



Peer Empowerment Network - PEN Pals

Pilot insights report 13.11.23

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MAKING IT HAPPEN!

Pilot activities

54

Total number of year 6 pupils actively engaged in the PEN Pals pilot

25 = Chantry Community Primary
29 = All Saints C of E Primary



Creative writing



Visual expression



Peer group discussions and active listening



Audio conversations and storytelling



Methodology

Our pilot began at Chantry Community Primary School in Bexhill, working with 25 pupils in Year 6, with a three-hour immersive workshop from 9am - 12pm in the classroom. One week later we visited All Saints C of E Primary School in Sidley, to repeat the workshop with 29 pupils in Year 6. We used insights from working with pupils from Chantry Primary to develop the format for All Saints pupils. Daisy and Jane from Make (Good) Trouble attended and managed all sessions, with a focus on oracy skills and recording young voices, while John and Tom from Priority 1-54 led the schools transition agenda and visual expression work.

At the beginning of each session, we set expectations and safeguarding boundaries. Workbooks were issued to each child who were encouraged to discuss each topic with their peers in small groups. A large AV screen at the front of each classroom was used for visual prompts relating to each section of the workbook. Topics included self-discovery, transition to secondary school and developing supportive messages to send to Year 6 pupils at the other local school included in this pilot.

Group discussions were facilitated. We encouraged pupils to think more deeply about their answers to expand their oracy skills. In one section of the workbook, pupils were asked to write a short letter about themselves using their first names only, that could be used as their PEN Pal correspondence. Some children excelled at this task, whilst others struggled with the concept of writing a letter to someone they do not know.

Once the workbooks were completed, Tom, gave each pupil a graphic board and coloured marker pens. Tom, who is a graffiti artist and youth worker, showed the pupils examples of graffiti-style writing, so that they could create artwork with their messages of support. The graffiti boards were then photographed and all children were given the opportunity to take their artwork home with them.

Children whose parents gave consent were interviewed in an audio booth set up at the back of the classroom at Chantry Primary and in a separate room at All Saints Primary.





Name:

School:

All about me

We are all unique and individual, but what makes you, you? What do you like doing? Are there things that make you feel happy or help you to relax when you are worried? Fill in each of boxes below.

Three words that best describe me!

1)

2)

3)

My Perfect Day

In the morning, I would

In the afternoon, I would

At night, I would

My favourite

TV show

Food

Colour

Book

Movie

Activity

One person that I most look up to and why

.....

.....

.....

.....



MAKING IT HAPPEN!

We started each session with a question - What is a pen pal?

Approximately half the children in each class raised their hands when asked “What is a pen pal?” Some said that you have to live in another country to be a pen pal.

Pen Pal (noun) - a person you come to know by frequent, friendly correspondence.

Methodology evolution: authenticity - in their own words

In the first session at Chantry Primary, it became apparent that many of the descriptive words being used by the pupils as messages of support were being copied from our resources. When the children applied these messages to their graphic boards, we ended up with many repeats. We decided to use this learning to change the delivery of the second session at All Saints Primary, reducing the descriptive words given to them, so that the children would use their own words. When the children from All Saints applied their messages to their graphic boards, there was far more creative variation, providing a much richer picture of their passions and what matters to them.

Analysing the workbooks from Chantry, it was clear that humour was important to the children. Of those asked, all struggled to understand what the word “community” meant (it was perceived as grown-up language). What became apparent from their workbooks and conversations was that their community was many things: family, school, activities and passions like football, dancing and art, with many speaking about belonging to local youth clubs hosting the activities.

At Chantry Primary we gave six pupils the opportunity to get involved in a body mapping activity. A child lies down on a big sheet of paper and another draws around them. Then cards with questions are laid around the drawing, and the children are invited to draw and write down what they think the personality of the fictitious character might be. Questions included: What is their name? What is their favourite food? What are they looking forward to when going to secondary school? etc. While the children enjoyed this exercise, it excluded the majority of the class. Those doing the body mapping exercise did not have time to complete their workbooks. We decided not to repeat the body mapping activity at All Saints Primary the following week. Our session at All Saints coincided with their class year photographs being taken. As a result some were absent at the end of the session and so did not complete the survey at the end of the workbooks.

