



# ANNUAL REPORT 2022 – 2023

[www.meltonlearninghub.org/engage](http://www.meltonlearninghub.org/engage)

With thanks to the players of the National Lottery, Engage have helped change the lives of young people and their families.



# WELCOME

The year has been a challenging one for the team. Andrew our colleague and friend was diagnosed with bowel cancer in February. He remained committed to the work he has done throughout his career and oversaw the recruitment and development of our Yr11-12 transition worker Kerry Crump. Unfortunately, Andrew's diagnosis became terminal but he remained involved with the project and supported us all with his knowledge and years of experience.

The newly expanded team is now well established across our district supporting referrals from many partner agencies and families now. For year 4 we were tasked with looking at how we could evaluate the long term effect of the project and the interviews within this report show the real change the project has been making.

Initial take up for the transitions year 11-12 role was slow and we acknowledge this is in part due to the lack of marketing of the role. However, we recognised this quite quickly and as we approach the end of the year the role is now up to capacity. Capacity remains an issue for the team, and we now operate a waiting list system which is reviewed on a bi-weekly basis.

Summer and the plentiful sunshine was a fantastic opportunity for the team to get to know new young people through the HAF scheme whilst continuing to support all their current referrals. The abundance of photographs throughout the report is testament to the variety of work the team do with the young people we support.

Unlike previous years we are seeing a larger proportion of young women referred into the project. We don't believe this is due to a growing number of young women needing support rather that we have managed to reach more young women with the project and what is available to them. Kate established the girls group in the spring and this has grown dramatically over the year, so much so we have drafted another member of staff into support the sessions.

In the autumn the team started to look beyond year 5 by looking at where the project could go next. We knew there was demand for the work of Engage as we regularly receive referrals from outside the area. We therefore reached out to partner schools and voluntary groups in Coalville. We know that Coalville has high areas of deprivation and concerning indicators such as under age pregnancies and school exclusions. These factors make it an ideal area for the work of Engage to make a real change. We are grateful to Awards for All who have funded the pilot of the team working 1 day a week in two identified schools.

Finally, the end of the year brought the news that devastated the team. Andrew passed away just before Christmas. We all had the privilege of being with him in the days before his passing and saying our goodbyes to a true gentleman who dedicated his life to supporting others. Out of Andrew's death came the good news, from donations, Andrew had raised enough money for the construction of a well to support families in Cox's Bazaar, Bangladesh. With the funding, it was given to Infinity Aid, a local charity that Andrew supported so that it can have a wider international impact. Their work represents everything Andrew stood for. Supporting young people and families to achieve their best life.



Sarah Cox - Manager



# OUR TEAM



**KATE CHAMPNEYS**  
**YOUTH & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKER**  
**YOUTH & FAMILIES**



**SARAH COX**  
**MANAGER**  
**MELTON LEARNING HUB**



**JOE ROUGHTON**  
**YOUTH & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKER**  
**YOUTH & FAMILIES**



**ANDREW LAKE**  
**DIRECTOR**  
**DISCOVERY CIC**



**KERRY CRUMP**  
**YOUTH & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT WORKER**  
**POST 16 & YEAR 11 TRANSITIONS**

# OUR MISSION & VISION

**ENGAGE'S MISSION IS TO EMPOWER YOUNG PEOPLE (11-18 YEARS) AND THEIR FAMILIES WITH PRACTICAL ADVICE, SUPPORT AND RESOURCES THAT BUILD FAMILY STRENGTH, RESILIENCE AND INDEPENDENCE.**

Engage envisions a society in which the most vulnerable young people will have the power to lift themselves out of unsafe circumstances and to create positive, healthy life choices for themselves, their families and their communities, now and for the future.





# YEAR 4 TARGETS

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1

Improve visibility and profile of equality and diversity work with Melton's young people.

2

Promote and grow our young women's project to local young women who need additional support through targeted group work.

3

Enhance our post 16 provision through the employment of a post 16 transitions worker, targeting NEET prevention and year 11 support.



# IMPROVE VISIBILITY AND PROFILE OF EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY WORK

A critical component of Engage is to promote equality and diversity among young people. However, it is not enough to simply discuss the importance of these values; we must also ensure that our efforts are visible and influential to the young people and families we work with.

It has been crucial to create a safe and inclusive environment for young people from all backgrounds, genders, races, and sexual orientations. Young women, LGBTQ young people, and young people from diverse ethnic backgrounds may feel discriminated against and undervalued in traditional youth settings. Therefore, as youth work professionals, we must ensure that our spaces are welcoming and accommodating to everyone. We are opening up opportunities for young people to learn, connect, and engage with the world around them regardless of their background, social status, or personal identity. We have done this by establishing a young women's group, which is thriving with young women from around the local area. Secondly, Melton Learning Hub is launching its LGBTQ youth group. Here, Engage aims to have a presence to seek views, give young people a voice to inform and shape our service to better meet their needs. Furthermore, we have introduced our Youth Satisfaction Survey that enables young people to anonymously give us feedback to further develop and enhance our provision.

We have provided open access to resources and activities that promote equality and diversity. Many young people may not have access to the internet, books, or other materials that can help them understand and appreciate diversity. Therefore, we are making sure that young people have access to these resources and that they know how to access them.

We are recognising the contributions and achievements of young people from diverse backgrounds. We have done this by highlighting success stories from young people who have overcome obstacles and achieved their goals despite facing discrimination or prejudice. Our case studies and projects such as 'Paint The Town Red' have been a vehicle to widely promote these success stories.

We also celebrate diversity by organising events that showcase different cultures, traditions, and customs. Young people in Melton have a very narrow view of the wider community. Engage takes young people out of the town to explore our rich heritage, culture and traditions. Train journeys to Matlock, exploring Leicester and Nottingham Cities and their rich cultures have been a few examples of work so that we can create a sense of belonging and pride among our youth.

With the young women's group, our 121 sessions and school-based group work programmes, we have been able to provide opportunities for young people to engage in discussions and activities that promote equality and diversity. While it was essential to provide access to resources and celebrate diversity, we have also created opportunities for young people to engage in meaningful conversations and activities that promote equality and diversity. We have done this by organising informal workshops and discussions that promote and encourage open-mindedness and respect.

In conclusion, improving the visibility and profile of equality and diversity work with Melton's young people has been critical to creating a safe, welcoming, and inclusive environment for all young people. As Youth and Community Development Workers, it is our responsibility to create spaces and opportunities for young people to engage, connect and learn from each other. We must recognise the unique talents and contributions of young people from diverse backgrounds, providing access to resources and programmes, and engage young people in meaningful conversations and activities that promote equality and diversity. By doing so, we can help our young people understand and appreciate the differences that make our world a better place for everyone.



# YOUNG WOMEN'S GROUP

"I AM ABLE TO TALK ABOUT THINGS WHICH I COULDN'T TALK ABOUT AT HOME."

"I WOULD HAVE BEEN IN A VERY STICKY SITUATION IF I DIDN'T HAVE AN ENGAGE WORKER TO TALK TOO, WHO GOT ME THE HELP I NEEDED."

"TALKING IN A GROUP AND LISTENING TO OTHERS DEFINITELY HELPS ME WITH MY SELF-WORTH."

"IT'S REASSURING THAT I'M NOT THE ONLY ONE WITH THOSE THOUGHTS."

"I COME AWAY FROM GIRLS GROUP FEELING I CAN DO ANYTHING IN LIFE."

"IT IS SO GOOD DOING THINGS TOGETHER IN A GROUP, WE HELP ONE ANOTHER WHEN WE GET ANXIOUS."

"I WAS SO SCARED OF GOING TO THE THEATRE, I GET REALLY ANXIOUS WHEN THERE IS LOTS OF PEOPLE, BUT I WENT AND I HAD SUCH A GOOD TIME."

