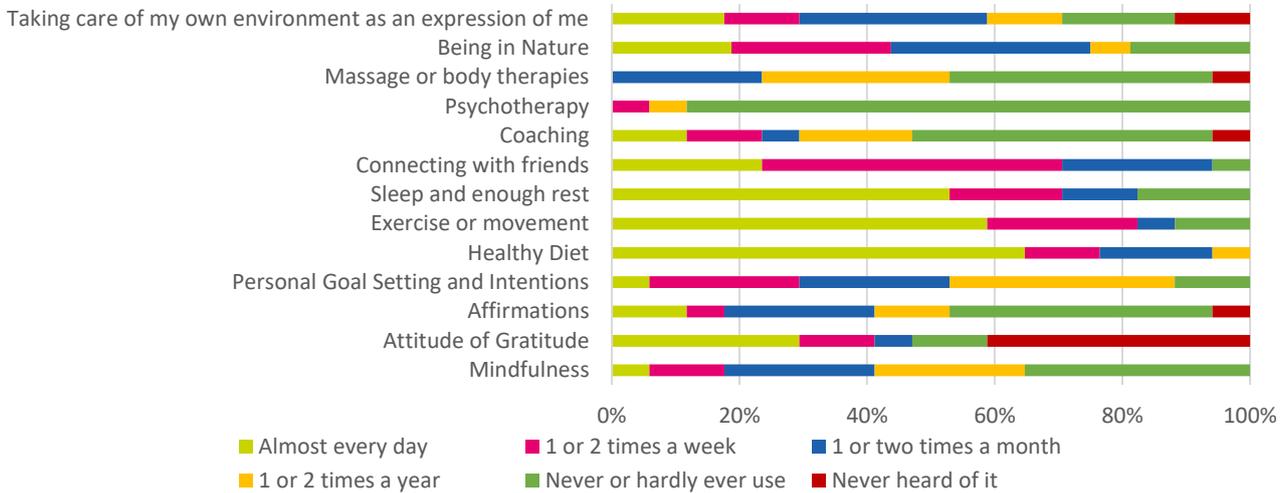
“I feel calmer by being able to put issues into perspective, realising problems are not the huge issues they first appear. This allows me often to focus on solutions rather than being distracted by the problem.”

“I feel the course has helped me to look at myself more and do more things for me.”

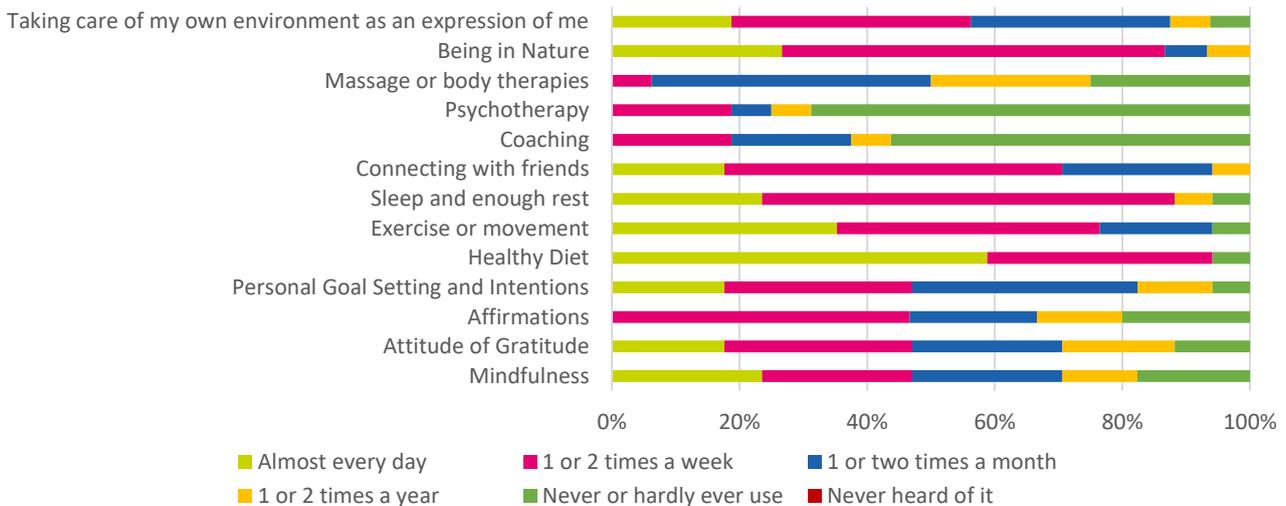
Personal wellbeing and wellbeing practices

On a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is low and 5 is high, the participants rated their overall sense of personal wellbeing at the beginning of the course with a **3.38** on average. When asked at the end of the course, their sense of personal wellbeing increased to an average of **3.9**.