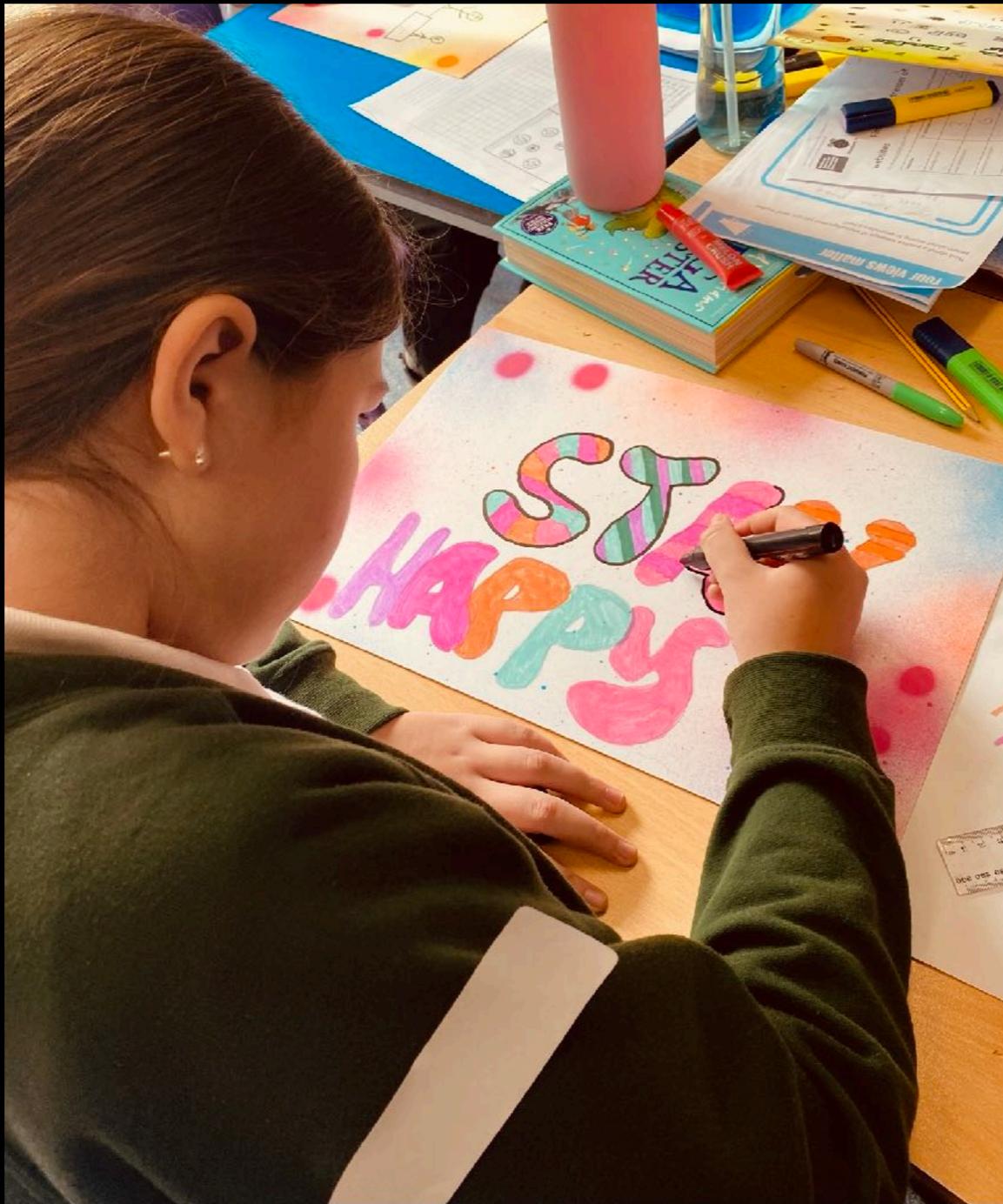
“I live in Bexhill-on-Sea and I like rollerblading and swimming at the beacon and I dislike the summer. I have one sibling and two animals, a cat and a rabbit.”

