

## Well-Being Award Entry

At Ballard, well-being is embedded within our culture. The **Ballard Family** is a welcoming community, everyone is accepted, School is a positive place to be. This familial bond, a sense of belonging and culture of acceptance underpins everything we do, **all the little big things**.

Ballard **bespoke education** underlines our commitment to individuality. Our curriculum and co-curricular provision are designed to “unwrap every Ballard child” encouraging them to be the best they can be. Themes e.g., Odd Socks Day, mental health & anti-bullying weeks emphasise inclusion and cohesion. Fundraising days e.g., Captain Tom, NSPCC and [Red Nose Day](#) help pupils develop socially and emotionally as well as academically.

**Life skill** lessons e.g.: mentoring, the Ballard Challenge, sports-leaders, and Apprentice challenge; combined with **key values**, especially respect and kindness, are part of the fabric of Ballard, helping pupils navigate through life. True well-being lies in our ability to be ourselves; to have a voice and express our emotions in a safe, respectful environment. ELSA, a councillor, worry boxes, surveys, a well-established PSHE programme and School Council all help our pupils find and **use their voice**.

Our specialist tutors utilise their form times as a time to discuss and reflect, a wellbeing filter. Recent initiatives include

- Drop Everything and Read Drop, a half hourly reading session
- Drop Everything and Listen - a variety of musical pieces selected to provoke debate.
- Votes for Schools debating sessions

When the pandemic hit, we were quick to support the Ballard Family, launching [ballard@home](#) as a continuation of [life@ballard](#). We worked incredibly hard to ensure continuity of care, with remote 1:1 support, group PSHE lessons, walk and talk sessions, weekly well-being guidance in our newsletter, regular tutor-time, and plenty of communication.

**Investment** in people, process and technology has had a significant impact on pupil well-being. Our recent restructure created a Deputy Head Pastoral, two mental health leaders, doubled our ELSA provision, ensured all the team were DSL trained and added crucial administrative support; allowing us to keep on top of the negative impacts of the pandemic on well-being.

At Ballard we recognise the importance of connecting with nature, with a multitude of opportunities, including Forest and Beach Schools. During lockdown we ensured that pupils continued to get outdoors and keep fit, through several initiatives, including Race Across the World and our new Forest School badges.

“RESTORE” a personalised programme was launched to support transition post lockdown. With an emphasis on intrinsic rewards, behaviour management, homework, collaborative learning, and creative opportunities it proved successful. ‘Well-being Wednesdays’ encourage a happy & healthy staff, in turn helping our community to thrive.

Our parents and pupils are passionate advocates, bringing in friends from near and far. The Ballard Family is now stronger and larger than ever but it is our individual successes that really count.