



Stormbreak[®] Surge

Insight Report 2022



Stormbreak Surge: embedding mentally healthy movement every day for every child



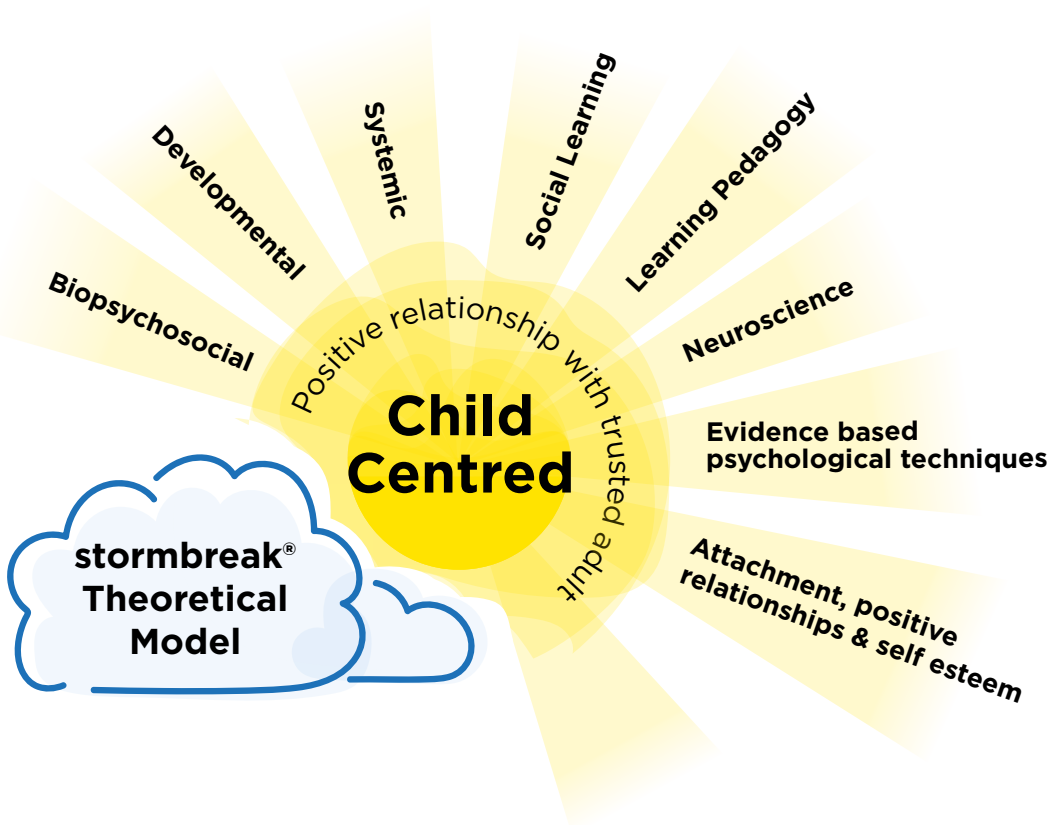
stormbreak[®]



“stormbreak is inspiring for us. It is easy to understand, enjoyable and motivating. It’s already possible in a short time to see how relationships with children can be strengthened and how children find talking about their emotions easier.”
stormbreak primary school teacher

What is stormbreak?

Stormbreak is a charity that supports primary children’s (aged 4-11 years) mental health and emotional wellbeing through movement.

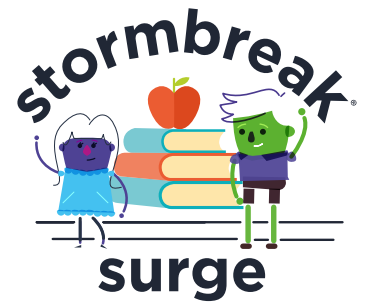


At stormbreak CIO we provide a unique integration of psychologically informed physical movement to proactively nurture mentally healthy children. The preventative, normalising, strengths based and validating approach of stormbreak is much needed in mainstreaming and de-stigmatising mental health. The World Health Organisation champions preventative, early childhood mental health interventions, including school-based programmes and the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE, 2022) recommends adopting a whole-school approach to supporting positive social, emotional and mental wellbeing of staff, children and young people in primary and secondary education.

stormbreak Theoretical Model >

Stormbreak provides essential opportunities to nurture the emotional and physical wellbeing of future generations by embedding mentally healthy movement in schools, homes, places and spaces with trusted adults who live with, work with, care for and support young children.