Pupil workbook entry

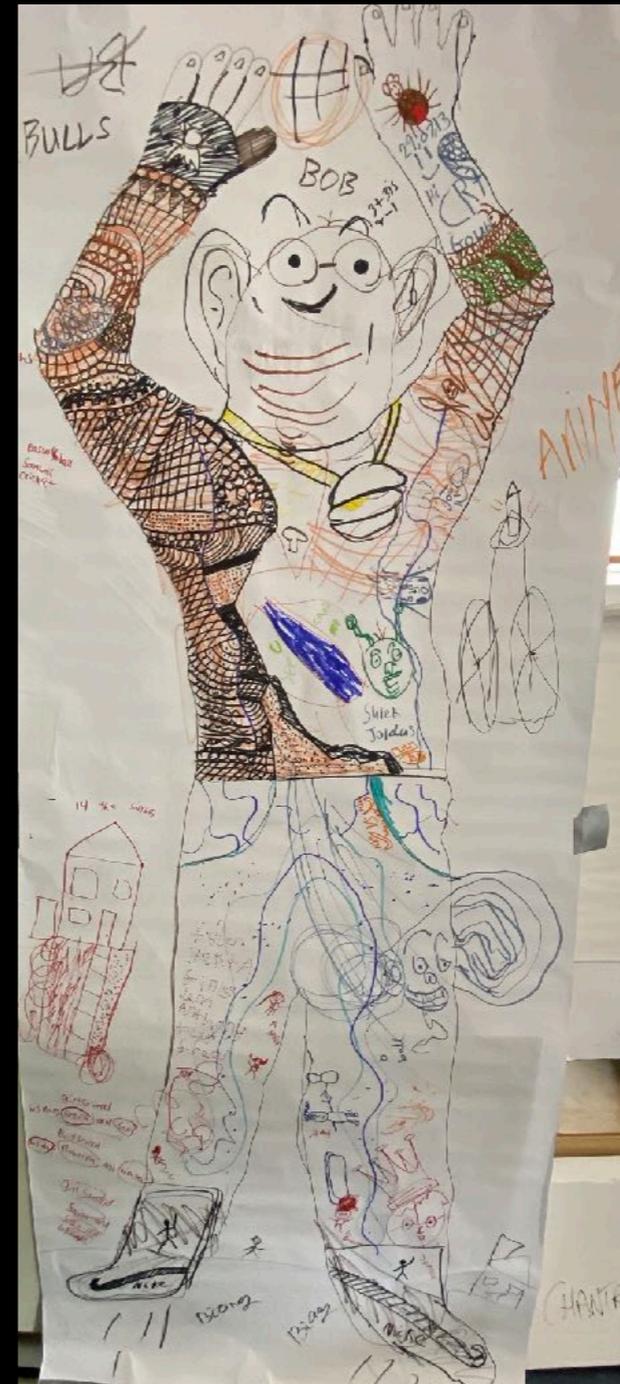


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Visual expression - graffiti boards and body mapping



Chantry Primary School



"Bob" - boddy mapping

Methodology evolution: authenticity - in their own words

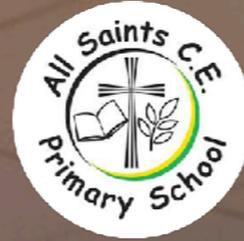
In the second session at All Saints Primary, we organised children in pairs, giving them one minute to talk about a subject. One child was encouraged to tell their story and the other to actively listen to it. The exercise was then switched so all children had the opportunity to be the storyteller and the listener. Questions were put up on the AV screen at the front of the classroom as conversation starters. We incorporated humour into this exercise, to maximise engagement. This exercise was an ideal way to prepare pupils for the audio recordings.

We also changed the methodology for the audio recordings for All Saints Primary. At Chantry Primary, we conducted adult-to-child interviews. During the audio recordings, we asked pupils if they would like to become a PEN Pal and how they would feel if they received a letter from a PEN Pal from All Saints Primary School? All answered positively, however, listening back, we realised that we were in fact conducting a survey of the concept of PEN Pals, rather than creating a PEN Pals experience and then finding out whether the children benefitted from it. The audio recordings at Chantry Primary were difficult to hear due to the background noise, as the recording booth was in the back of the busy classroom.

For the recordings at All Saints Primary we adopted a peer-to-peer model. Children whose parents gave consent worked in pairs interviewing each other. This provided much richer, funny, poignant conversations – importantly in their own words. We also managed to get a separate room with no background noise, so these recordings are better quality and easy to hear.

