

Above and Beyond: Wellbeing transcription (opening 01:15)

[Opening drone footage showing the River Wear, Durham Cathedral and Durham Castle. Images of a bus driving along a road, nature, the Riverside Cricket stadium, and children in front of a reservoir]

This year has been strange for everyone.

It's been an emotional roller-coaster and everyone has been affected in some way.

The loss of normal life that we took for granted has taken its toll on our mental health and wellbeing.

Families and friendships have had to endure separation and loneliness, many have lost their loved ones, and we have felt frightened and powerless in the battle against this virus. But amongst all of the turmoil, we made the decision to be kind and to support each other.

[Image of primary boy walking near school gates]

[Images of adults receiving letters from children, primary girl holding up a picture, nursery children blowing kisses, cartoon images of children, Santa Claus delivering presents to a family, child in wheelchair smiling).

Through the pandemic, we have seen schools and settings go above and beyond to make a difference. Children and young people have reached out into **their** community to support and befriend when people needed it most. To quote Maya Angelou, 'people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel'. To every child, young person, school, setting and community group who looked out for the wellbeing of others, this video is for you, with a heartfelt thanks. You were kind when the world needed it most.

[Images of Roseberry Primary School – Feel Good Friday – Daniel a pupil talks about random acts of kindness, Daniel sitting in a chair at school explaining Feel Good Friday and random acts of kindness).

Well **I made feel good** Friday 'cause I heard about something happened on TikTok when a man committing suicide and I thought something **had** to be done. And now the sad thing is that he didn't probably get to talk to anyone. I wanted to do something, 'cause he never got to speak to someone. I thought, he may be **he maybe** got fired, it may be financial things and things going on in his life he may be lost a family member, so I think to prevent that from happening I want people to **er speak up** speak up about their mental health. And **erm** not be afraid and I want people to know **they're** not alone.

We did a feel-good Friday, what me and my dad came up with, erm, and it **came out** came out so great. We had a non-uniform day and brought in £1, **erm** yeah, it was really good. **Well, well** me and my dad was talking about **erm** what we could do, and we thought about like, if the Covid restrictions **erm ease**, we could have **maybe a summer fair**, something for Halloween, get more charity involved, **erm** Papyrus, Mind, **er** more schools to get involved as well, so **it** could spread the word.

Me and my family **erm** have made this **erm** random act of kindness box **er** for every month of the year, and we put random names in the box and every month we pick a name and we do random acts

of kindness **to that one person for** every month. But **erm** you don't have to do it for that one person, you could do it for everyone. And everyone deserves at least a random act of kindness like holding open a door, smiling at someone or greeting them, or giving someone a compliment.

It's so nice that he completely came up with the idea himself and **he'd** written, do you remember you wrote that piece and you **came and** read it to me and said can we do something about this? And like we couldn't say no to him because it was amazing.

[Images of Durham University Day Nursery, image of user of the nursery,].

Durham University Day Nursery has gone above and beyond **at** supporting us as a family during the pandemic. They've been so dedicated to keeping a connection with us, and encouraging us to do the same, particularly through Tapestry where they've shared ideas **for** activities and **ways to encourage** learning at home. Their focus on wellbeing and encouraging the children to talk about how they are feeling is so important and **was really** reassuring when our little boy went back to nursery after the first lockdown which **was** such a daunting time. They're just so excellent at what they do, I can't praise them enough.

[Images of Jenna, a pupil from Finchale Primary School – created a stop motion video, images of Lego pieces and toy vehicles).

[Images of Conkers Life exploring their outdoor Advent Spiral, images of children in the spiral garden).

[Images of Copeland Primary School – Reading Bears which were distributed to children, images of children with teddy bears).

[Images of Cockton Hill Primary School – Wings of Kindness Art Project, images of children decorating paper wings with beautiful coloured paper and craft materials).

[Images of Busy Bees Nursery – The Nursery Council – children working on artwork describing how they feel about Covid and showing their understanding. Also they contributed to random acts of kindness and distributed treat hampers to a care home and toiletries to University Hospital of North Durham. Images of children's work in the school).

[Images of West Rainton Primary School – Lockdown,).

When we were in lockdown, I felt sad because I **couldn't** see my family or my friends

I felt bored and really sad.

It was sad because I **missed** my friends and **the** school.

In lockdown I **felt it felt really depressing and sad because I couldn't see my friends or focus properly.**

It was sad because I couldn't go out.

When I was in lockdown, I felt lonely because I **couldn't** see anyone and **it was also really hard to work.**

I was sad because I didn't get to see my friends.

The things I missed about my school were my friends.

My friends.

My friends and cousins

Doing fun things.

Having **all the** nice teachers around.

Welcome to our happy school

Here at West Rainton, we are proud to show you how our **relationships first approach to recovery is truly going above and beyond.**

When I was told I could go back to school I felt happy and overwhelmed.

I felt happy and joyful.

I was excited so much **and filled with joy.**

Extremely happy.

Overjoyed

Excited to be back.

I like to **play** outside because I've been inside **too** much.

My School, My Planet.

Taking part in the My School, My Planet **project** was fun because I **liked working** with my friends.

I felt happy and relaxed playing outside.

I felt great and it made me love school more. Everyday school is getting better.

As a part of the school again.

It made me happy and I felt more confident.

(Saying lines from Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet)

[Children enacting a Shakespeare play Romeo and Juliet).

And it was like a movie because we did it in scene.

It made me feel like I was included, and I didn't feel as much overwhelmed.

It was the best feeling to take part in something that I thought I would never do.

