



Case Study

The Willows Primary School



The Willow Primary School, based in Tottenham in North London, is a two-form entry primary school for children aged 4-11 years of age. Rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted, the school strives to give pupils a first class, stimulating, fun and well-rounded educational experience that includes afterschool provision through the Broadwaters Extended School Service (BESS). The Willow Primary is part of the Broadwaters Inclusive Learning Community, which also comprises of The Brook Special Primary School and Broadwaters Children's Centre.

In 2018, Assistant Headteacher Natasha Beckles began researching a teaching and learning package that would expose the school's children to a good level of knowledge across a range of topics, especially to support safeguarding.

"We had set up a working party to take a step back and look at our spiritual and moral provision for children," she said. "We wanted to focus on developing the role of PSHE and citizenship education to meet the needs of the community we serve, in one of the most complex and challenged communities in the country. As I am already responsible for pastoral support, I was ideally placed to help drive this forward. We found that the working party had lots of ideas but not the time or capacity to actually create comprehensive resources at the standard or depth that would be needed, so I contacted the PSHE Association and requested guidance on available kitemarked resources. It was through this research that I came across 1decision."

The school introduced 1decision to Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 children at the start of the 2018-19 academic year. Natasha explained that the resources were a key part of their plans to strengthen Relationships, Sex and Health Education, and wider PSHE, provision.

"Having great SATs, GCSEs and A-Levels is not enough for pupils in this community – or any community," she said. "We need to take a systematic approach to children's emotional and social decision-making development. By that, I mean making sure that pupils are given opportunities to consider the drivers within their own choice-making and can evaluate risks and relationships. We want to help children think, speak and own their reasons for making decisions, with an awareness of the consequences."

She continued: "It is increasingly important that children are taught to negotiate situations and conversations well to keep themselves safe. All schools have to prioritise core subjects to help create equity and opportunity but we believe our curriculum has to take emotional intelligence (EQ), life skills and dynamic situational thinking seriously too, so that children learn to 'read' situations well. Our motivation is not the result of the government's current direction: it is about safeguarding for our children, at a time when issues like child exploitation, criminalisation and youth violence are on the increase. Any school with a serious commitment to safeguarding, behaviour and safety cannot afford to ignore PSHE or resources like 1decision."



Although in its early days, Natasha said that 1decision was already making an impact in the school.

“We work in a state-of-the-art facility with smart screen resources, remote working and collaboration so first and foremost everything has to be easily accessible online and not in a folder somewhere in the staff prep room,” she revealed.

“Our teachers like 1decision’s online format, videos and supporting booklets in terms of everything being there, when they need it. If we have an incident in the community, we can use a relevant video and start a discussion around it.”

“A good example is the appropriate touch video. I really like the inclusive representation of the father and his response to what his child was telling him, which is a really helpful model. He dealt with the situation in an intentionally child-focused manner and I could certainly show this video to our diverse community of parents to start a discussion on how best to deal with a difficult and upsetting disclosure, and help them begin to consider their reactions. Overall, there is lots of opportunity for parental engagement through 1decision.”

Natasha added: “We are already a restorative school committed to ‘Circle Time’ and ‘Golden Time’ alongside lessons on PSHE and pupil voice. We will ultimately measure the success of 1decision on whether children demonstrate increased awareness to recognise and report situations; increased confidence to recognise and respond effectively to peer pressure and unsafe adult behaviour; as well as understanding the language and social relationship concepts that we have taught them as part of our wider EQ, life skills and social curriculum.”

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