"I GET TO DO DIFFERENT THINGS EVERY WEEK."

"SPEAK TO PEOPLE! MAY NOT TALK TO AT SCHOOL."

"THE ONLY TIME IN THE WEEK I CAN GET OUT OF THE HOUSE AND ENJOY MYSELF."

"THE ENGAGE WORKER HELPED ME GET MY FIRST JOB IN A CAFÉ."

"GIVES ME A SAFE PLACE TO TALK ABOUT MY THOUGHTS AND FEELINGS."

"KNOWING THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CARE ABOUT US."

The girl's group has expanded tremendously since it began in 2022. It was set up to improve the girls mental health, well-being and confidence, decrease isolation and increase their ability to participate in community activities.

The girls group provides a safe and supportive environment where the girls can discuss their issues and anxieties among themselves and with the Engage workers. This type of support system offers personalised strategies and can have a significant impact on the girl's confidence, self-worth and future success in life.

The group aims to enable the girls to make positive choices in their health, relationships, and education. We do this by age-appropriate resources and honest discussions to help them understand their sexual health, how to stay safe and the potential risk of sexual exploitation.

Many of the girls have difficulties handling and expressing their emotions, we target this by the work we do around positive self-worth and body image to help the girls become more resilient.

The girls' group is by referral only. The girls can be referred by their school, parents, careers, and social care. The girls group began with three girls we now have fourteen. The girls have taken part in many exciting things in the past twelve months, which they have chosen to do. These include the Theatre, Glass Making, Karaoke Evening, Cinema and many more.



# YEAR 11 & POST 16 TRANSITIONS

As this was a new role, the focus was primarily on establishing links with colleges and training centres in the area. Brooksby College, Leicester College, and the Heart of England Training Centre were identified as key institutions to engage with, and the aim was to build strong relationships with key staff to ensure young people we supported were well-supported beyond Engage. In addition to building links with colleges and training centres, the role also involved exploring additional opportunities for young people transitioning from year 11. This included looking at options such as the Prince's Trust and apprenticeship opportunities, which could provide valuable pathways for young people to develop their skills and gain experience in their chosen fields.

Building strong relationships with local businesses was also a key focus, as this could provide opportunities for work placements and apprenticeships, which could help to bridge the gap between education and employment.

Central to the success of the role was getting to know the area and the young people that had been referred to the service. This involved working closely with schools, community groups, and other organisations to understand the needs of young people in the area and to identify ways in which Engage could support them.

It was important to take a holistic view of the challenges facing young people in the area, recognising that issues such as mental health, family problems, and poverty could all impact on their ability to succeed in education and training.

A key aspect of the role was therefore to provide a comprehensive support service that addressed not just educational needs but also wider issues that could impact on a young person's ability to succeed.

This involved developing strong relationships with young people and their families, working closely with schools and other organisations to identify areas where support was needed, and providing tailored support to help young people overcome the challenges they faced.

During the year, we provided support to four young individuals that came from alternative educational provisions. One of them completed a hairdressing course at The Heart of England Training in Leicester with our guidance, while another could not continue the support as they relocated to a new foster placement. The third young person we assisted applied for college, and we continue to provide them with mentoring support.

The fourth young person we supported had complex needs and required our help to apply for college. Although they were initially offered a place, the college later informed us that they could not accommodate the young person's needs, even with additional funding from the authorities. We then collaborated with the Rutland Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) officer to find a solution and worked closely with the individual's mother to arrange transportation in the long term.

Now currently on role we have 17 pupils from John Ferneley College and 6 young people from alternative provisions, Belvoir Academy and an additional referral from Leicestershire County Council Graduated Response Inclusion Partnership Team.



We have developed a partnership with pathways, a project by De Montfort University, that wants to support the project with activity funding and will also support with training to support young people with apprenticeship/CV development and virtual university tours.

In addition to this we have also established a link with a local stables that offers work experience for one of our young people that has an interest in equestrian studies but has not been attending school for over a year. We have used this as a point of interest to give him purpose during the week, encouraging him to get up, develop conversation around college or foreseeable transitions back in to school.



# KEY DEVELOPMENTS

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It is truly inspiring to see the results of our work with young people and their families over the course of this year! We have been able to provide valuable resources and support to so many, and it has been truly rewarding. We look forward to continuing to build on this amazing work and making a positive difference in the lives of young people and their families.

In order for us to do this, we continually reflect on the successes, challenges and changes we make to our services to ensure they meet the needs of our service users and the wider community.

Over the next few pages, we have looked more closely at certain elements of our service, including what works, what doesn't work, as well as improvements and efficiencies we continually make based on the feedback of our young people and families.

We will look to focus on the following elements:

- **GROUP WORK – YEAR 7 PREVENTION**
- **THE FAMILY DYNAMIC**
- **NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE PILOTS**



# GROUP WORK – YEAR 7 INTERVENTION

Engage has come a long way since its inception, and we are proud to have successfully expanded our work in schools over the last few years. Our unique group work programme has been making a positive impact on young peoples' academic and personal growth, and we are thrilled to continue this work in even more schools.

In Melton, we have excellent partnerships with John Ferneley College and Long Field Academy, and these partnerships have continued to thrive. Our work with these schools has shown measurable improvement in young peoples' behaviour and performance. Through our innovative group work programme, we provide young people with a safe and supportive space where they can learn important life skills and build relationships with their peers.

We are also excited to announce that we have begun piloting an expansion into the Coalville area. We have begun building relationships with Castle Rock and New Bridge Academy in Coalville, and our goal is to bring our successful programme to even more young people in the future. We believe that the group programme we have developed can have just as much of a positive impact on the lives of young people in Coalville, and we are committed to making a difference in their lives.

At Engage, we know that every young person is unique and has their own set of challenges. That's why we work closely with schools and families to identify the specific needs of their child. Through our partnerships, we help young people access school counselling services, bridge information gaps so that schools better understand a young person's home life, provide a space for young people to play and take time out, and identify young people that require our 121 support.

One of the key ways in which our group work programme has helped students is by providing them with a safe and supportive environment where they can build relationships with their peers. For many young people, making friends and building social skills can be challenging, and our programme helps to break down these barriers. As a result, we have seen an increase in young people going back on to mainstream timetables, which is a positive outcome for their academic progress.

Another way in which our programme has helped young people is by signposting them to school counselling services, liaising with SENco coordinators and supporting families with the EHCP process. Many young people face challenges that they are not comfortable sharing with their peers or teachers, and our programme helps to break down these barriers. We work closely with schools to identify students who may require additional support and support them with access to additional services that can help them work through their challenges.

We are proud of the work that we have done so far, and we are excited to continue expanding our work in schools. We believe that our programme can have a positive impact on students' academic and personal growth, and we are committed to making a difference in the lives of young people. With our expanding partnerships, we look forward to continuing to support more young people in the future.



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# GROUP WORK – YEAR 7 INTERVENTION

## Why are we focused on year 7 pupils within our group work programme?

Transitioning from primary to secondary education can be a challenging experience for young people, with a wide range of barriers and issues that can affect their mental health, educational attainment, and overall learning experience. While the transition can be exciting, it can also be a time of stress, anxiety, and uncertainty, particularly for those who are not adequately prepared for the new environment. Engage has identified this age group over the last 3 years, to develop early intervention group work, in order to build coping strategies early in a young person's adolescence. Our view is that they will require less support as they enter adulthood and know how to ask for support when needed.