[Images of Greenfield Art – Changing Times. Showing things that make student happy, dancing in the street, playing, walking with friends, windmills, ice-cream, creativity, sunshine, birdsong, ideas for creating ways to show you are happy such as displays around school).

During summer 2020, a group of students worked with Greenfield Arts and film maker Laura Degnan to explore their **recent** experiences. They noticed the learning and **discoveries** that **have** taken place, through a series of creative activities. This film includes some of the creative activities the students worked on together **and created**.

It's important to reflect and **to** notice things we can learn from and take forward.

[Images St Helen's Primary School – We are all superheroes).

We think that everyone in our school community **is a superhero**. We have all had to learn to adapt over the **past** year and we have all done an amazing job. We would like to say a big thank you to all the boys and girls who are learning at home, or in our school, and all of the parents and carers for supporting with learning at home **and every member of staff in school**. we are all the superheroes **of** St Helen's along with all the young people.

[Images St Helen's Primary children dressed up as superheroes, showing images of cards and letters sent out to the community to make them smile. Images of recipients of cards and letters with smiles on their faces). **Cheerful song plays**

(Images of Ox Close Primary School – Harvest Hearts and Tell Me Trees)

Harvest hearts **were our** method **to spread** kindness messages to the community. We wrote out hearts and wrote a message for our good cause. In year 5/6 we sent our hearts to Sole and Connor **Fawcett** Cancer Trust. It was our way of spreading kindness during lockdown without people coming into the school. It felt really good because our school does a lot with the community and it made us feel good to know that we were still able to help others during the lockdown.

In our classroom we read a short story about Tell Me Tree and made our own Tell Me Tree to place our thoughts.

It is important to talk about how you are feeling rather than bottle things up. If you share your worries then someone can help.

Even writing things down can sometimes help get the thoughts out of your head, and that might make you feel a little bit better. The Tell Me Tree gives you a chance to write things down, and then adults in school and your friends can help.

(Burnopfield Primary School – Burnopfield Bears)

(Images of bears in the assembly hall and at desks, around the school and in children's homes)

The particular scene of all of the bears sitting in the assembly hall I think was just so well received by all of us parents and the children alike. **So, it's** just been lovely because the school really is part of our community.

(Audio clip from BBC Radio Newcastle - Kath Thompson (Acting Head Teacher) Sarah Leigh (Parent Governor))

Kath Thompson is Acting Headteacher at the school and she joins me now. Kath, thank you very much for speaking to us at BBC Radio Newcastle.

Good morning. So we are always thinking of ways that we can connect with our children, while they were at home we obviously missed them all. And **we've got** lovely caring staff **and they're always** thinking of ideas and sending them to us. One of our parent governors sent an idea around teddy bears, and we decided to buy every child in school, all 400 of them, a teddy bear. Just something comforting for them. It's a really hard time for children. We wanted them to know that we care about them and that we are thinking about them and sort of feel more connected and more secure. It plays a big part in our live lessons since the children got them. We've had loads of photos where the children have been sending us doing baking with them and doing art and yoga and gymnastics and it is just so lovely. And because they all have a bear each, they're all the same and they can feel part of something, so it's just been a really positive thing for the whole community.

I just think it is something that they can identify with because undoubtedly, they are missing their friends and there is only a portion of them in school and some of them at home and it's really challenging. I think anything that's light-hearted and something to embrace and support the children is really important at this time. Most of them are very resilient but we don't really know what the effects are going to be.

So hopefully when we look back on this time it will be for a more different positive reason, rather than thinking about you know the negatives of this time, it'll be 'oh I remember that time that's when I got this teddy', and it will be something for them to hang that onto, rather than thinking that the time that, you know, couldn't go out of the house, and it was scary.

Evergreen Special School – Elmer Elephant parade

[Images of Evergreen Primary School sign, images of large and small elephants around the school grounds, teacher explaining why and how the Elmer was created in school)

So our last wow day was based around educate and celebrate. We have just gained **the** award for educate and celebrate and we chose the theme of Elmer the Elephant to celebrate difference and diversity. Each corridor had a large papier-mâché elephant, that they had to choose a theme for and they decorated the elephant, and come the wow day, every class had also been allocated a smaller elephant with a colour from the **pride** flag, and they used a range of sensory media to decorate their elephant. These were all hidden around school on the day, and bubbles were able to go round on an elephant hunt. The bubbles took it in turns to do the elephant hunt and find the elephants around school and we actually left the elephants up for a number of weeks because the children were really

enjoying spotting them all around the building. So we videoed all of the elephants on the hunt, with some music, so that children who were at home could engage with that and see the elephants hidden around school and of course they were still in the building when they returned to school.

(Catchgate Nursery - A Bucketful of Love)

(images of children blowing kisses to the camera, children lying down spelling out the words LOVE, showing kindness, and playing games, sharing a cuppa, laughing together, giving hugs, and showing activities in class, dancing and the class showing photos of pink hearts, and throwing confetti)

Catchgate Primary School – Your imagination is amazing)

[Image of chalk board showing children on chalk drawings being amazing and singing a song. Image of Catchgate children sitting the yard inside a chalk drawn heart smiling]

[Image of credits and thanks to Burnopfield Primary School, Busy Bees Nursery, Catchgate Primary School, Cockton Hill Infant School Conkers Life, Copeland Road Primary School, Daniel from Roseberry Primary School, Durham University Nursery, Evergreen Primary School Greenfield Arts, Jenna from Finchale Primary School, St Helen's Primary School, West Rainton Primary School]