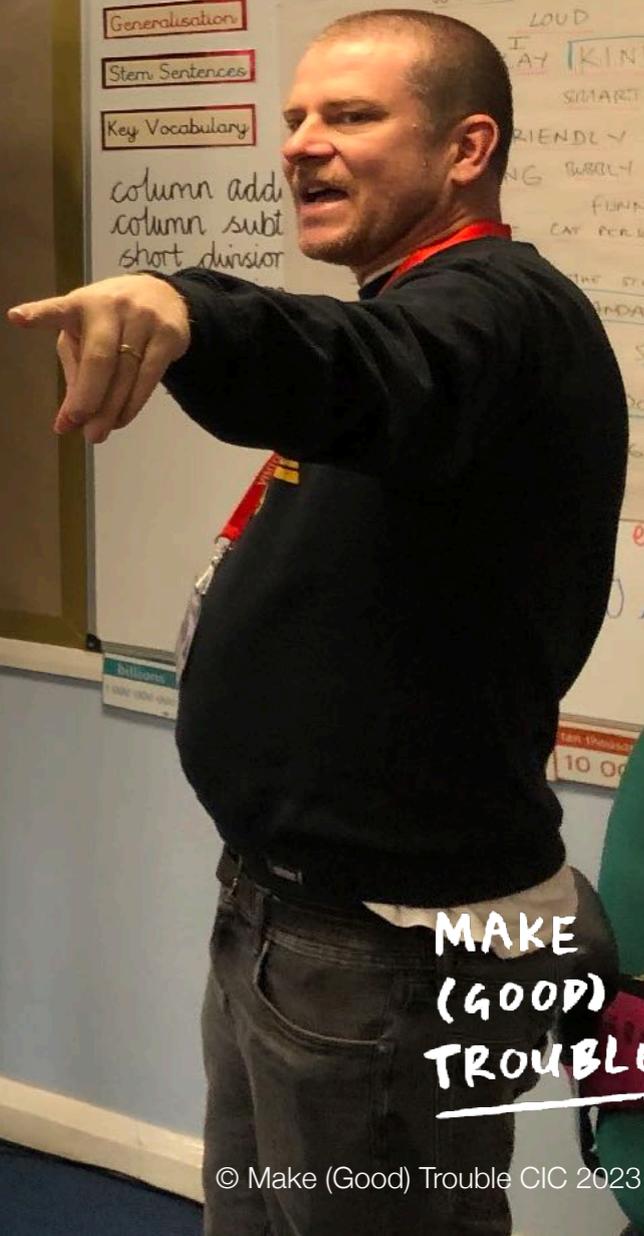
“I live in St. Leonards. I feel nervous about secondary school since there's loads of new things and you might lose some friends from primary school. I want to be an engineer when I grow up.”

Pupil workbook entry



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“
**Speak for 1 minute
about your funniest
day at school**”



READING

Clarify
Predict
Question
Make links
Summarise
Infer

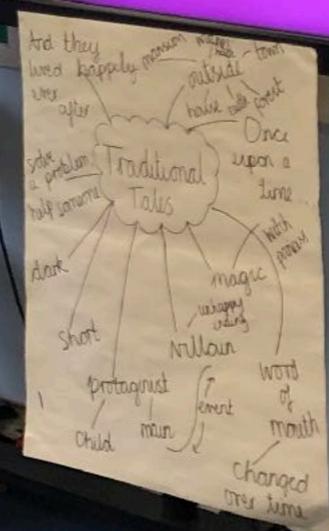
PHILIP PULLMAN
NEIL GAIMAN

This term we are reading...

Dear Diary,
Today was the
happiest day of my life.
Friday the 2nd was a
great day as I always
get into a routine but
today was special as
I was the first to be
chosen to be the class
representative for the
school council. I was
very nervous but I
did it and I was
chosen. I was
happy to be chosen
and I will be a
great representative
for the school.

Dialogue

1. New speaker - new line
2. go around what is said
3. Capital letter
4. Ends with a punctuation mark



This term we are learning about

- Generalisation
- Stem Sentences
- Key Vocabulary

column add
column sub
short division

know?

What mathematical information is already available in the question?

Four Operations
+ - x ÷

WORDS

LOUD
I AM KIND
SMART
FRIENDLY
FUNNY
CAT PERSON
STRONG
DOWN
EGGS
evenly
are

Methodology post production

Following the face to face sessions, outputs and information were collated and data logged:

- Pupils' graphic boards were digitised and converted for use as digital postcards
- A secure google form was created, logging all answers contained in 54 workbooks
- Evaluation survey from the workbooks recorded and analysed against MGT and P1-54's experience of running the pilot
- Audio conversations from All Saints Primary were de-identified and edited together with animated text for accessibility and visual engagement
- Insights report generated with summary analysis by qualified researcher (time volunteered)
- PEN Pals website page generated on Make (Good) Trouble's website for online access (in progress)
- Year 6 teachers approached for feedback and comment (pending)
- Second sessions booked to play in audio to each classroom and gather feedback (December 2023)

“I live in Bexhill and I go to Chantry school and my Mum and Dad are Turkish and I am learning Turkish.”

Pupil workbook entry



Creative workbooks - 'words that describe me'

WEIRD SLEEPY IMAGINATIVE
 ARTY GAMER LOVING LOUD CREATIVE
 FRIENDLY HAPPY CONFIDENT
 CARING
 SLAYER OUTGOING
 GOOD LOOKING FUNNY HELPFUL JOYFUL
 CHATTY SPORTY
 SMART
 BEST TEAM KIND SMILEY
 SINGINGLY HAPPY BUBBLY LAZY
 CAT PERSON CRAZY

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Creative workbooks - favourite activities

