

No5



Summer Transitions 2023

Project Impact Report

Background and History

Following the huge success of our 2022/23 Summer Transitions project, we again delivered a 5-day Creative Expressive Wellbeing programme in August 2023.

Funded by the Laithwaites family, Rotary Club of Reading Abbey, and the Peter Baker Foundation through The Good Exchange, the 5-day project was devised and delivered by specialist creative practitioners from Rabble Theatre, musician and composer Chris Mitchell, two No5 counsellors, and a young musician, supported by a Sound Therapist and dance teacher.

The project aimed to support young people who were struggling with school to help them transition into the next academic year. The project delivered creative workshops and opportunities for young people to grow their confidence, build friendships, form relationships with trusted adults, and explore how they were feeling in a safe environment.



The Project Team

Phaedra –Inclusion Support Counsellor

Phaedra began working as a counsellor for No5 4 years ago and has worked in theatre and music too for many years.



Rachel –Inclusion Support Counsellor

Rachel is a counsellor trained to work therapeutically with young people aged 3 - 17.



Emily- Youth Education Lead

Emily trained as an Actor and has been a part of RABBLE since it was established.



Chris—Musician, Composer and Producer

Chris is a classically trained composer and producer and runs his own recording studio in Reading.



Gemma – Community Outreach

Gemma is a Children's Theatre Director and Community Theatre Practitioner, trained at Birmingham School of Acting and later St Mary's,



Three additional, creative specialists also joined the team:

Young person and musician, Josh Lines, supported throughout the whole week

SEN Specialist Dance Teacher from Make/Sense Theatre, Emily Burffit, joined the team for dance sessions

Sound Therapist, Dan Bilbrough, joined the team for a drumming workshop, therapeutic Sound Bath and the final performance.



Project Evolution

The team integrated the learnings from the first year of the project into the design and delivery of this year. This included a Young Leaders programme and setting up permanent, designated rooms for different creative activities.

The project was offered to **11-16 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 2023, and saw a group of **20 11-16 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

6 specialist, creative practitioners and 2 counsellors

5 days

5 Young Leaders

11-16 year olds

12 local schools

20 young people

1 performance

30 hours of support

The Project

There were four designated rooms set up within the school, the 'Song Foundry', 'Pop up studio', 'Dance Studio', and 'Tech Studio', and a permanent, creative art space in the main stage, performance hall. These rooms and spaces were set up as permanent rooms associated with activities, that **organically evolved**. The young people **established the identities of each space** and were given complete **agency and freedom over when they wanted to use each space**.

They were also supported by the team to determine **the boundaries** they wanted everyone to stick to within these spaces, and **negotiated this as a group**.

Chris and Josh established the 'House Band', that created an opportunity for young people to **try out different instruments** and also bring their instruments from home to play.

One young person, R, totally took being part of the band in **their stride**.

On Day 1, young people were invited to add their favourite songs to the 'Playlist of the week'. This was played **every morning during the check-ins** where young people were also given the **time to reflect and journal** in their own, personal book. This was also encouraged every afternoon before going home.

The Project

It was important that the project **promoted equity** amongst the group and so free lunch was provided for every young person and we worked with a **local caterer**, Green Bike Food Co, to provide **healthy, nutritious food for each day** of 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, guitar 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.



The Project

'What a week it has been - incredibly productive and so much transformation witnessed'

- Chris Mitchell, Musician and Composer



Choice was constantly promoted throughout the project, and where this can be anxiety provoking, the experience of having choice was transformational as the team could 'hold' the anxiety and yet not remove choice out of their fear of how the young people might respond. This supported young people to learn and explore choices and consequences as it was held in a safe environment by the team who had no other agenda other than to support them and 'meet them where they were'.

*'The **growth** in all of these young people throughout the week was brilliant. We created a safe place to play that was transformational'*

- Inclusion Support Counsellor

The Project

The team also modelled reassurance and safety—whether about create work, activities, or even travelling to/from the project, and their ability to tolerate high anxiety in these young people was hugely impactful in that it supported them to be able to share and 'be with' how they were feeling, rather than deny it and bottle it up.

A core value of the delivery team was to model unconditional belief in all the young people and that they could do and achieve whatever it was that they wanted to. This was hugely impactful and instilled such confidence and self-belief in the group which was transformational.

This was also something they shared and showed to each other. As a group, there was no questioning, doubt or judgement about any one's skills or abilities. They showed total respect and acceptance for each other and they brought this culture to the project, and maintained it.