Initial Survey on wellbeing practice



Final Survey on wellbeing practice



Initial results – participant’s feedback before the course

At the beginning of the course period, participants were asked what they would do and what they would change if they could improve the balance and quality of their lives. A common theme across all participants was to reduce their work hours and workload and to be able to fully disconnect during their time off, other themes mentioned include:

- Spending more time with family and friends
- Being more available for their children
- Working on healthier habits (*“more regular sleep patterns, less smoking, lose weight, practice yoga and mindfulness more”*)
- Having time to practice and/or take up hobbies

We found it interesting to find that a number of the participants that brought up having more time to spend with their loved ones included comments on “*not feeling guilty*” about having this time off or “*not having to rush it*”.

Final results – participant’s feedback at the end of the course

67% of the participants reported they had **introduced new wellbeing practices into their lives** as a result of attending the course, including:

- Mindfulness
- Taking time out, both mentally and physically
- Attitude of gratitude
- Spending time in nature

“I attempted to introduce an attitude of gratitude and make time for mindfulness in my day to day life. Recognising and relishing being in nature and really appreciating the time I have with my friends and family.”

Participants who were already including some of these practices in their reported increased usage of these practises due to the course. Also, **62% of the participants** said they **have introduced changes into their lives to improve the balance and quality of their lives** as a result of the course, such as:

- Setting daily targets
- Daily gratitude practice
- Leaving work on time

“I take an hour long walk in the fields and woodlands where I live after work, I’ve also tried spending more time with my partner visiting the coast and National Trust houses every weekend.”

We asked participants if they could describe **any other positive impacts on their personal wellbeing** as a result of the training, taking into consideration the self-care plan. The feedback is consistent with feedback from other LIFEbeat training in Somerset in terms of an increase in:

- Usage of different strategies with a positive impact on wellbeing
- Self-awareness
- Time dedicated to hobbies and personal needs

“It has raised my awareness generally of the role I play in young people’s lives and I feel more valued. I really enjoyed the singing and rhythm work and benefited from the effect it had on me – it made me realise what you can forget to enjoy as you get older! I could see the benefits of this type of activity on the groups on the course and have talked to some of our Tutors about including rhythm and song in their sessions with students.”

When asked if they **found the LIFEbeat self-care plan a useful model for supporting their personal wellbeing**, on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is low and 5 is high, the participants rated the model with a **3.7** on average. **91%** of the participants also expressed they **will continue to use the model in their personal and/or work life**. Some of the ways in which participants have said they will use the model include:

- “I will take time to evaluate every 6 months”
- “Through daily targets relating to short and long-term plans”
- “As a check-in: Am I doing ok in each of these areas?”
- “I am trying to embed the circle activities into my vertical tutor group”
- “By giving more attention to my own self-care needs without thinking that by doing so, I am taking time away from the job I do”

"I'm wanting to continue with the mindfulness, take time to sit in nature and just be. I will definitely be valuing the time with my friends and family far more and making more time to grow all my relationships, especially with my partner. I now recognise that being consumed by issues out of my control at work is not healthy and can affect other areas of my life. I want to let go of the anxiety and revel in the love of my friends and family."

77% of the participants also expressed an interest in **joining a LIFEbeat network with occasional meetups** to support their self-care and wellbeing.

"I would definitely join! I would really like that as it is bound to slip again, and it is really important to keep it up. Plus, I really enjoyed networking and meeting colleagues from across the county."

Finally, participants were asked about what new knowledge and skills they had learned around awareness of wellbeing, practical steps of support and self-care. The participants emphasised the importance of being aware of all aspects of one's personal wellbeing and taking time to attend to it as well as taking time out when faced with stressful situations.

"I used to look after my physical health and thought my mental health would take care of itself through being active, but now I appreciate the importance of looking after the mind too."

Wellbeing in the workplace

"Supporting positive mental health and reducing the stigma attached to mental health is fundamental to the SHARE Project. I have learned creative ways and practices to help deliver this in the schools we are working in. "

In terms of new knowledge and skills learnt to deliver PSHE and support mental health concerns, participants reported feeling better signposted to where to go for information when searching for resources and planning and having acquired new activities they can use to engage students on their sessions and break down barriers.

"I have a far clearer understanding of the issues, how to approach the subject sensitively and understand some of the issues that before the training I would have no understanding of through my own life. I feel more confident in recognising early warning signs in my student cohort and knowing how to proceed appropriately."

Finally, when asked what they will do differently for themselves and other colleagues in their work as a result of the course, participants highlighted the importance to look after the staff team as well as the students, and they expressed an intention to conscientiously give more time and attention to their colleagues. A number of them mentioned they have now introduced regular check-ins with colleagues both personal and professional.

