The West Partnership presents:

Coatbridge High School, North Lanarkshire Wellbeing App

This storyboard details how Coatbridge High School developed a Wellbeing App resource to support the health and wellbeing of their pupils. We hear how they built on existing digital infrastructure to provide an easy-to-access repository of health and wellbeing resources.

What was the problem?

Health and Wellbeing is an important part of the Curriculum for Excellence. Its importance has no doubt been elevated by the pandemic, which has posed several challenges for pupils, staff, and the wider school community. It's not always easy for pupils to talk about issues around health and wellbeing and some pupils are unlikely to self-refer to support services. Providing support to these pupils is important to meet their health and wellbeing needs.

Why is this important?

Health and wellbeing is important for a number of reasons. Firstly, staff have a duty of care regarding their pupils and should ensure the wellbeing of their pupils. Secondly, the progress of learning is intricately linked to pupil wellbeing. If wellbeing is not present then learning is likely to be hampered. Thirdly, wellbeing has been prioritised during the pandemic, with the challenges of social distancing posing a particular challenge to wellbeing.

Aims of the change to practice

The project had a number of aims:

1) To increase the awareness of health and wellbeing

2) To provide an accessible library of support resources
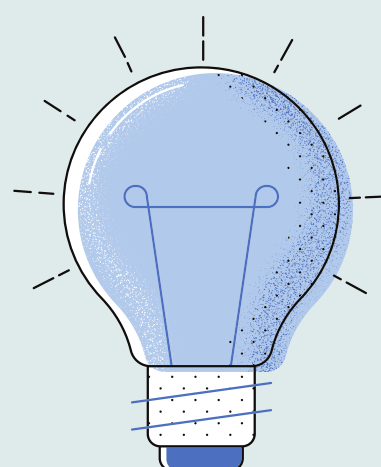
What did you do?

To meet the needs of pupils, the team aimed to develop an app that could host wellbeing resources in one convenient place. The app needed to be accessible to both pupils who would access it and staff who would contribute to its development. Several apps were initially audited, with the school's existing app provider (ConnectUS) being chosen in the end. Pupils' prior understanding of the app meant that they would not need to learn how to use it, and its accessibility for the team meant that you didn't need to be a tech wizard to update and maintain the resource library. The team then identified resources, from multiple agencies, that would be appropriate for the app. The app is live, with content added when appropriate. The team who developed the app informed the wider staff community of the purposes and functions of the app and were asked to publicise it within their classes. Parent and carers are also encouraged to download the app and are sent resources appropriate for them to support their child. This also gives them an awareness of all the resources and activities on the app in general.

What happened?

The team begin the project in October and the app was live by January. After initial resources were found and placed on the app, the team trialed the app with their S1 cohort. Feedback was positive and led to the school-wide roll out of the app. Uptake amongst the school was quick. The app had been downloaded 90 times by the end of its first week being live. As a way of keeping awareness of the app high, the team have ran a number of themed weeks with aligned launches of associated resources. Such weeks have been ran around expressing yourself and staying safe online. More recently, the team ran a 7 days of positivity campaign, which encouraged pupils to complete a task a day to stay positive during the pandemic.

What are the key points you have learnt?

The team has identified several key learning points from their change to practice. Firstly, the team believes that informing staff of the purpose of the app and its functions was key to aiding the promotion of the app. School teachers were the key link that helped legitimise the app and its focus on health and wellbeing to pupils. Secondly, the team note that engagement has been higher with video content than with written content. This has aided their search for new resources and content and helps them plan for future updates. Thirdly, the team was keen to stress that the app did not require high-level technical skills to develop. The accessibility of the app meant that content could be uploaded without the need for specific IT support.

What next for the project?

The team have identified a few next steps for the app. Firstly, they intend on evaluating the impact of the app by auditing their users. This will help inform how they develop the app in the future. Secondly, they intend on considering how the app could be used to track learning wellbeing over time. The team will continue promoting their app and providing resources to their pupils.