*'To see her **working through her fears as she wrote lyrics** throughout the week was **fantastic**'*

- Inclusion Support Counsellor

The Project—Young Leaders

For the first time this year, we established a **Young Leaders group** as part of our Summer Transition Project offer.

This invited **young people aged 14-17** who had taken part in Year 1 of the project to come back and work on a **specially designed programme** that supported them to devise and **co-deliver workshops** to the main, younger group throughout the week.

The group of **5 young people** had their own group dance lessons, and worked with Gemma to devise games, activities and create pieces to teach and share with the group.

These young people **grew immeasurably** throughout the week, because of the opportunity to step into the roles of Young Leaders. They took to the **responsibility** of this role instantly, getting involved and **helping other young people to feel comfortable and settled into the group**, and being **peer-mentors**.

All five young people successfully **achieved their AQA 'Young Leaders' unit** as part of this project, and were awarded a certificate for their achievements.

Stories of Change

*"J really enjoyed the Summer Transitions project. She had met two other young people that she **didn't know before who were also going to her new secondary school**. She would not have met them otherwise and it **gave her comfort knowing someone else outside of her small primary school friendship group**.*

*The experience did give her a **confidence boost** and I would **definitely recommend this to other families**."*

- J's Mum



"N came along to our youth group following her time on your project and so **proudly showed everyone her song lyrics**. The following week she came back to show us the final song that she had been working on. She even made sure those who came in after her got a chance to hear it! She said that she **really enjoyed her time** with you.

This is huge for her to want to share something she has done with others, and so confidently too!"

- Practitioner from local voluntary sector service

Impact

"R enjoyed herself so much and said everyone was so nice, friendly and welcoming. She felt very included and part of a team.

Her confidence massively improved"

- Parent of one young person



The young people completed a bespoke wellbeing wheel outcome measure every morning and afternoon.

On the final day of the project, the average score for all six questions was 4/5.

The questions were:

Do You feel Confident?

Do you feel Inspired?

Do you feel Creative?

Do you feel heard?

Do you feel safe?

Feedback: 'What did you enjoy most?'



Looking Ahead from Summer 2023

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 this summer were again 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.

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.

We continue to seek funding to make this commitment possible, replicate our follow-up Spring Transitions project delivery again in 2024, and continue to offer this project over many summers to come.



Feedback

"I feel accomplished"

"I'm usually socially awkward but I've come out my shell"

"I'm not tired anymore"

"The whole week was amazing: singing, acting, song writing!"

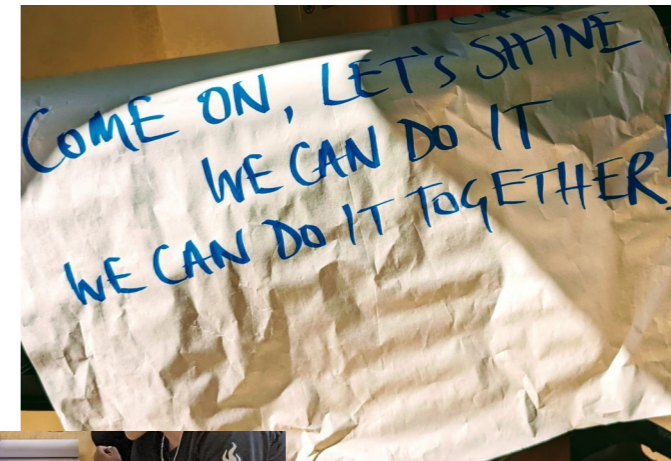
"I feel really happy"

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, Chris Mitchell, Josh Lines, Dan Bilborough, MakeSense Theatre, Green Bike Food Co, The Abbey School, 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.



Pits
 Comfort - Safe Place
 Home Kitchen
 A Storm feels cold
 - Worry
 Unity - Supporting each other
 Quiet
 During Winter I feel safe
 Safe within the Storm
 Togetherness
 Peaceful
 Things that make you feel safe
 Food
 Safety
 Calm
 Peace is Unity
 Music
 Peace is light
 Storm is dark

With Faith & Love everything can be achieved.
 Ozone may be restored in decades
 NHS
 Life Saving Medicine
 A Warm feeling like everything is going to be okay
 Colourful
 Hope for the Future
 Let me be me.
 Like you still have a chance and believe in life
 Bright
 Faith you believe in someone or yourself
 Everyday Heroes
 Its all going to be okay!

My Identity
 Being Unique
 Being Myself
 NO Judgment
 Chase your Dreams
 Let me be me
 I can be myself
 Sharing my Passions
 Kindness to others

No5 Young People
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