Stormbreak school training programmes are universal, whole-school, preventative approaches that support children to develop the skills and knowledge around their own wellbeing that will support them recognise, respond to and regulate their feelings, emotions and behaviours now and in the future.



The Surge Programme

Surge is stormbreak's school staff advocate training programme to make movement simple, inclusive and accessible and equip staff with the delivery confidence to incorporate mentally healthy movement strategies into the daily life of the whole school. It removes barriers to participation and enhances perceptions of the worth of movement in schools for teachers, staff and children, through the delivery of purposeful and intentional movement that is focussed on mental health and establishment of an effective whole school empowering environment.

The stormbreak Surge programme leads a school community through the principles and practicalities of embedding stormbreak to ensure long lasting, impactful and sustainable change.

[Hear from a stormbreak school >](#)

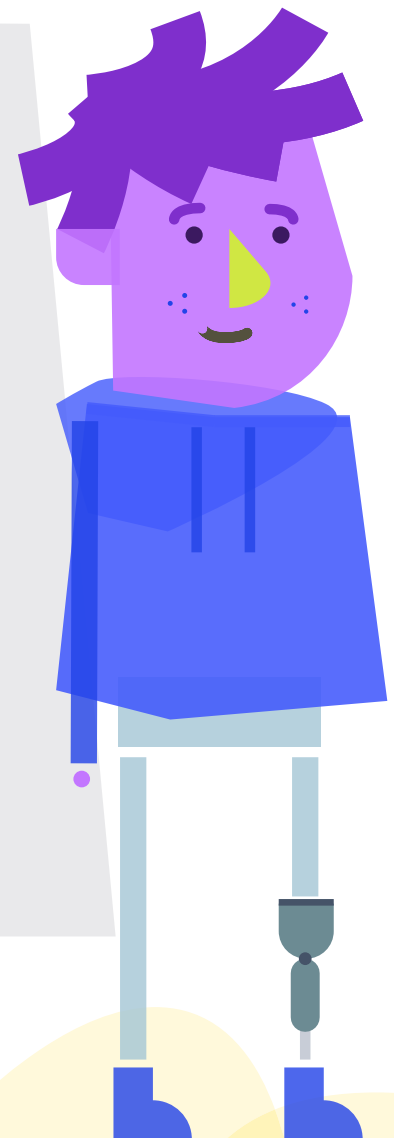
Stormbreak Surge Primary Schools: Insight Report 2022

In 2022 stormbreak delivered Surge to **53 Primary Schools**. Of these schools, **30 took part in the evaluation** that has contributed to this report. These schools were in Dorset, Hertfordshire, Birmingham, Bedfordshire and Walsall.

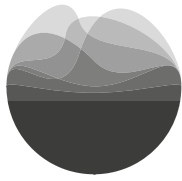
All of the schools were invited to engage in the evaluation of stormbreak. The insight and evaluation team are based at Bournemouth University. The evaluation is ongoing and the findings presented here are emerging, confident observations of progress so far.

The people who participated in the evaluation to date include school staff (class teachers, pastoral care workers, senior leaders) who engaged with the stormbreak Surge programme training and those staff who have delivered stormbreaks in their classes and across the school.

Children's outcomes have been captured through teacher observations, experiences during stormbreak and across the school day. The staff within the cohort played a significant role in supporting the evaluation. The school staff have shown a thorough commitment to their schools through the delivery and promotion of mentally healthy movement in the day to day school environment.

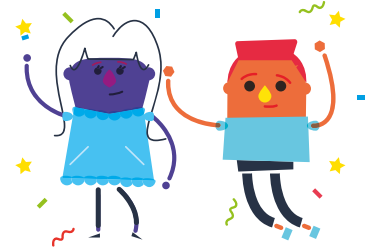


All time stormbreak reach



Total number of stormbreaks completed:

538,328



Total number of children supported:

34,940

stormbreak 2022



Total number of stormbreaks completed by new schools:

103,832



Total number of new children supported:

11,622



Total number of new schools supported:

61



Total number of new school staff trained:

239

In 2022, schools provided feedback from 11,728 stormbreak activities.

