

# Swale Academies Trust Case Study

## Mental Health at the Heart of School Improvement

Insight

Identification

Impact

### Introduction

Swale is a large and diverse multi-academy trust with schools operating in a range of social and geographical contexts.

Recognising that wellbeing plays a critical role in learning, behaviour, and attendance, leaders wanted to take a more consistent, data-informed approach to mental health support.

Schools within the Trust had been delivering good pastoral care, but there was little alignment in how needs were identified, understood, or tracked. This meant that while interventions were happening, leaders couldn't always evidence impact.

Leadership saw the need for a more strategic solution: one that would provide timely, high-quality insight at both school and Trust level, while reducing the admin burden on staff.

Swale adopted BounceTogether as a tool for gathering and analysing wellbeing data across its settings. They wanted to move from reactive support to proactive, preventative action – and to embed mental health monitoring into the core of school improvement planning.

### Implementation

The rollout began with an audit of existing provision. Every school completed a self-assessment, giving leaders a clearer picture of what was in place and where gaps existed.

All pupils were invited to take part in standardised wellbeing surveys. These were completed online, were age-appropriate and took minimal lesson time, making them easy to embed into the school routine. The key benefit was scalability – allowing pupil voice to be captured consistently, at scale, and at multiple points during the year.

What made BounceTogether so effective was how quickly the data turned into insight. Our staff didn't need to be specialists – the dashboards highlighted key concerns and themes clearly.



### Insight

One of the Trust's biggest wins was being able to shift from general assumptions to precise, structured insight.

Instead of relying on anecdotal feedback or waiting for behaviour to flag concerns, staff could now access clear, real-time data on how pupils were feeling – and how those feelings changed over time.

The Trust also extended this insight beyond pupils, introducing a validated parent/carer survey. This gave schools a broader picture of their provision – bringing in family perceptions of school support, and helping identify disconnects between pupil experience and parental awareness.

### Identification

This new approach helped schools move beyond reactive support models and systematically identify need, including:

- ✓ Pupils experiencing emotional distress but not visibly presenting concerns.
- ✓ Groups of children who shared similar challenges (e.g. low sense of belonging or emotional regulation issues).
- ✓ Students who were doing well academically but were internally struggling.

The structured nature of the data meant that even in large schools, staff could see who needed help – not based on assumptions or visibility, but based on what pupils were reporting themselves.

# Impact

The use of BounceTogether enabled schools across Swale to not only gather wellbeing data – but to act.

Schools created targeted wellbeing action plans using their results, and pastoral support was adapted and evaluated based on survey feedback.

The ability to track outcomes over time, including through pre- and post-intervention comparisons, meant leaders could refine provision with confidence.

At a Trust-wide level, actions taken could be evidenced clearly to stakeholders, from governors to Ofsted, and used to justify further resourcing and support.

It fostered a shared understanding that mental health - like academic attainment – should be tracked, supported, and improved through structured practice.

The Trust also provided evidence-based guidance, giving leaders a framework to turn insights into practical steps.



## What Swale Achieved

At the heart of BounceTogether are three core capabilities designed to help schools move from vague concerns to confident action. At Swale, each of these elements played a distinct and meaningful role:

- Insight** - Leadership teams gained clear, comparable data that replaced guesswork.
- Identification** - Schools uncovered emotional needs in pupils who might have otherwise remained invisible.
- Impact** - Data was turned into action, enabling schools to build targeted plans and evaluate interventions.



## Ready to Get Started?

### Run Your First Wellbeing Survey **FREE**

BounceTogether helps schools bring structure and clarity to pupil wellbeing – surfacing hidden needs, enabling smarter support, and evidencing what makes a difference.

Run your first wellbeing survey completely free as part of our trial offer.

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