One of the most significant barriers that young people may face during the transition is mental health issues. Adolescence is a critical period for mental and emotional development, and the pressures of the transition can exacerbate existing mental health issues or create new ones. Many young people may experience anxiety, stress, or depression as they navigate the social and academic expectations of secondary school. Without proper support, these issues can impact their educational attainment and overall well-being. Our sessions focus outside of the academic circle and in to informal educative practices. Through discussion, open environments and building relationships of trust and honesty, we find that young people are able to have a voice and open up about a range of issues, both at school, at home and within themselves.

Another significant issue during the transition is school exclusions. Secondary schools are typically larger and more complex than primary schools, which can make it difficult for some students to adjust. If a student is struggling to adapt or is disruptive in the classroom, they may be at risk of exclusion. Exclusion can have a significant impact on a young person's educational attainment and future prospects, as it can lead to disengagement from education and a negative perception of the education system. In order to prevent further internal isolations or being at risk of exclusion, we work closely with each school to identify students that require additional support. Not being part of the school establishment enables Engage to advocate on behalf of these young people, both at home and at school and our ability to be a 'neutral party' helps young people to have a voice.

Special Educational Needs (SEN) can also be a significant barrier to a successful transition and may lead to further complications later on. While many young people will have received support for any learning difficulties they may have had in primary school, the transition to secondary education can bring new challenges. The increased workload and academic demands of secondary education can be overwhelming for some students, particularly those who have struggled with literacy or numeracy in the past. Without proper support, these students may fall behind their peers and struggle to keep up. Our weekly sessions helps these groups to break up the academic week, taking time out from the pressures of their school work and the social environment they navigate on a daily basis. When a young person talks about the problems they are facing, we are able to signpost support to the relevant services. This includes feeding back to the schools whether a young person needs more help in the classroom or access to a school counsellor. From our sessions, we are also able to work closely with their families to offer further support where needed. We have found that supporting families to bridge the gap between the complex school system, whether that's simplifying information about access to further SEN support, writing applications and development statements for Educational Health Care Plans or to establish effective parenting strategies to support their child at home and at school.

Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic has only made this transition more difficult. With many schools closed or operating at limited capacity, students have missed out on crucial time in the classroom. This has led to a widening attainment gap, with students with SEN needs falling further behind their peers. The lack of routine and structure caused by remote learning has also made it more difficult for these students to manage their behaviour and stay focused. Part of the group recruitment process we ask of schools, is to highlight those pupils that have emerging or diagnosed SEN that would benefit from the programme. This enables the transition of building structure and routine a little easier for pupils and provides a more comprehensive and cohesive approach to supporting year 7 pupils, ensuring they have the best possible start to their secondary school experience.

BUT WHAT DO  
YOUNG PEOPLE  
THINK?

"IF I DIDN'T HAVE  
ENGAGE, I WOULDN'T  
GO TO SCHOOL"

"GIVES ME A  
BREAK FROM  
THE STRESSES I  
HAVE AT SCHOOL"

"I CAN TALK ABOUT  
MY PROBLEMS  
WITHOUT FEELING  
JUDGED"

"I LOVE PLAYING IN  
THE WOODS AND  
MAKING FIRES"



# THE FAMILY DYNAMIC

Engage focuses on improving the family dynamic and supporting families in a holistic way, addressing the needs of the whole family, not just the young person.

Family dynamics can be complex, and no two families are the same. However, some common issues that families face include financial difficulties, mental health problems, and relationship breakdowns. These issues can have a significant impact on the family dynamic, affecting the emotional and psychological wellbeing of all family members.

One approach we take to support families is providing wrap around support. This means working alongside a range of services that are tailored to the individual needs of each family. This can include social, emotional, and practical support, education and training, and access to specialist services.

Working with young people and connecting families is key to improving relationships and structural strategies. We believe that by working closely with young people, we can help to improve their wellbeing and support them to achieve their goals. By connecting with families, we can provide the support and guidance that parents need to manage their child's behaviour and support their development.

Accessing services can be a challenge for families, particularly if they have complex needs or are unfamiliar with the education and social care system. We believe that we can be the vital thread that maintains consistency, ensuring that families have access to the services they need to support their child's emotional and educational needs.

We understand that supporting families where parents may have undiagnosed special educational needs or who cannot navigate both social and education systems is crucial. We work to provide practical support to help parents navigate the system and access the support they need. Systems such as navigating the Special Educational Needs system when their child has been excluded from school can be a daunting and overwhelming experience for families. We provide comprehensive support to families and young people during this challenging time. We work alongside each family to ensure that young people have access to the education and support they need to achieve their goals.

At the core of our approach is a commitment to developing a wrap around service that is comprehensive and tailored to the individual needs of each family. We work closely with each family to ensure that the services we provide are meaningful and beneficial to them. We strive to be helpful, kind, and informative, and work to create innovative solutions that are both clever and friendly. We provide detailed and thorough support that is both respectful and understanding.

Over the next few pages, we have provided a series of case studies that showcase the various ways in which we have supported young people and their families. These case studies provide real-life examples of the challenges that young people face, and how our support has helped them overcome these challenges. In some cases, we have witnessed great success, where young people and their families have flourished and achieved their goals. However, we have also experienced setbacks, where our support has not yielded the desired outcomes. These setbacks have provided us with valuable insights into the needs of young people and their families and the importance of adapting our approach to meet their unique needs. Overall, we believe that these case studies demonstrate the impact of our work and the difference we can make in the lives of young people and their families.

# FAMILY SUPPORT CASE STUDY: DAVID & HIS MUM

CASE STUDY  
**SNAP**  
**SHOT**

David was referred to Engage following multiple challenges at both home and at school. At the time, the family had been allocated a social worker and was on a child in need (CIN) plan. David's behaviour had led to 4 exclusions and a large number of internal isolations at school that has now led to him being excluded and now currently attends alternate educational provisions. Mum said *"David was referred to the project by his school or social services. David needed help with drugs he was taking and his temper. He had been removed from mainstream school. I went to the doctor about David's temper, he said we don't deal with that its CAMHS. I then contacted CAMHS, they said they wouldn't deal with it. Nobody said they could help with his anger."*

Outside of school, David doesn't listen to the boundaries that mum puts in place, staying out until the early hours of the morning and getting into trouble. At times he can be controlling and manipulative towards mum which undermines her parenting capabilities. He smokes cannabis that he says helps him with his ADHD and refuses to try medication.

Mum had been allocated a family intervention worker that was assessing her parenting skills at the time. With mum's deteriorating mental health problems, she was struggling with David's behaviour and their relationship was at breaking point.

David and his mum are going through a tough time. They had been allocated a social worker and a family intervention worker to support them, but it was short term, primarily to assess parenting abilities. After which, mum felt deflated and worthless.