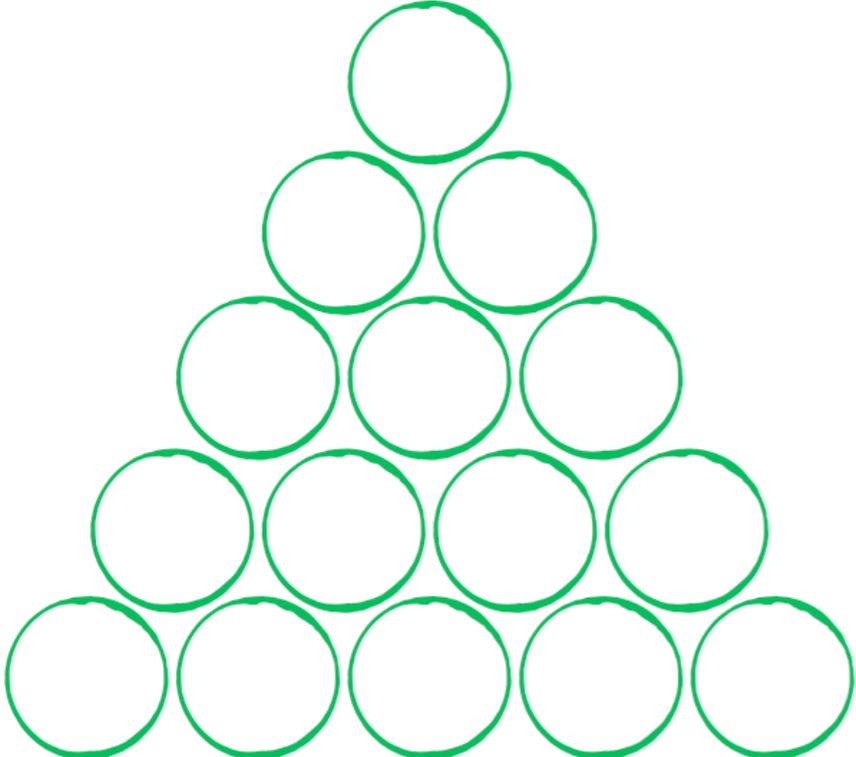
A community of...

WRITER **GAMERS** **GYMNAST** **BOXER**
FOOTBALLERS **ENGINEER** **CAT PERSON**
DANCERS **SWIMMER** **ARTISTS**
BASKETBALL PLAYER **SKATER** **BADMINTON PLAYER**
ROLLER BLADER **ASTRONAUT** **CHEF** **ACTOR**

Creative workbooks - What makes a friend?

What makes a friend? 

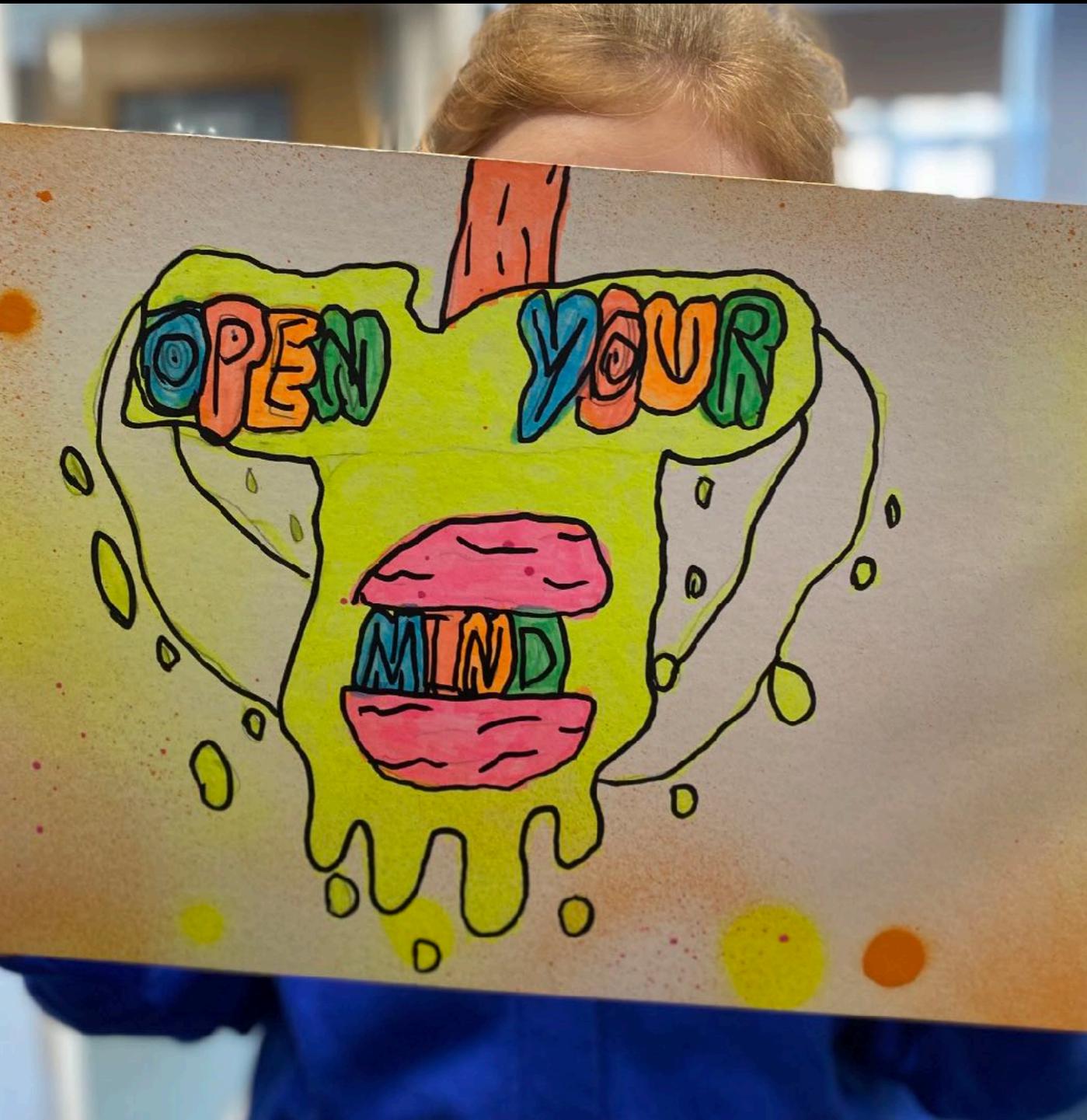
Write down the qualities that make a good friend by arranging the most important quality at the top and the least important qualities at the bottom. Once you think you have them in the correct order, glue them on the page.



