

No5



Summer Transitions

2022-2023

Project Impact Report

Background and History

In 2019, No5 was awarded funding from the Berkeley Foundation to address issues relating to increasing school exclusions in Reading.

This work included **in-depth listening** sessions with young people at the local Pupil Referral Unit who had been excluded. Young people shared their school history with the No5 team, and we learnt that the **transition from Primary to Secondary school**, and the transitions as young people moved up through Secondary school were the **moments where young people's relationships with school began to break down**.

With this, No5 devised an **Inclusion Support project** which delivers 1:1 support in a local secondary school, working to **reduce each young person's risk of permanent exclusion**.

After the first year of this project, and following discussions with statutory partners, it was clear that more **needed to be done for young people especially during the summer holidays**– a transient period where their school routine and relationships fall away.



Background and History

This research indicated that a **creative project**, focusing on **young people's strengths**, aiming to increase their **confidence**, encourage the building of **safe, trusted relationships**, improve **communication**, and not focusing on school or young people's impending risk of exclusion would be the **most impactful** way to support them.

This was confirmed by the young people at the Local Referral Unit's receptiveness to working creatively to help **tell their story**, especially where they struggled to find the words to communicate how they felt and what had happened to them.

With this in mind, we reached out to **two creative partners, Rabble Theatre and Chris Mitchell**, as well as **two No5 counsellors**, all who we were confident about their **strengths-based, individual young person-focused** way of working to devise what became our **Summer Transitions project!**



Project Development—Part 1

A huge amount of time and careful consideration on the part of the **whole project team** went in to the project planning, with **2 additional delivery partners** brought in. 1 to provide additional **music experience and support**, and the other, a **Sound Therapist**, to provide a group drumming workshop as part of the programme.

The project was offered to **11-14 year olds** on **No5's counselling waiting list**, who had self-identified **anxiety** and **issues around school** as one of their reasons for asking for counselling support, and to local schools who identified young people who were at likely to **struggle with the transition into the next academic year**, and were at risk of exclusion.

The project took place over **5 days**, at the beginning of August



2022, and saw a group of **22 11-14 year olds** working **creatively and collaboratively** through drama, music, art and performance.

They told us they built **friendships, relationships and confidence** throughout the week, and that they were **happier**.

The Project

5 specialist,
creative
practitioners and
2 counsellors

5 days

5 songs
produced

11-14 year
olds

12 local
schools

22 young
people

1
performance

30 hours
of support

The Project

*'There were so many **inspiring** and **moving** moments and a sense of **transformation** happening right before our eyes. A **groundbreaking week!***

– Chris Mitchell, Musician and Composer



Added Value

It was essential to us that the project was **free** for young people, and that **lunch** was provided for all every day. We worked with a local caterer, Crumbs, to provide **healthy, nutritious food** for each day of the project.

Due to the spread of ages of the young people (11-14), as their **confidence grew**, the older young people naturally adopted a **peer-mentor** position within the group and **supported** the younger participants throughout the week.

The Project

The project culminated in a **performance**, shared with the young people's friends and families., where they **showcased** some of the work they had created during the week—this included **singing, dancing, piano recitals, drumming, acting vignettes** and the performances of songs they had written themselves.

All of the young people were **happier, thrived, grew** and **developed** through the week.

*'Play, connection and joy has carried us through the hottest week of the year ending in a **moving performance** from talented young people. **What a journey!***

– Phaedra Ashford, Counsellor



Impact

*L really enjoyed it (more than I thought he was going to—the arts really aren't his thing!) but he **really** loved it.*

*The **transition** into his new school is **going really well**—**better than anticipated!***

- Parent of one young person

87% said they felt they made new friendships

Average of more than 50% improvement in their wellbeing

73% said they felt a noticeable increase in their confidence

A Story of Change

The workshops gave B such **increased confidence and willingness to attempt things independently** first before they feel they need to ask for help. They also **found their singing voice!**

This has given them so much confidence and they have been singing so much more than before!

B faced a **change of school in September**, as well as a new journey to and from school on public transport—**both are going great.**

B enjoyed the week's activities immensely and it was a great experience for them.

Feedback

Making friends

Everything!

The drumming

Being able to say how we feel

Singing

Making music

Writing songs and performing

The games

Looking Ahead from Summer 2022

The need amongst local young people for creative expressive projects that focus on their wellbeing, confidence and communication during the transitory summer holiday period is clear. The outcomes for young people were clearly seen by the young people themselves, their parents and the delivery team throughout the week, and when we checked in with them all in September.

"L enjoyed it (more than I thought he was going to! As the arts really aren't his thing!) but he really loved it. Transition into new school is going really well- again better than anticipated."

No5 strives to continue to be part of making this difference possible for as many local young people as we can.

The whole delivery team partnership made a commitment of continuing to develop and offer programmes of support into the future and build on this project.

This led us to think about how we could continue to offer support for the young people we worked with, whilst also begin planning and seek funding to make this offer possible for more young people in 2023.

We are delighted to have secured funding to deliver the second year of this project in August 2023, whilst also having developed Part 2 which we delivered in April 2023!



The Evolution—Part 2

Following the huge success of the first part of the project in August, and given that two incredible songs were created in the process, we all felt that more could be done to extend the impact of the project and the outcomes for the young people involved.

Building friendships and relationships were a significant outcome in August, with one young person asking when they would all see each other again on the last day.