It was important for Engage to build confidence in a long term relationship for David and his mum to ensure a level of consistent support and to give reassurance. There was a need to support mum with practical solutions to some of her issues as well as meeting with David weekly to provide space to talk and have time out. *"Joe is amazing. I feel Joe is David's only adult male that supports David. David failed to get support from turning point to get him off drugs so Joe is supporting him. They go out to places and do things and David comes back more positive."*

Engage helped mum to develop better ways to manage and organise agency involvement and correspondence from education and health care agencies. Her current methods were disorganised and she couldn't recall meetings, appointments or respond to correspondence. Mum went on to say *"Joe also supports me. Joe does feed back to me and tells me things that David doesn't like that I do. He supports my decision making, advising and helping me with situations I face with David. He has helped me when I am in a mess."*

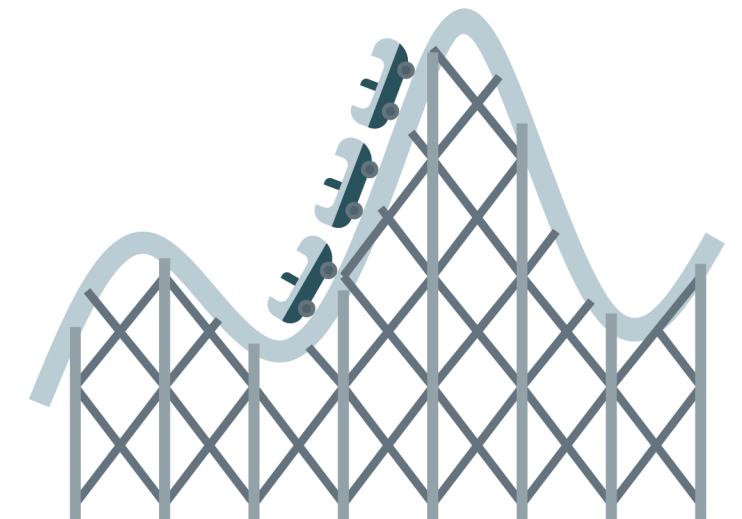
To begin building mum's confidence and regain some control, Engage helped her to organise and streamline her correspondence using notebooks for meetings and phone calls, calendars for appointments and a contact list for agencies that are involved. This is somewhat of a working progress but mum is trying.

Engage liaised with the family intervention worker to share information and to seek ways of developing a wrap-around support package in order to improve the families' overall well-being. Mum had been signposted mental health support, which she has been attending.

Sometimes, conversations with mum would be difficult. Mum would become defensive and not want to hear what was being said. In these situations, Engage would take a step back and allow mum some space before returning to the topic at a later time. The aim was to build trust and rapport with the family, which would enable them to feel comfortable in discussing any challenges they were facing.

With David, Engage worked on building his self-esteem and confidence. Engage worked with David to set achievable goals and milestones that he could work towards, which would give him a sense of accomplishment and achievement. Engage also helped David to understand the impact of his behaviour on others and how he could modify it to avoid negative consequences. This is an ongoing process. Mum said *"David smoking weed has decreased and his mood is better. I feel this is from the work he is doing with Joe. He has started to be more respectful to me."*

At present, David's journey, like most of the young people we work with, is like a rollercoaster of ups and downs. Engage will continue to sit with the young person on this ride to help navigate the dips in his journey, provide non-judgement advice and to be there to acknowledge and praise his successes. *"My goal is for David to be back in school and doing some GCSE's. Joe is trying to support me with this. We have tried to get an EHCP as we believe David requires support. Joe has advocated for us in doing this. My head is all over the place so I appreciate the support."*



A young person's journey is rarely a smooth path, with many twists, turns, ups and downs.

Likened to a rollercoaster ride, ENGAGE rides alongside this path with the young person.



## CASE STUDY: JAY

Jay was initially referred to Engage for a range of behavioural issues in school. This included problems with his anger, inability to work with others and becoming easily distracted. Jay's mum told us "He was struggling with anger issues. This had led to him being excluded from his school and he had to go into alternative education. I was not happy about this as I wanted him back in school. I know what he did was serious, took a knife into school but this was due to being robbed in town, he was frightened."

At the time, Jay had a turbulent relationship at home with his mum, his mum's girlfriend and his sister. There had been incidents of domestic violence where Jay had been verbally and physically abusive, which scared his family and led to Jay having no consequences in case of future violent outbursts.

At school, Jay was disruptive and disengaged from his learning. He had no motivation to do work or to follow the school rules and code of conduct. He struggled to manage his poor language and had no self-control over his actions. Jay didn't care about the consequences to his actions, which led him to be excluded.

During the last 3 years, Jay has been through many ups and downs in his life which he shared with Joe. His journey of change has seen many challenges and setbacks. He had no respect for his family and no self-worth and little self-respect. Throughout this time, Engage stuck by him, supporting him weekly, giving him the opportunity to talk through his problems and listen to fair and unbiased advice and practical solutions.

Whilst listening and engaging in meaningful discussion, we took part in a variety of activities that offered time out, a space to play, activities that Jay was interested in as well as activities that stretched him. Jay thoroughly enjoyed bushcraft activities. This gave him the opportunity to learn survival skills, build shelters in the woods, make fire and toast marshmallows with a hot chocolate whilst opening up about his problems. These activities were important to Jay, something he looked forward to every week.

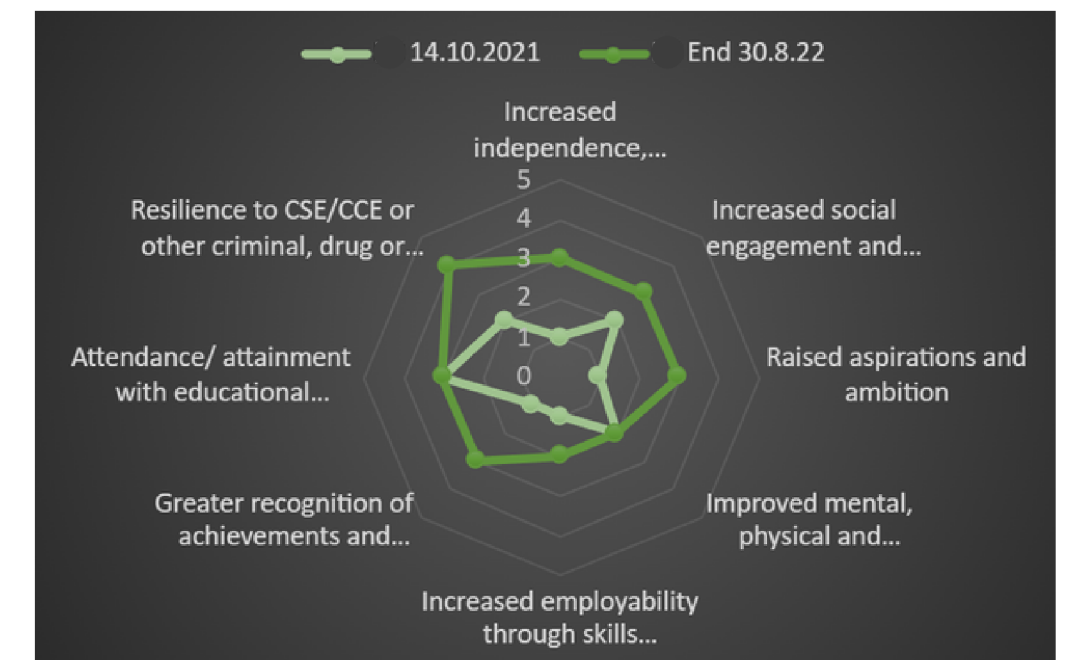
For Engage, it was challenging to work closely with family as it was difficult to form a deep relationship with Jay's parents. Some of this was due to having a lack of trust with professionals as well as historic family trauma which had kept them from being totally open to anyone outside of the immediate family circle. Over many years, they have had social care involvement that they feel had pried into their lives with little practical support that worked for them.

Despite parents' distance with Engage, they were very forthcoming with updates on a weekly basis. Our mutual respect for openness and an honest approach to change was of huge benefit to building a trusting relationship and to find different ways to support both Jay and his family.

Jay's mum wanted him to take part in our weekly sessions and found them beneficial to him. His mum said "I cannot thank Joe enough. Joe was the first male Jay could really trust. I think he talked about lots of things he wouldn't talk to me about. His Dad and I are separated and Jay always had an on off relationship with his Dad. Jay stayed with Joe for a number of years. He helped him with his confidence and behaviour. Jay trusted Joe's opinion. Through the work with Joe, Jay got back into mainstream school and got some GCSE's at grade 4. This is a lot more than we were expecting. Jay is now training to be a mechanic."