"I will be far more positive, I now recognise negativity can be a destructive mechanism that begets more negativity. Stopping this cycle and encouraging others with kindness and positive support will make a difference."

Recommendations

There was clear support for establishing a LIFEbeat network to enable Wellbeing course participants to continue to support and engage with each other.

APPENDIX 1: PERSONAL WELLBEING EVALUATION TOOLS

Personal Wellbeing Survey - Initial

Please complete the following questionnaire to help us track the impact of the training and improve our programme. The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Name:

School:

Role:

Date:

1. Personal Wellbeing

Please read the following statements and indicate with a tick the extent to which you agree:

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Are you sleeping well?					
Are you eating a healthy diet?					
Are you drinking a sensible level of alcohol?					
Do you smoke?					
Are you exercising regularly (at least 30 mins exercise 3 times a week)?					
Do you spend time outside in nature?					
Do you feel generally relaxed in your home life setting?					
Do you make time in your life for the things you enjoy?					
Do you have fulfilling relationships with family and friends?					
Do you have fulfilling intimate relationships?					
Does your life feel purposeful at the moment?					
Do you have a strong spirituality or inner life that sustains you in life?					
Do you have your own wellbeing practice?					
Do you actively practice gratitude and compassion in your daily life?					
Do you enjoying learning and developing new skills?					
Are you actively involved in your local community outside of school?					
Do you have positive strategies for dealing with stress?					
Do you ever feel depressed?					
Do you ever feel lonely?					
Do you ever feel overwhelmed?					
Do you suffer from depression or anxiety?					
Have you ever suffered with grief and loss?					

2. Wellbeing at Work

Please read the following statements and indicate with a tick the extent to which you agree:

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Do you feel generally relaxed in your work setting?					
Do you find your job fulfilling?					
Do you feel in control and able to deal with problems you encounter in your role at work?					
Do you get on with and work well with your colleagues?					
Do you get on with and work well your managers/SLT?					
Do you get on well with pupils?					

Do you feel you have appropriate support from colleagues and senior management when you need it?					
Do you have any difficult relationships with colleagues?					
Do you feel valued at work?					
Do you feel you get supportive feedback and encouragement on work you do?					
Do you feel your work load is manageable?					
Do you feel you have appropriate involvement in decision making and changes at work?					
Do you look forward to returning to work after the holidays?					

3. Work-life balance

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Does your personal life suffer because of your work?					
Does your work affect your relationships at home?					
Do you manage to leave work on time fairly regularly?					
Do you feel you have a life outside of work?					
Do you regularly take work home?					
Do you think that your job motivates you to pursue interests outside of work?					
I miss personal events and activities due to work?					
Do you ever feel depressed?					
Do you suffer from depression or anxiety?					
Do you ever feel lonely?					

3.1. Please indicate the average number of hours worked per week (on/off site):

3.2. Please indicate the number of days annual leave taken last year:

4. General Stress

Overall, how would you rate your current levels of general stress in your life?

Low	Medium	High
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4.1. What do you feel is the greatest contributing factor to stress in your life generally?

5. Stress at work

Overall, how would you rate your current levels of stress at work (please circle)?

Low	Medium	High
-----	--------	------

5.1. Do you suffer from any stress related symptoms (such as anxiety, depression, irritability, headaches, feeling overwhelmed)? Y/N

If yes please describe.

5.2. What do you feel is the greatest contributing factor to stress in your work place?
For example: work life balance, student behaviour, relationships with colleague, job security

5.3. How do you currently deal with stress?

6. Wellbeing Practice

How often do you use any of the following?

	Never heard of it	Never or hardly ever use	1 or 2 times a year	1 or two times a month	1 or 2 times a week	Almost every day
Mindfulness						
Attitude of Gratitude						
Affirmations						
Personal Goal Setting and Intentions						
Healthy Diet						
Exercise or movement						
Sleep and enough rest						
Connecting with friends						
Coaching						
Psychotherapy						
Massage or body therapies						
Being in Nature						
Taking care of my own environment as an expression of me						

7. **How you rate your current overall sense of personal Wellbeing?** 5 = high and 1 = low

1 2 3 4 5

8. **If you could improve the balance and quality of your life what would you do and what would you change?**

9. **Anything else you would like to express about your current wellbeing**

Personal Wellbeing Survey - Final

Please complete the following questionnaire to help us track the impact of the training and improve our programme. The information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Name: _____ School: _____
Role: _____ Date: _____

1. Personal Wellbeing

Please read the following statements and indicate with a tick the extent to which you agree:

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Are you sleeping well?					
Are you eating a healthy diet?					
Are you drinking a sensible level of alcohol?					
Do you smoke?					
Are you exercising regularly (at least 30 mins exercise 3 times a week)?					
Do you spend time outside in nature?					
Do you feel generally relaxed in your home life setting?					
Do you make time in your life for the things you enjoy?					
Do you have fulfilling relationships with family and friends?					
Do you have fulfilling intimate relationships?					
Does your life feel purposeful at the moment?					
Do you have a strong spirituality or inner life that sustains you in life?					
Do you have your own wellbeing practice?					
Do you actively practice gratitude and compassion in your daily life?					
Do you enjoying learning and developing new skills?					
Are you actively involved in your local community outside of school?					
Do you have positive strategies for dealing with stress?					
Do you ever feel depressed?					
Do you ever feel lonely?					
Do you ever feel overwhelmed?					
Do you suffer from depression or anxiety?					
Have you ever suffered with grief and loss?					