Laminated cards asking pupils to prioritise pre-set answers i.e.,

- Accepts me for who I am
- They are loyal
- Has same interests
- Someone I can trust
- They are kind
- Respects my boundaries
- Wants to spend time with me
- Is not afraid to say how they feel
- They don't judge
- Cares about what I think

Chantry Primary School



All Saints Primary School visual expression for digital postcards



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Adult to child interviews - Chantry

Peer to peer audio interviews - All Saints



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Writing postcards of support

I want to write to you because I'm going to talk to you about where I live. I live in a flat and it's always busy and nobody to play with. Do you have a place to play? Do you like living where you live? Don't forget your almost going to high school. I'm feeling nervous and excited at the same time. How are you feeling? Anyway please write back soon.



MAKING IT HAPPEN

Writing postcards of support

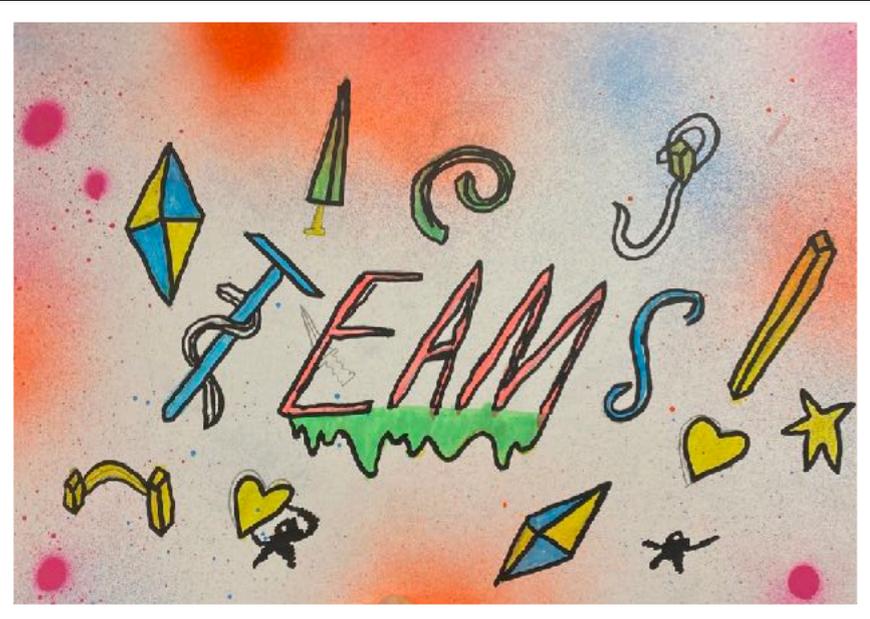
I just wanted to talk about where I live,
I live in Sidely I enjoy it here there
is a park down my road. The 3 words
that describe me are funny, loud and
chatty, I'm excited about going to
secondary school because I really
want to do cooking and Dance and Drama.
Take care! I hope you enjoy High School!