The stormbreaks schools delivered to meet the needs of children were:



15%
Hope & optimism



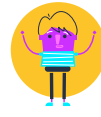
24%
Resilience



18%
Self-worth



21%
Relationships



22%
Self-care

93%

of children said that they enjoyed **feelings of happiness** when they took part in the stormbreak activities.

78%

of children said that they **wanted to do more** stormbreaks.



What stormbreak advocates and staff say:

“Stormbreak helps children to feel good and to feel positive about themselves.”

“Through stormbreak, children are learning useful vocabulary very quickly. This helps with children’s understanding and acceptance of how they are feeling. Children also then know to use the ideas and coping strategies that they have been taught - trusting that these will help them.”

“Stormbreak is inspiring for us. It is easy to understand, enjoyable and motivating. It’s already possible in a short time to see how relationships with children can be strengthened and how children find talking about their emotions easier.”

“When we complete stormbreaks, we notice how different children are throughout the day. The children ask to do stormbreaks frequently. They are engaged and focused on learning afterwards. They seem really happy in the school days whenever they do stormbreaks.”

“One class teacher I spoke to said she could see the changes in wellbeing with children who have done stormbreaks. She referred to stormbreak as having a “magical effect” on children.”

“We have found that conversations about mental health have increased. Our staff team is more aware of children’s mental health and wellbeing needs. Importantly, children are also more aware of their emotional needs since we have embedded stormbreak into our school.”

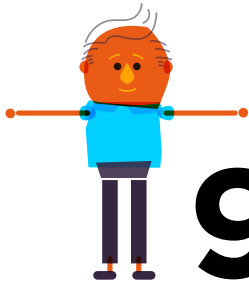
“Stormbreak enables us to reach out to all children, including those who would not usually take part in any interactive activities. We see happy faces when the children do take part in stormbreaks.”

“Children have increased their understanding of the words to describe their feelings and this has enabled them to develop different ways to cope and manage their feelings.”



What professionals say:

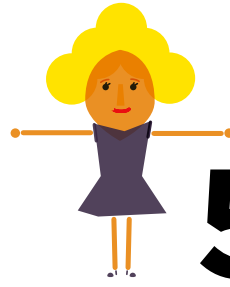
Total number of Surge participants from the 30 schools;



99

Primary School advocates completed stormbreak Surge.

(class teachers, pastoral care workers, teaching assistants)



52

Primary School Leaders completed stormbreak Surge.

All Surge programme training participants completed an outcomes evaluation at the end of each session they attended. The research team analysed this data and identified some key findings and themes from the feedback received during the reporting period.

86%

of school staff who participated in the Surge programme training **strongly agreed** that the sessions were understandable.

83%

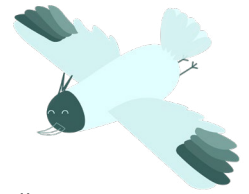
of school staff who participated in the Surge programme **strongly agreed** that the resources that accompanied the training sessions were useful.

86%

of school staff who participated in the Surge programme **strongly agreed** that they felt confident about embedding stormbreak into their schools, based on their learning from the training and access to the available resources.



Themes



School staff said that the Surge programme enhanced understanding and knowledge about mentally healthy movement and that this promoted planning and effective embedding. This in turn has been acknowledged as a powerful approach to using mentally healthy movement that is fun, encourages positive interactions and where children can feel calm to engage with learning and classroom activities.

“Stormbreak helps children to feel calm and relaxed whilst they take part in physical activity.”

“Stormbreak works well. Within minutes, I am able to use stormbreak to settle and engage well with the pupils in my classes.”

“Children are taking the lead in asking to take part in specific stormbreaks.”

“It is very clear to see the importance of supporting children in understanding their mental health and to provide them with strategies at a very young age that they can use throughout childhood, adolescence and beyond to keep mentally well.”