2. Wellbeing at Work

Please read the following statements and indicate with a tick the extent to which you agree:

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Do you feel generally relaxed in your work setting?					
Do you find your job fulfilling?					
Do you feel in control and able to deal with problems you encounter in your role at work?					
Do you get on with and work well with your colleagues?					
Do you get on with and work well your managers/SLT?					
Do you get on well with pupils?					

Do you feel you have appropriate support from colleagues and senior management when you need it?					
Do you have any difficult relationships with colleagues?					
Do you feel valued at work?					
Do you feel you get supportive feedback and encouragement on work you do?					
Do you feel your work load is manageable?					
Do you feel you have appropriate involvement in decision making and changes at work?					
Do you look forward to returning to work after the holidays?					

3. Work-life balance

	Not at all	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Does your personal life suffer because of your work?					
Does your work affect your relationships at home?					
Do you manage to leave work on time fairly regularly?					
Do you feel you have a life outside of work?					
Do you regularly take work home?					
Do you think that your job motivates you to pursue interests outside of work?					
I miss personal events and activities due to work?					
Do you ever feel depressed?					
Do you suffer from depression or anxiety?					
Do you ever feel lonely?					

4. General Stress

Overall, how would you rate your current levels of general stress in your life?

Low	Medium	High
-----	--------	------

- 4.1. What do you feel is the greatest contributing factor to stress in your life generally?
- 4.2. Have you noticed any changes in your stress levels as a result of attending the PSHE course? If yes, how?

5. Stress at work

Overall, how would you rate your current levels of stress at work (please circle)?

Low	Medium	High
-----	--------	------

- 5.1. Do you suffer from any stress related symptoms (such as anxiety, depression, irritability, headaches, feeling overwhelmed)? If yes, please describe how?
- 5.2. Have you noticed any change in these symptoms as a result of attending the PSHE course? If yes, please explain how?
- 5.3. What do you feel is the greatest contributing factor to stress in your work place? For example: work life balance, student behaviour, relationships with colleague, job security
- 5.4. Have you noticed any change in relation to these factors as a result of this course? If yes, please explain how?
- 5.5. Have you noticed any changes in how you deal with stress as a result of the course? If yes, what has been helpful to you and why?

6. Wellbeing Practice

How often do you use any of the following?

	Never heard of it	Never / hardly ever use	1 or 2 times a year	1 or two times a month	1 or 2 times a week	Almost every day
Mindfulness						
Attitude of Gratitude						
Affirmations						
Personal Goal Setting and Intentions						
Healthy Diet						
Exercise or movement						
Sleep and enough rest						
Connecting with friends						
Coaching						
Psychotherapy						
Massage or body therapies						
Being in Nature						
Taking care of my own environment as an expression of me						

6.1. Have you introduced any new wellbeing practices into your life as a result of attending the course?
If yes, please explain how?

6.2. How would you rate your overall sense of personal wellbeing after attending the course? (5 = high and 1 = low)

1 2 3 4 5

7. Have you introduced anything into your life to improve the balance and quality of your life as a result of the course? If yes, please explain how?

8. Can you describe any other positive impacts on your personal wellbeing as a result of the training, taking into consideration the selfcare plan? (awareness, practices, information, personal needs, emotional, physical, sexual, spiritual, environmental, intellectual)

9. Did you find the LIFEbeat selfcare plan a useful model for supporting your personal wellbeing? (1= not useful, 5 really useful)

1 2 3 4 5

10. Will you continue to use it in your personal life or in your work? If yes, please explain how?

11. What new knowledge and skills have you learned around awareness of wellbeing, practical steps of support and selfcare?

12. What new knowledge and skills have you learned in delivering PSHE and supporting mental health concerns?

13. What did you find most useful about the wellbeing focus of this course?

14. What will you do differently for yourself and your colleagues in your work as a result of the course?

15. How could the PSHE training be improved in relation to wellbeing and self-care for staff and students?

16. Would you join a LIFEbeat network with occasional meetups to support your self-care and wellbeing?

17. Is there any further training LIFEbeat could deliver to support your personal or professional development?