

Tameside pupils feeling happier thanks to Hummingbird Project

Tuesday 7 February, 2023

Last term children's charity MedEquip4Kids visited four primary schools in Tameside to deliver the Hummingbird Project, a six-week course based on Positive Psychology that aims to increase happiness and resilience, benefiting 287 pupils in total. The project was generously supported by Jigsaw Homes Tameside through a grant of £9,950 from the Jigsaw Foundation.

The course covers topics including Happiness, Kindness and Slowing Down, What Makes You Strong, Bouncing Back, and Feeling Good About Your Future. The sessions include mindfulness meditations, character strength cards, and fun activities like the hula-hoop challenge which teaches about resilience and teamwork. The sessions are taught by MedEquip4Kids Project Lead, Ian Platt, a psychology postgraduate from the University of Bolton.

Feedback from the four schools was overwhelmingly positive. Teachers at St Peter's CE Primary School in Ashton-under-Lyne told us pupils have shown improvements in regulating their emotions and grounding themselves in relation to their senses and that pupils are independently using strategies to calm themselves in different situations.

"The Hummingbird Project is a project where you focus on wellbeing and mental health. They don't judge. You can be free. You do many things like games, wellbeing and you also have fun. As a person with anxiety, this helps me." *Pupil*

At Broadbent Fold Primary School in Dukinfield, children gained an increased understanding of what makes them happy and how they can overcome sad or negative feelings by using their strengths. This has led to an improvement in their resilience.

"The Hummingbird Project makes you feel good...when things get tough just take a breath and count to ten then after you will feel better. When you feel that you want to give up, don't - get up and try again." *Pupil*

Teachers at Hollingworth Primary School in Hyde reported that the strategies and techniques learned have led to an increase in calmness in the group. The class have learned to be more thankful and look for the positives in a situation.

"If you ever get to do the project, do it. It's one of the most fun lessons I've ever done! I loved it and Ian is so kind and thoughtful." *Pupil*

Teachers at Hurst Knoll St James CE Primary School in Ashton-under-Lyne told us that some pupils have thought really deeply about the concepts they were taught and have benefited from suggestions on how to be more resilient. They have learned that there are lots of different ways to be mindful, using senses as well as meditation.

Jigsaw Foundation Manager, Sarah Keenan, says: "I was so pleased to read how positively the children reacted to the sessions which we funded. Ian has obviously worked extremely hard in delivering this project. The past few years have been hard and very disruptive for children. The impact of Covid and now the cost of living crisis in our neighbourhoods has understandably led to concerns about the impact to children's mental health. This project has therefore proven invaluable."

ENDS

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