Engage asked mum what she thought would have happened without Engage's involvement. She said "I really don't know but I don't think it would have been good. I know Jay would not have managed school and I believe would have been in the Hub or other setting. I therefore don't think he would have got GCSE's. In particular I don't know where his anger would have gone. I think talking things through meant he didn't explode as much."

Engage helped Jay with his anger issues and provided him with a male role model he could trust. Through working with Engage, Jay was able to improve his confidence and behaviour, and Engage helped with Jay's return to mainstream school where he obtained his GCSEs. Without Engage, it is uncertain how Jay's situation would have turned out.



Jay's progress continues to build beyond our support. As you can see from our initial starting-point to his end-point, he was showing signs of growth and change. His mum's feedback is a solid indicator that Jay continues to thrive and is better equipped to cope with life's challenges.



# NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE PILOTS

It is important for us to understand the community that we support and what other services are available. In order to do this, in January 2023 we conducted a community profiling exercise in Coalville. The purpose of this exercise was to gain insight into the local area and to establish key networks with local organisations and schools.

During our visits to Coalville, we had the opportunity to meet with a number of charities that support the local community. The Marlene Reid Centre, Coalville C.A.N, and Falcon Services are just a few examples of the organisations that we connected with. These organisations provide a range of services and support to local residents, including families, mental health support, and youth work programmes. Through our discussions with these organisations, we were able to gain a better understanding of the needs of the local community and the types of services that are currently available.

In addition to meeting with local charities, we also established relationships with two local schools: Castle Rock School and Newbridge Academy. We met with school support leads at both schools to discuss how we could work together to support young people in the local area. We also discussed our existing programmes and how they could be adapted to meet the needs of the schools and their students.

Another important part of our community profiling was meeting with the North West Leicestershire Inclusion Partnership. We talked with them about the Engage Service and how it could benefit their service and their pupils. Through our discussions with the Inclusion Partnership, we were able to gain a better understanding of the support that is currently available to young people that have been excluded from mainstream school and identify potential areas for collaboration.

Our community profiling exercise in Coalville was an important step in our efforts to understand the local community, this led us to offer our group work programmes to both Newbridge Academy and Castle Rock School.

Mirroring the success we have in Melton, we have established a day for both schools who have referred four young people each who are in year 7 and are struggling with the transition from primary to secondary school for a range of different reasons.

We believe that every young person deserves the opportunity to thrive and reach their full potential, regardless of their circumstances. One of the ways that we worked towards this goal was to targeting young people who have been identified by their schools as being on the cusp of exclusion, having special educational needs, or who may benefit from a break from school.

Since February we have been piloting these group work programmes every Wednesday. Initial feedback from the school leadership team and pupils has been very positive and welcoming. Pupils that are currently taking part have fed back to us that these sessions help to break up the week, provide them with a safe and supportive environment where they can express their concerns and explore their emotions.

Our forest school activities have enabled the two groups to connect with nature and explore the world around them. These activities are not only fun and engaging, but they have also provided them with a sense of achievement and accomplishment, something that is not currently being recognised at school due to their behaviour.

In addition to these activities, we ensure that conversation and discussion is a vital component to the sessions. Designed to support young people who may be struggling with mental health issues or who may be experiencing a variety of challenges, this time provides them with the opportunity to explore their emotions and develop coping strategies to help them manage their feelings.

We are continuing to provide this programme to both schools up until the end of the academic year, at which point we will be reviewing and exploring future opportunities with the schools and with the North West Leicestershire Inclusion Partnership.





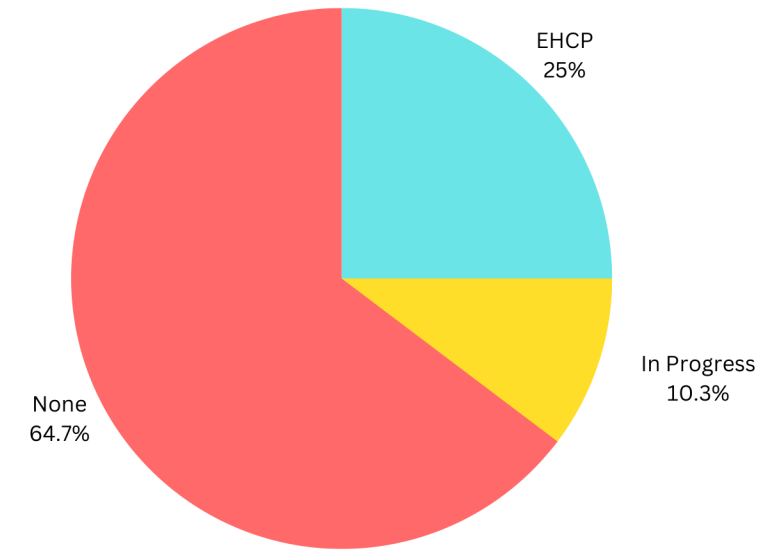
**DATA**

# FACTS FROM OUR DATABASE



We are currently working with 72 young people across our project. We have seen a sharp increase in the number of young people accessing our service with the development of our young women's group, our new pilots in Coalville and the appointment of our Post 16/Transition Worker. This number continues to grow due to the flexibility of membership with the young women's group as well as the fluid and sometimes short-term support for young people needing post 16 support.

As a result, we have seen a balancing of male to female referrals coming through to Engage.



We are now working with more young people who have been provided with an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP).

These referrals come from:

- Schools
- Inclusion & Behaviour Partnerships
- Children & Family Wellbeing Service
- Social Care