“We have been able to raise the profile of mental health and wellbeing in our school. The training has facilitated a consistent message and language about mental health and we are enjoying a whole school culture that prioritises empathy, following training and practising with stormbreaks.”

“We could talk honestly in the Surge sessions, share feedback and discuss how we would approach using different stormbreaks in our schools.”

“It was really helpful using the stormbreak resources, for example the activity cards - and then being able to try them out directly.”

“We were able to see the different principles and concepts behind stormbreak - to fully understand the approach.”

“The Surge sessions offered clear information and imparted knowledge and learning about mental health and wellbeing in the context of children and staff.”

“As a group, we were able to share ideas, reflect upon the processes, discuss our school values and really understand how to incorporate mental health into movement, together.”

“We were able to use the training to work out how to implement stormbreak, plan and deliver sessions and to practise stormbreaks in a supportive environment.”



The participants completed Surge programme training and school impact measures and the following results were found:

100% of participants said:

- they were confident to lead the process of showing colleagues how to use stormbreak
- that stormbreak supports the connection between children and the staff who lead stormbreak sessions

The Surge training participants said they were more confident to plan, deliver and embed the stormbreak approach across the school.

86%

of participants said they were more confident to embed stormbreak into their school day

95%

of participants said they were confident to use the stormbreak dashboard to monitor deliveries and evidence the outcomes for pupils

87%

of participants said:

- that having conversations about feelings and wellbeing was easier since doing stormbreaks
- they felt confident that their whole school approach to mental health and wellbeing was enhanced through stormbreak
- that when children do stormbreaks, they engage in team work most of this time, amongst each other, as peers

96%

of participants said that when children do stormbreaks, their engagement helps them to create a positive learning environment (readiness for learning)



What children say:

"Stormbreak makes me feel good, it is fun!"

"I love it, it is really good fun."

"Stormbreak makes me feel good."

"It's fun and makes your heart feel good."

"It makes me feel energised."

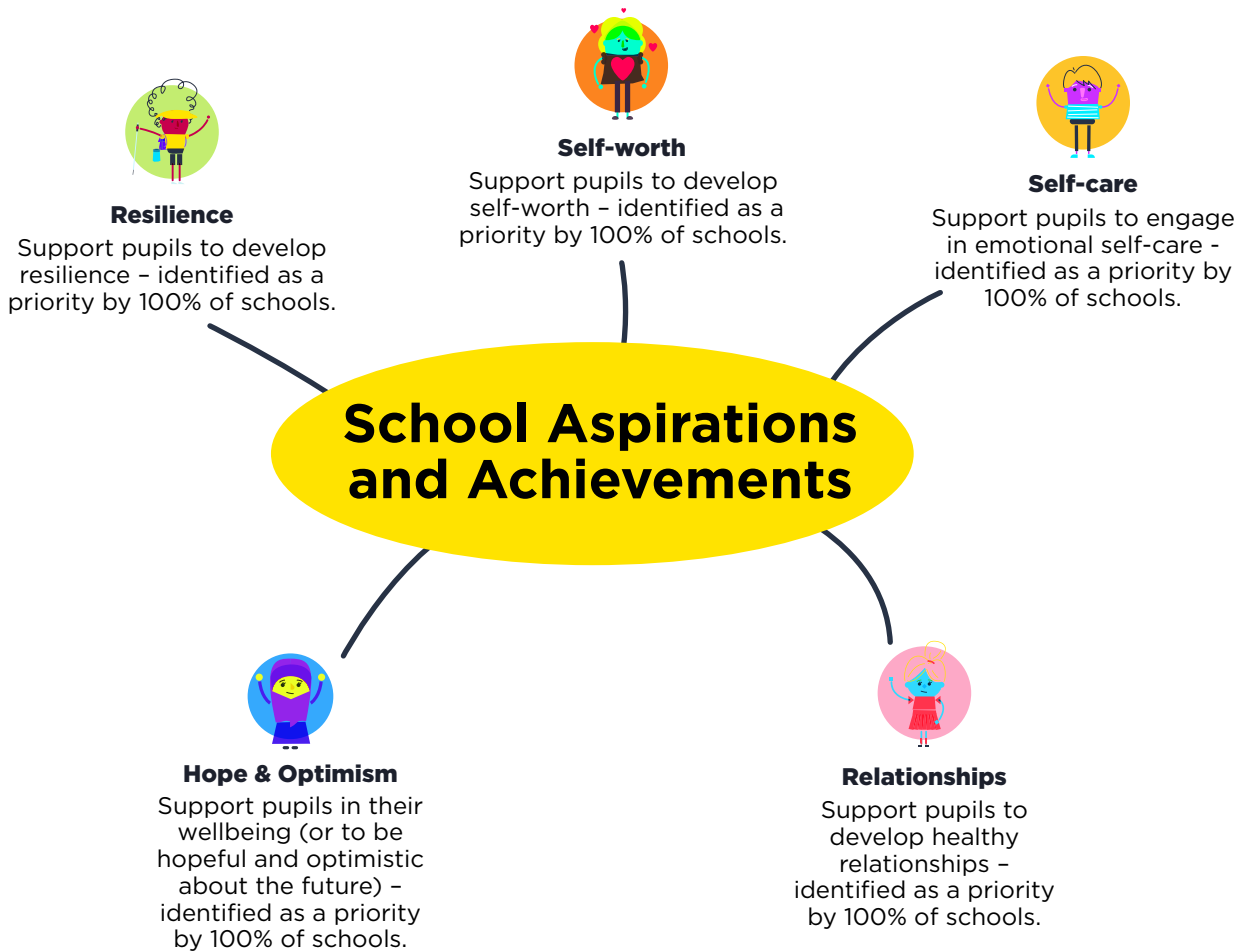
"I want to do it more! It makes me feel happy with my friends."