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Writing postcards of support

Are you excited for secondary school? Which one are you going to? I have two kittens and they make me happy. Also, in backhill are lots of fun parks that I love to play in. There is also a huge field by our house that I love to run around in. Are there any places near your home that you like to play in. Be positive and have a nice day!



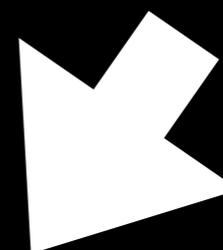
MAKING IT HAPPEN

Writing postcards of support

The things I like doing outside of school
is doing football training. What about you?
One best thing about where I live is there
is a place to hang out. Do you hang out
anywhere? I enjoy school to see my
friends. I am scared, nervous and also
excited. The last thing is I am excited for high
school because its fun.
Bye hope you reply soon. 😊 Frank



PLEASE CLICK
IN THE MIDDLE
OF SCREEN TO
PLAY MOVIE



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BABOOM!

H

Peer Empowerment Network - PEN Pals

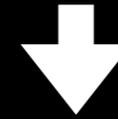
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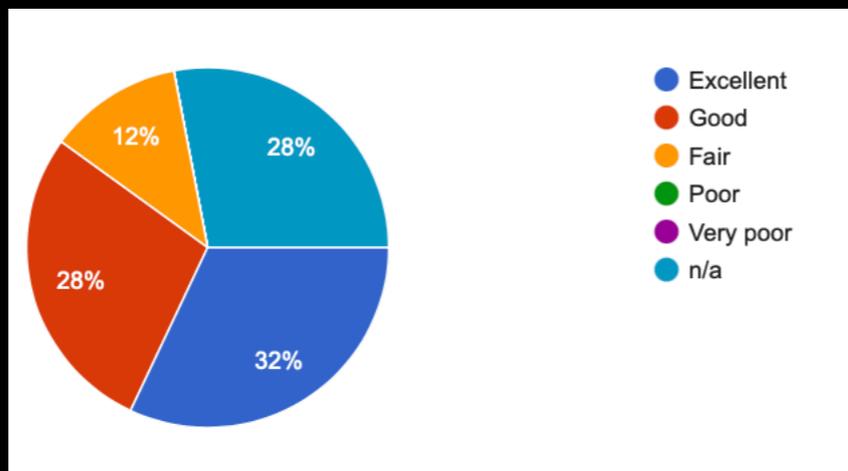
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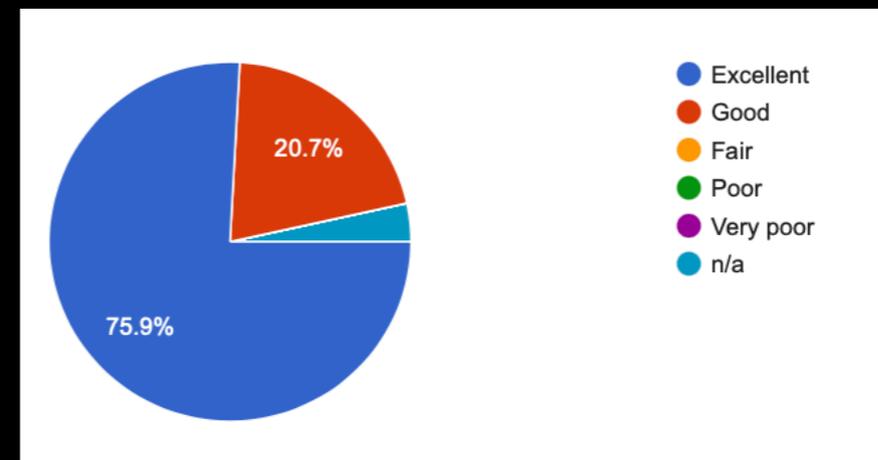
EVALUATION



How would you rate the workshop?

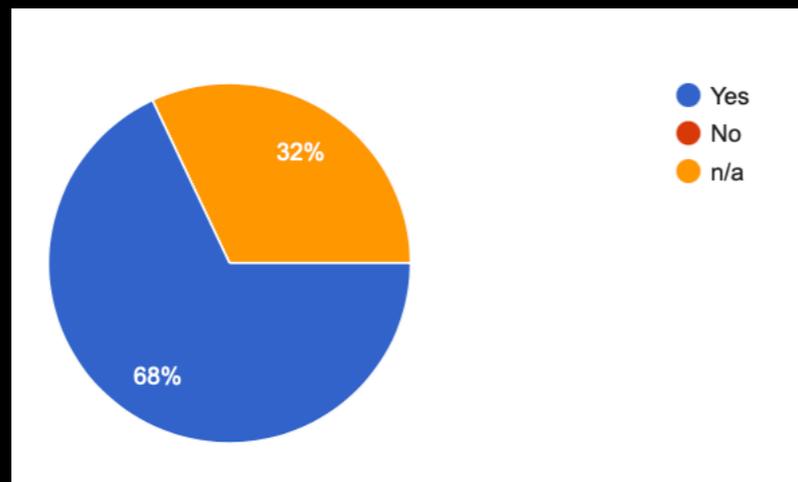


How would you rate the workshop?