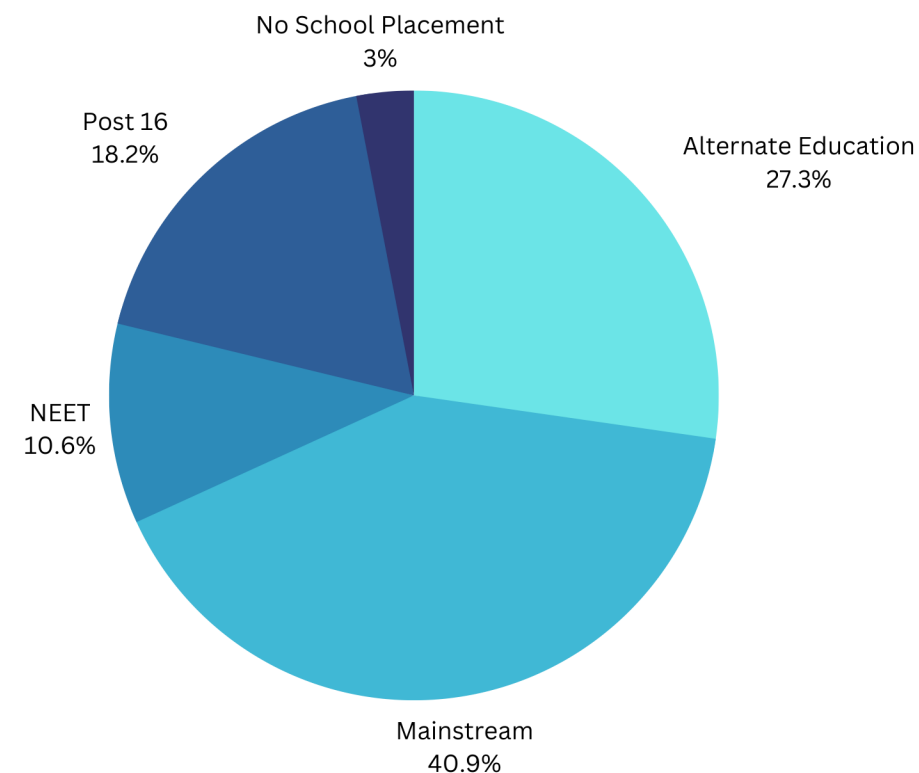
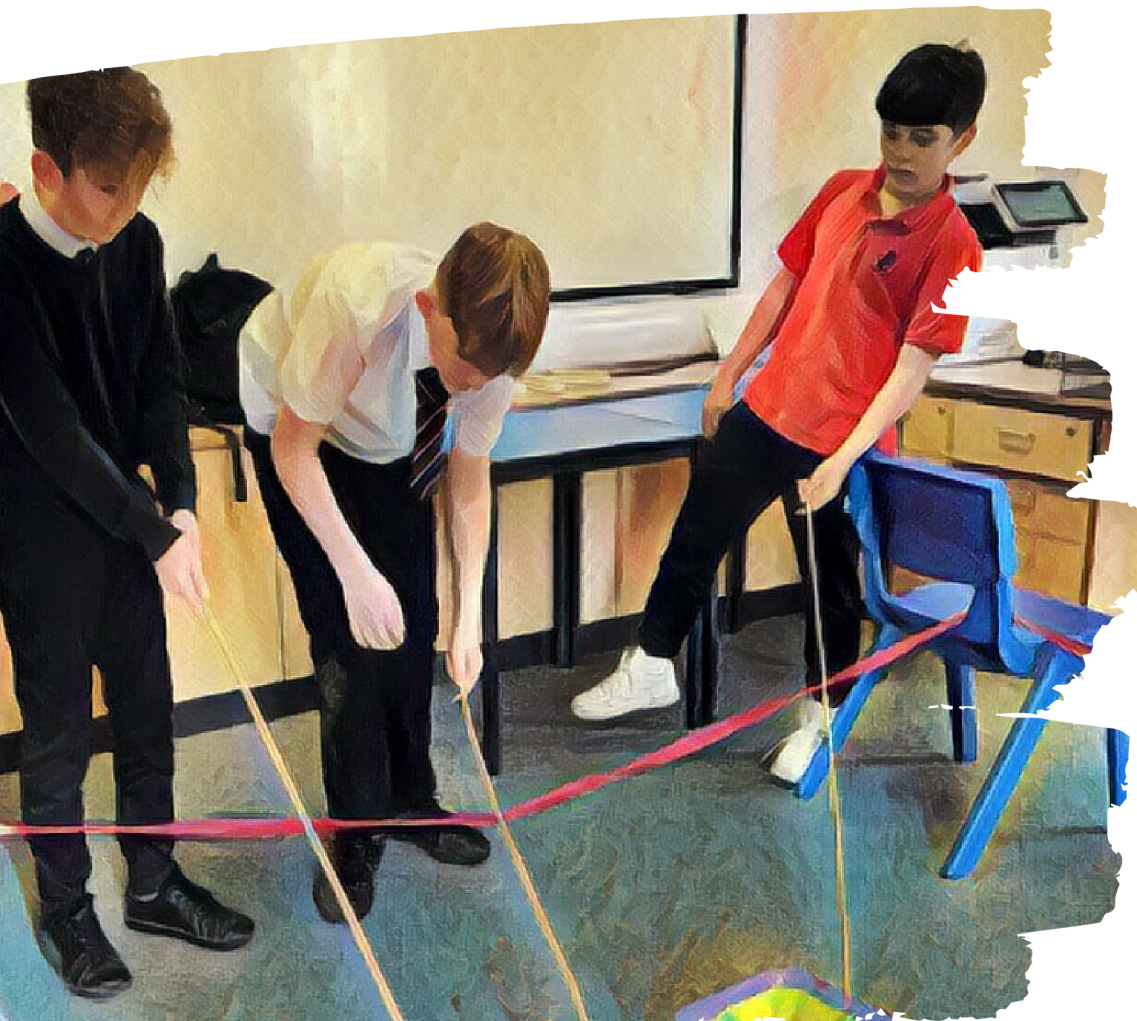
These young people continue to access mainstream school or have been placed on a flexible timetable (mix between mainstream school and alternate provisions) but have not yet secured a placement within a specialist school.

Due to the complex Special Educational Needs (SEN) system, Engage have supported parents with the application process, from liaising with the lead school to working with Educational Psychologists, GP's and other health care professionals.

Our relationship with the families have given them a consistent and regular line of information, advice and guidance to better inform them of their rights and navigate the form-filling processes that can seem unbearable and scary. We have also identified that there are some parents we work with that have an undiagnosed SEN, such as dyslexia and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) or have mental health conditions, which has impeded their ability to cope with dealing with such a stressful process.

Most young people being referred to Engage are coming directly from schools.

This has enabled us to develop preventative strategies with the young person to maintain their placement in a stable environment whilst providing a space to take time out and talk through their issues.



# YOUTH SURVEY YEAR 4

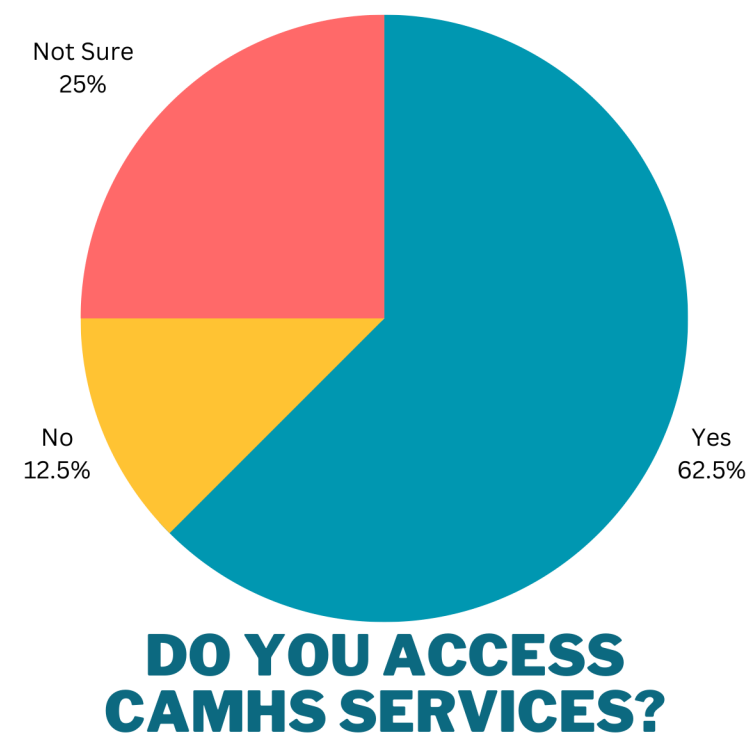
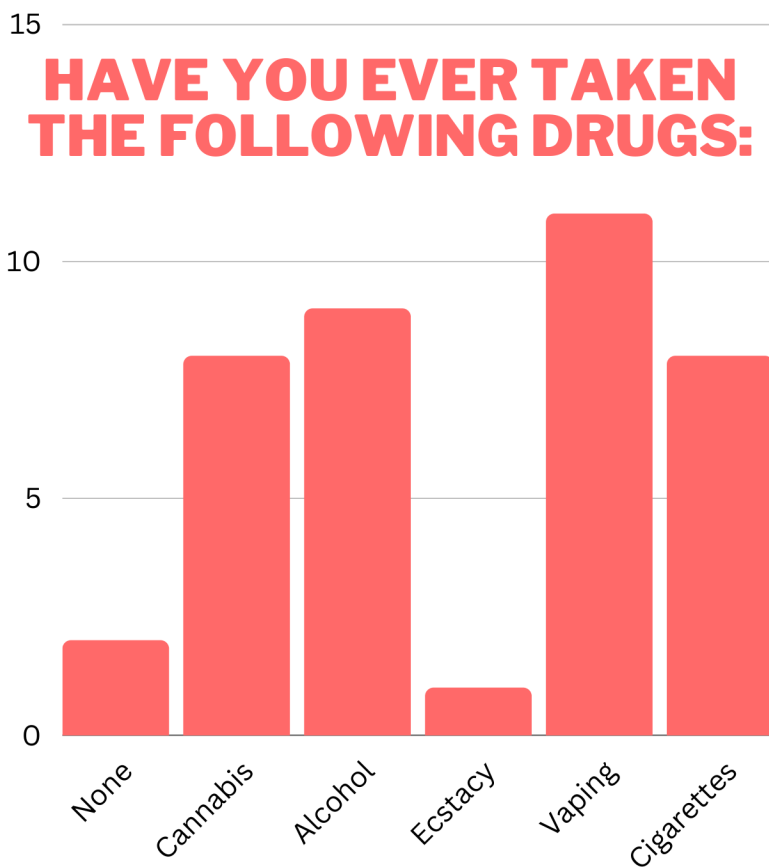
This year, we received 16 responses out of the 72 participants to our survey. Our data reflects 25% of our overall participants. Half of our responders were 15 years old. Our youngest response was 12 years old and our eldest response was 18 years old.