As a team we felt that there could be an opportunity to provide a follow-on project for all the young people who worked with us in the Summer to maintain their new friendships and relationships, and further build upon what they created in a professional environment.

And so we began devising a potential project by first asking the two young people who wrote the songs whether they would like the opportunity to professionally produce and record them. We then asked all the young people from the Summer whether they would like to come back in April 2023 for a follow-up project which would involve forming a choir and recording the vocals for the songs and accompanying music videos.

There was huge interest and excitement from all of the young people and 9 returned in April!



The two young people who wrote the songs 'Lost and Found' and 'Stand Together' worked alongside two other young musicians in Chris' professional recording studio to pre-produce and record the musical and lyrical backing of the songs. They also created their visions for the accompanying music videos which were to be filmed and produced by young people supported by Starting Point Studio – a local video production Alternative Provision for young people.



Both young people received two AQA Unit Awards for their pre-production work.

We then invited all the young people from the Summer along with new young people on No5's waiting list who were struggling with school, or at risk of exclusion, to join the team for three days during the Easter holidays to rehearse, record and produce both songs and music videos!

This part of the project supported 19 young people in total and about our time together, they said:

"I feel really happy because I've made some friends today."

"I've always loved singing, acting and performing but I never believed I was good enough, I let my shyness stop me from doing what I loved"

The Evolution

New and returning young people

We invited back the young people who attended the project in the summer as well as new young people on No5's counselling waiting list, and through local schools, who were struggling with school, or at risk of exclusion. The new young people were met with open arms by the young people who had attended last year and they all said how welcomed and a part of the group they felt when they all met for the first time.

These young people formed the choir for the chorus parts of the songs, were part of shaping the choreography of the music videos, and all were part of the filming of the videos – whether behind or in front of the camera!

Creating the music videos also provided an opportunity for young people to explore and find their passion for dance and drama, and were supported by the creative practitioners to find ways to express themselves through movement and drama.

Working with Starting Point Studio

This project being led by local young people was an essential part of it for all of us and so we partnered with Starting Point, another local charity who journey alongside and provide mentoring and opportunities for young people, and their alternative provision, 'Starting Point Studio', to film and produce both music videos.

Three young people from Starting Point Studio, alongside Simon, Starting Point's Creative Lead, joined the project for Days 2 and 3 and quickly became part of the group!

The three young people shared how welcomed they felt by everyone and how much they enjoyed working alongside other

5 specialist,
creative
practitioners and
2 counsellors

3 days

2
music videos
recorded

11-14 year
olds

9 local
schools

17 young
people

1
Launch event

19 hours
of support

Launch Event

An important element of the project was to provide the young people who took part with an experience of a professional music and video production environment. They told us they felt this gave them a really good experience of a professional environment, equipped them with new skills, made them aware of lots of different careers and opportunities within music and video production, whilst also supporting their mental health and wellbeing by working alongside safe, trusted adults, and navigating building and maintain friendships and relationships.

"I feel ready for the future as it was so professional" - Young Person

We wanted to provide an opportunity to showcase and launch the finished videos, and to allow the young people to celebrate all they had achieved over the 8 days in total we spent together, alongside their family and friends and local dignitaries. We also wanted to ensure the launch event did justice to their incredible work and so we partnered with Pip Studio, the UK's first purpose-built audio post production facility, to organise a launch event using their state of the art equipment to showcase the videos on the 'big screen'!

The launch was a fantastic event, and we were joined by 12 young people and their parents, alongside the Mayor of Reading (Councillor Tony Page), The High Sheriff of Berkshire (Simon Muir), the Lead Councillor for Children (Graeme Hoskin), and a local councillor and No5 Trustee (Debs Edwards).

Alongside Pip Studios, it was also supported by Blue Collar Food and Lexington Catering who showed their support by providing drinks for everyone at the event! They showed such support for the project, and the young people, and we are really grateful.

The two young people who wrote the songs shared their experience of the project at the event with one saying;

"The transitions workshops was my journey from lost to found. I am so grateful for all the adults and young people who helped H and I bring this project to life. It was great fun making the songs but that was not the best part. The best part was making connections and creating a friendship. What followed from this blew my mind when all of you joined us to make the music videos even though perhaps you were feeling lost and alone, working together made us feel a lot more connected and found. What I have learnt is don't let your shyness stop you from reaching out, honestly there is someone out there, someone you can call, there are others out there who want to help."



Feedback

"I feel really happy with myself. I couldn't have done this a year ago because of my confidence."

"I feel ready for the future as it was so professional"

"I got to know more people and I've become happier."

"It was nice to do something like this outside of my house as I don't really get out much."

"I feel really happy because I've made some friends today."

Thank You!

We want to say a huge thank you to everyone who was involved in supporting and delivering this project for making it what it was. It wouldn't have been possible without you!

Rachel Kershaw, Phaedra Ashford, Emily Evans, Tash Marks, Chris Mitchell, Joe Hetherington, Dan Bilborough, Luke and Josh Lines, Starting Point Studios, Green Bike Food Co, The Abbey School, Pip Studio, Blue Collar Food, Lexington Catering, and most importantly all of the young people who took part!

You all made this project the success it was, and really showcased the power and impact of local partnerships when we all come together to do what we do best.



Unshakable

Relaxed

Leader

Happy

Calm

Brave

Daring

Joyous

Contented

Compassionate

No5 Young People

www.no5.org.uk

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