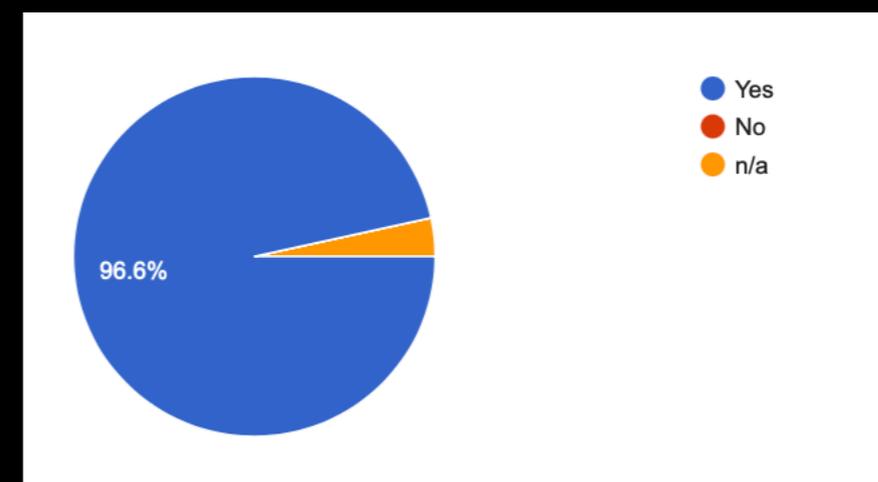


*n/a = did not fill out answer due to being away from the main group

Did you feel listened to and respected during the workshops?



Did you feel listened to and respected during the workshops?



Tell us what you think?



Please take a moment to answer the following questions. Your comments are important.

1. Overall, how would you rate the workshop?

Excellent Good Fair Poor Very Poor

2. Did you feel listened to and respected during the workshop?

Yes No

3. Write a sentence telling us what liked most about the workshop.

It's very creative and free minded and it was my thing. BEST MORNING EVER!

4. Write a sentence telling us one thing that you learned in the workshop.

I've learned about how you can use different words for a word.

5. Any other comments

THIS IS THE BEST WORKSHOP EVER!

Angel, All Saints Primary

Likes: English, art and reading

Words that describe me:

- Creative
- Kind
- Imaginative

"It's very creative and free minded and it was my thing. BEST MORNING EVER!"

"I learned about how you can use different words for a word."

"THIS IS THE BEST WORKSHOP EVER!"



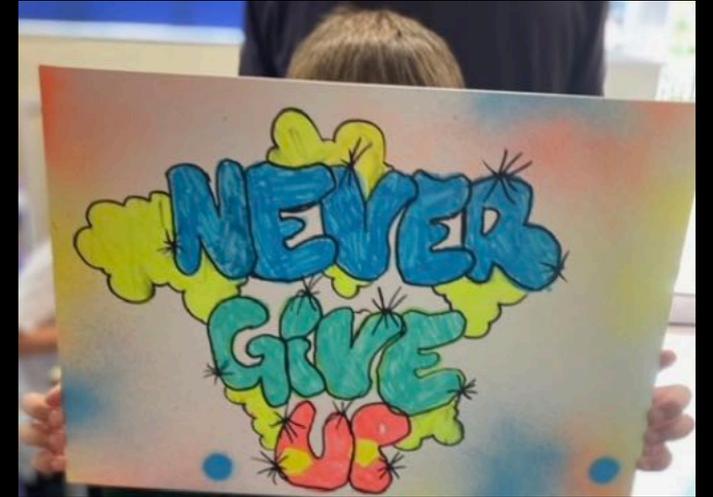
5. Any other comments

I really enjoyed today I wish I could
work more with you.





NEXT STEPS



- Continue to work with both schools and recruit Youth Ambassadors (YAs)
- Expand to children within the catchment who are home educated
- Work with researcher to design feasibility study, co-created by the pupils that follows children in their journey to include year 7
- Co-create a digital audio interface with the YAs to include local sounds i.e., beach, recreation parks etc. to add to the podcast sound effects
- Increase reach - BBC Radio Sussex radio feature, social media etc.
- Sustainability - design PSHE lesson plans to scale the programme and connect communities.

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