**63%** OF RESPONSES HAD BEEN IN TROUBLE WITH THE POLICE



**50%** OF RESPONSES HAVE BEEN BULLIED



**73%** OF RESPONSES HAD BEEN EXCLUDED FROM SCHOOL



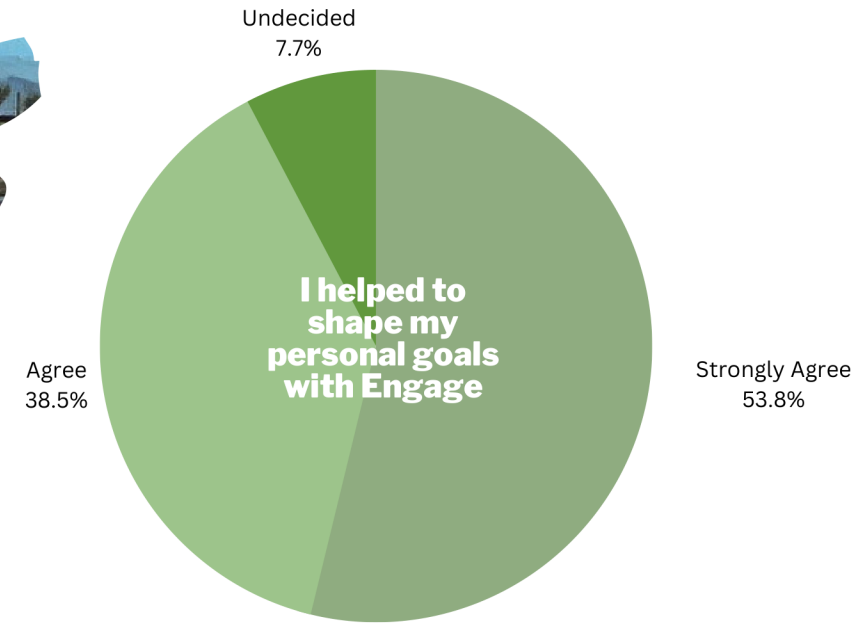
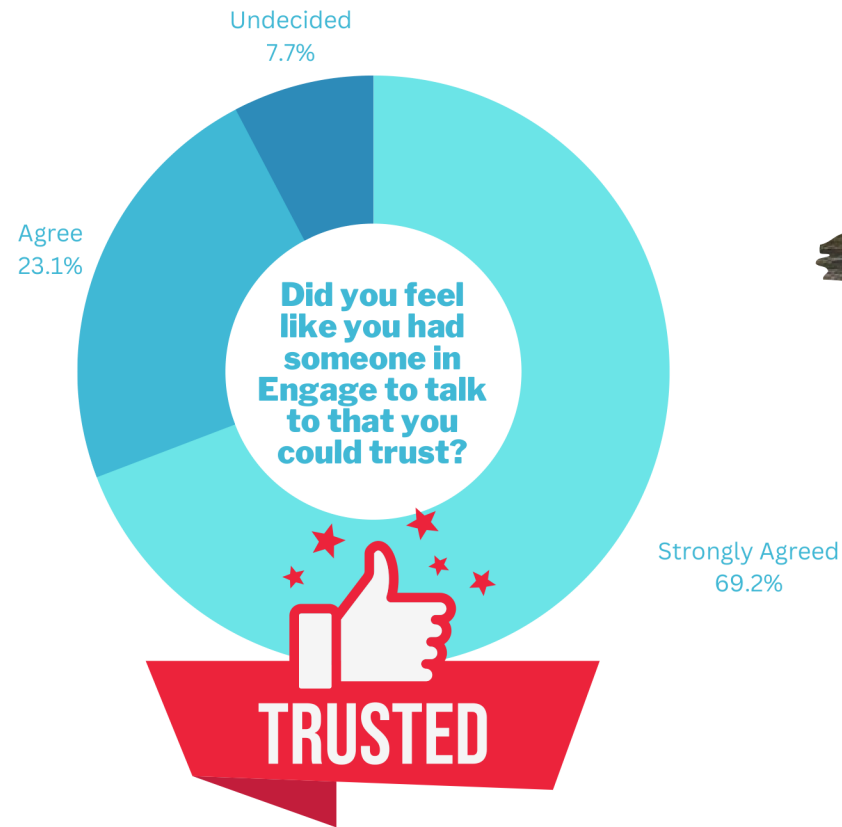
# PROJECT SATISFACTION SURVEY


This is the first year we have introduced a satisfaction survey, with 13 young people responding to our request to have their voice heard.

We asked young people to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with each of the following statements about the services they received in the last 6 months by selecting the answer that best represents their opinion.

If the statement is about something they have not experienced, they answered "Not Applicable".

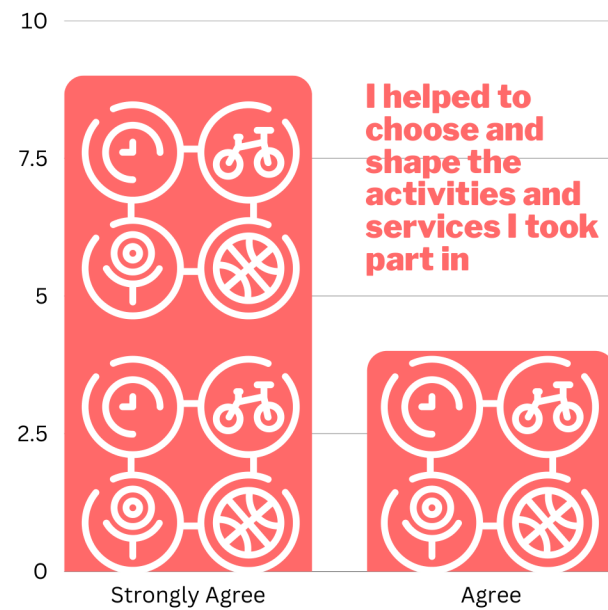
Below is a snapshot of some of the responses.



**76.9%** 

**Strongly agreed their satisfaction with the services recieved from Engage Youth Workers.**

**15.4% agreed with 7.7% disagreeing with the service they recieved.**





# **YOUNG PEOPLE'S MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK**

# YOUNG PEOPLE'S MEASUREMENT FRAMEWORK

ENGAGE created its own start and end-point questionnaire that is flexible to the needs of the young person and to the staff working with the individual. Furthermore, the data collected will provide an accurate picture of that young person's journey.

We can plot the starting-point of a young person's ENGAGE journey using this model, then use the same method to capture an end-point. Once plotted, our system will provide us with a visual picture that can be transcribed and utilised to show change and impact the ENGAGE project makes in the life of a young person.

