



# Leading Parent Partnership Award (LPPA)

## Reassessment Report

School name:	Elmwood School
School address and postcode:	King George Crescent, Rushall, Walsall. WS4 1EG
School telephone:	01922 721081
School website:	<a href="https://www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk/">https://www.elmwood.walsall.sch.uk/</a>
Head teacher:	Lee Cross
Award coordinator:	James Hawkins
Award verifier:	Hannah Hall
Date of reassessment:	9.12.2019

### Commentary on the mini-portfolio of evidence:

A robust and thorough collection of materials to support the evidence for each KPI.

### Commentary on the tour of the school:

The school has a calm, safe and “family feel” climate for learning. I was warmly greeted from the moment I stepped into the school. A welcoming reception area and friendly professional staff made for a very positive start, and this continued throughout my tour and the day.

Signage and displays are bright, informative and up to date, and the learning spaces are well organised, equipped and underpin a safe climate for learning. I was really impressed with the care and respect the Learners clearly have for their social spaces, and the routines and systems the staff have in place to support this.

I observed staff using calm, scripted interventions where needed, and the language of emotions and choice is beginning to be embedded – again supporting the safe and calm culture at Elmwood. There was a lovely example of this during a one to one in a reflection room.

There is an open door policy here for parent/carers - I experienced this myself as staff were more than happy to talk to me about their roles in the school.

#### **Commentary on discussions with stakeholders:**

The staff are passionate and dedicated to parental partnership and the sustainability and ongoing development of this agenda. There is no “lip service” paid to this – parental engagement is woven into all areas of the curriculum and improvement planning.

The roles of Bev and James have evolved so that they are essential and skilled conduits for parent/carers not just to school but to a vast array of other services. They have forged relationships with Doctors, Consultants, Secretaries and receptionists (to name a few!) with the understanding that without this families and the achievement of the Learners will not be sustained.

The roles of staff here are more than Teachers or support workers. They are Champions for the families they work with, truly underpinning and evidencing partnership work.

The school acknowledges that prior to Learners achieving a place at Elmwood, Parent/carers have had to fight for their child’s place. The school has an emphasis on putting in place interventions and resources, communicated consistently (sometimes through going out to the home) that alleviate the additional worries and stress some of the families experience. Shifting the Parent/carer mindsets means they feel safe in trusting the school with their child, and equally enhances the relationship and partnership between family and school.

The Parent/carers I met commented how grateful they were that any concern or query was responded to immediately, even when at the weekend or later in the evening. The lines of communication are open and flexible, and there was a genuine appreciation of the mutual respect afforded them when there was any dialogue or contact between themselves and the school.

The School also works to develop the confidence and skills of the Parent/carers. One Parent Governor I met with left me speechless after she had finished speaking, as she was so grateful and empowered for the opportunities and support the school had afforded herself and her daughter. She was really inspirational - and dedicated to sustaining and building on the partnership work already in place.

The resounding feedback from all stakeholders was “It feels like a family”. In a context where Learners and their families need to feel safe and regulated this was a lovely statement to hear, and testament to the work done by the staff team.

#### **Strengths identified during reassessment:**

The implementation and development of the “Marvellous Me” App as a way of communicating positive work, attitude and behaviour between school and home is a real strength, identified by all stakeholders.

Coffee mornings have evolved, and are held in informal safe spaces. The fantastic food technology room also facilitates informal and non threatening parental engagement. The school now sees it’s role in this as facilitating rather than leading, and there are many dedicated and passionate Parent/carers wanting to take this responsibility on.

The breadth of the staff team means Parent/carers feel they can just pick up the phone. The development of this has ensured every family feels, and can identify, they have a safe space and safe person, as well as their child.

Matching the curriculum to individual needs, equally ensuring each Learner has an individual plan that also meets and repondes to their social and emotional needs. For example, Learner and Parent/carer led “emotional Warmth intervention.

#### **Impact:**

Parents and Parent Governors want to lead on parent coffee mornings and other occasions./events. There is strength within this team and they are confident to challenge and hold the school to account where they feel there needs to be development or change.

There has been a significant rise in attendance at progress and achievement meetings as well as to EHCP review meetings. It is attendance with purpose too. Parent/carers are empowered through their regular engagement with school and are encouraged and supported to be assertive partners in decision making for their child and school developments.

Bev’s role and the weekly meetings with SLT ensures there is a coordinated and consistent approach to meeting the needs of the Learners as well as their families.

#### **Areas for development:**

Developing the Parent/carer area of the website, for example providing audio clips. Include visuals of the Friends of Elmwood and the Parent Governors. Have a list of planned social and curriculum opportunities for Parent/carers in this area for ease of access and not just on the Calendar.

Continue to support and develop the coffee mornings, and use some of these opportunitites to collect informal feedback (not just questionnaires!) on strengths and areas for development, and for the school to give their actions and respnses to these.



**Verifier recommendation:**

Elmwood School has met the requirements to maintain the LPP Award.

**Head teacher comments:**

It was a pleasure to watch Hannah engage with so many stakeholders within the school and I particular enjoyed my conversation with her – she was able to demonstrate a real understanding of the school and acknowledge the journey we have been on in supporting not only the pupils but the parent / carers of our pupils. The whole process was a celebration of our work, and Hannah also explored additional areas of our practice to validate and cement her judgements. Her kind words left us all extremely proud of our achievements and gave us renewed vigour to continue on our journey.

May we use your comment for website/marketing purposes? **Yes**