"Copy Cats makes me laugh so I like doing that one when I'm sad."

"I like doing 'Classroom Compliments' when I've fallen out with my friends as it makes me realise nice things about myself that I didn't know before."

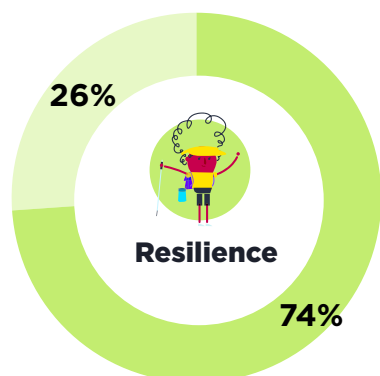
Stormbreak Experiences: School Aspirations and Achievements

At the beginning of their engagement with stormbreak, schools took part in the stormbreak mentally healthy audit and identified their highest priorities in working towards achieving a mentally healthy school culture. The highest priorities were:

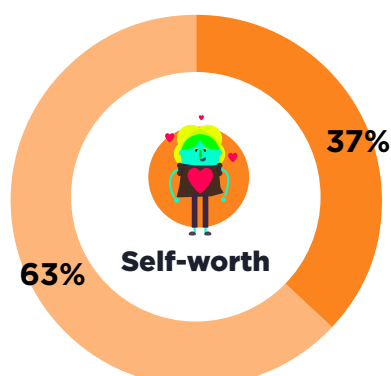


Stormbreak Experiences

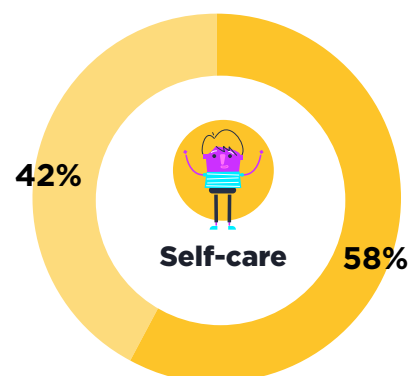
When schools were asked how far they were working towards achieving these prioritised aspirations, we found the following outcomes. This showed how schools were already committed to a mentally healthy culture, and where stormbreak can be utilised as a vehicle to continue to support schools to achieve their aspirations. We anticipate that schools can build these aspirations into their priorities for school improvement plans and how they can contribute to evidencing their achievements through the school's self-evaluation processes.



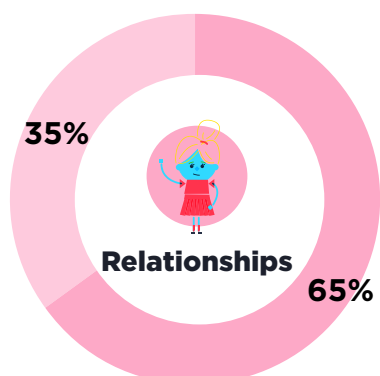
Supporting pupils to develop resilience - 74% of schools were developing their practice and 26% of schools identified this priority as being well embedded into practice.



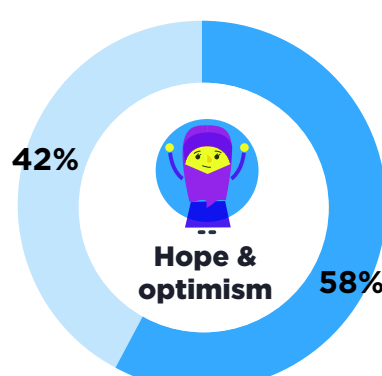
Supporting pupils to develop self-worth - 37% of schools were developing their practice and 63% of schools identified this priority as being well embedded into practice.



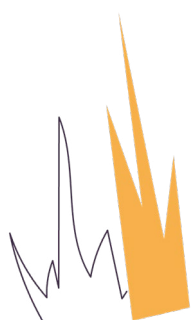
Supporting pupils to engage in their own self-care - 58% of schools were developing their practice and 42% of schools identified this priority as being well embedded into practice.



Supporting pupils to develop healthy relationships - 65% of schools were developing their practice and 35% of schools identified this priority as being well embedded into practice.



Supporting pupils in their wellbeing (or to be hopeful and optimistic about the future) - 58% of schools were developing their practice and 42% schools identified this priority as being well embedded into practice.



Summary



The schools who engaged in the stormbreak programme and were able to attend the sessions expressed **significant readiness to embrace both stormbreak and a commitment to achieving a mentally healthy culture in their schools.** The Surge participants became more receptive over time and this experience was shared in the context of school advocates and school leaders, which was encouraging.

Given the emerging positive findings, the schools who have engaged thus far have demonstrated significant commitment to their children and to the whole school culture.

Teachers told us about their observations so far:

"I have gained much more of an understanding about children's mental health. I have learnt how movement can help children to feel better about themselves. I now implement stormbreaks as part of the school day."

"I have benefited from an understanding of what stormbreak is. As well as the classes, it has given us a chance to explore its impact with a small group of children. We now have the chance to share ideas with other staff about how to use it."

"Stormbreak is so powerful in supporting children's mental health and wellbeing. The children always ask to do more!"

"Children are building relationships with each other through stormbreaks."

"It is positive to be able to reinforce mental health and wellbeing through movement with the children in our school."

"Using the resources and the website are easy processes to deliver different stormbreaks, based on the children's interests and needs."

"Children are able to identify different emotions which helps them to understand their feelings."

"We have dedicated time to deliver stormbreaks in our schools. It provides us with different ways to support children with mental health issues and with well being generally."

"I have been using stormbreaks as a 'brain break' between lessons. It really helps children to return to learning and their readiness for learning can be seen."



As schools continue to embed stormbreak across the school day whilst also participating in the evaluation, the outcomes and impact for pupils can be captured over time. On an individual basis this provides schools with an invaluable opportunity to share the findings with key school stakeholders and to include the findings in the school and governing body self-evaluation processes.

Find out more about how stormbreak Surge can help your school >

Get in touch with us about stormbreak Surge or other programmes >

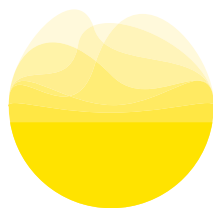


Contact details

Darryl Walsh: Director of School Operations
darryl@stormbreak.org.uk
07910 246064

**View our
free school
resources
here >**

Contributing authors: Claire Hannah-Russell, Darryl Walsh, Kate Bone, Victoria Stamp, Dr Victoria Randall and Dr Martin Yelling.



stormbreak®

stormbreak.org.uk

#hellostormbreak