There are eight headings that we will use to plot the journey of a young person.

They are:

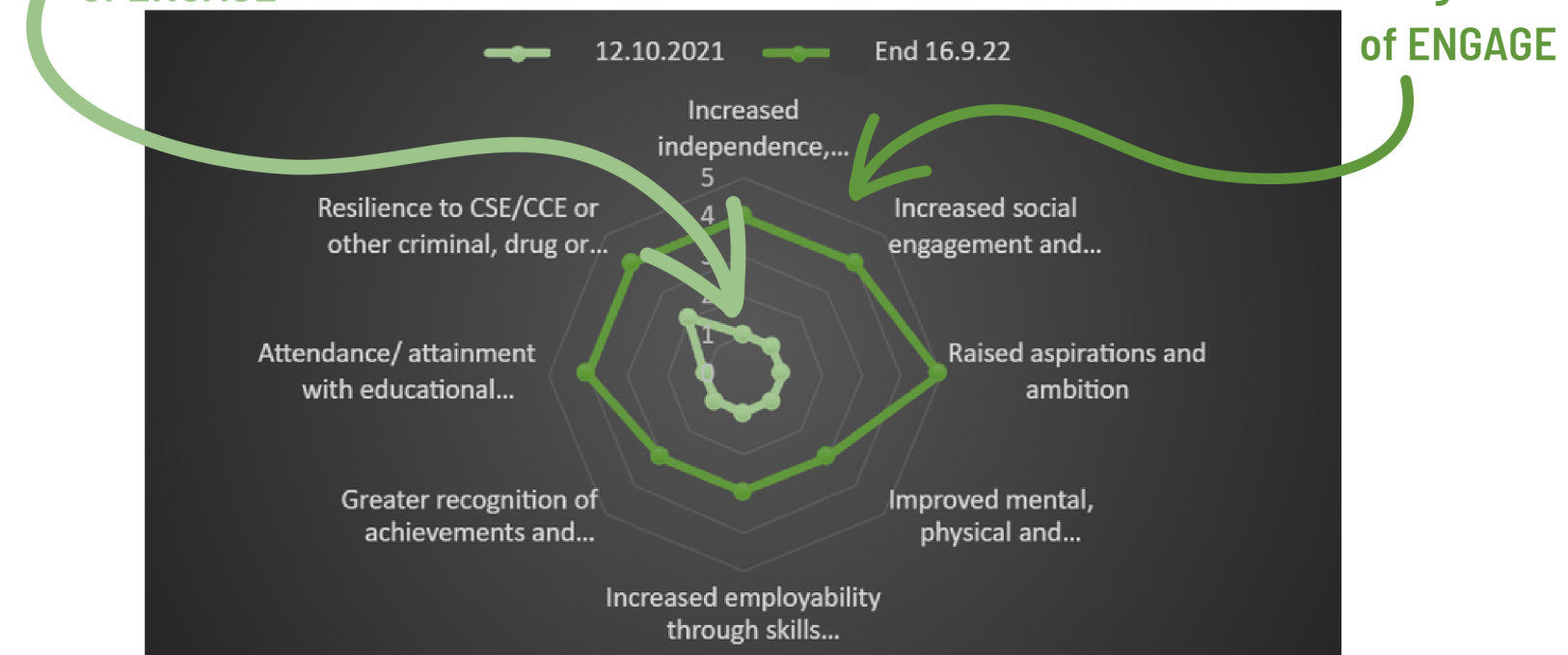
- Increased independence, maturity, and control of destiny
- Increased social engagement and sense of belonging
- Raised aspirations and ambition
- Improved mental, physical and emotional well being
- Increased employability through skills development
- Greater recognition of achievements and enjoyment of learning
- Attendance/attainment with educational provision
- At risk of CSE/CCE or other criminal, drug or personal safety issues (e.g. Bullying, cyber-bullying, knife crime, ASB, racism, etc)

To read more about this measurement framework, please [CLICK HERE](#)

Over the next few pages, we have added some of the completed start and end-point assessments along with some context to put them in to perspective.



Starting Point  
of ENGAGE



# START/END-POINT ANALYSIS



James was referred to ENGAGE due to his reluctance to go to school, severe behaviour and language towards staff and pupils. He refused any support from school and wouldn't do his online learning. Parents felt the school had let him down and also refused help. Engage worked with James for a year during year 11. He knew that he wanted to either become a butcher like his Grandfather or work on farms.

For a year, Engage worked with James during his final year of secondary school, building his confidence and helping him to restart his online learning with dedicated tutors. Engage also worked closely with James and his parents to understand his interests, which were centred around becoming a butcher like his grandfather or working on farms. This led to the development of a unique plan that supported James's special educational needs and provided him with further support to pursue an apprenticeship at his grandfather's butchers.

Through this process, Engage built a positive and trusting relationship with James's parents that encouraged regular sessions and provided a supportive environment for James to flourish. Engage also worked with James to understand the impact and consequences of his behaviours towards others, which led to him having more respect for himself and those around him.

One of the key milestones in James's journey was completing a Food Hygiene Course while working at his grandfather's butchers. This not only gave him practical skills and knowledge but also helped to build his confidence and set him on a clear path towards his career goals.

Throughout this journey, Engage provided ongoing support to James and his family, ensuring that they felt heard and understood at every stage. This included working with WB to develop strategies for managing his behaviour and communicating with his family to provide regular updates and feedback.

As a result of this support, James is now in a position to pursue his passion for food, butchery, and farming with renewed confidence and enthusiasm. He has recently applied to a college that will provide him with the support he needs to continue his education and pursue his career goals in this field.

Prior to closing the case, James had started a relationship that had given him more confidence to succeed. James's journey with Engage was not only focused on his academic and career goals but also encompassed other aspects of his life, including education, advice, and guidance on sexual health. Engage recognised the importance of providing James with comprehensive support, which included issuing him with a C-Card to ensure that he could practice safe sex.

By providing James with advice and guidance on sexual health, Engage helped him to develop a better understanding of the risks associated with sexual activity and how to protect himself and his partner. This, in turn, helped to build James's confidence and self-esteem, which has contributed to his overall success.





# START/END-POINT ANALYSIS

Ben was referred to ENGAGE as he had stopped going to school following an incident with a gang of friends he had gotten in to trouble with. He had stopped going out as he feared retaliation. Ben had closed himself off to his social life and his attitude was poor towards his mum.

The story of Ben is not uncommon. Many young people experience a difficult period in their lives, which can lead to them closing themselves off from the world around them. In Ben's case, an incident with a group of friends had caused him to stop attending school and fear retaliation from others. This isolation had led to poor behaviour towards his mum, who struggled to get through to him. However, with the help of Engage, Ben was able to start moving forward and addressing his problems.

Engage's impact helped him to better understand his ADHD diagnosis and explore options for medication and therapy. This was a crucial step towards improving his mental health and well-being. Additionally, Engage provided activities and time away from home, giving Ben and his mother some much-needed respite from their difficult situation.

Ben was able to talk through his problems with Engage and receive advice on how to move forward. This was a vital source of support, as it can be challenging for young people to know how to address their issues on their own. Engage gave Ben the tools he needed to start making positive changes in his life.

Of course, the process was not without setbacks. Ben often refused or made excuses to attend his sessions with Engage, and his sessions were irregular. This is a common challenge with young people, who may be resistant to receiving help. It can be frustrating, but it was important for Engage to continue to reach out to Ben and encourage him to seek support.

Another challenge was Ben's mum's struggle to uphold boundaries and rules. Ben continued to act out and "rule the house," which made it difficult for Engage to make progress with him. This is another common issue that can arise in situations like this. Parents may be overwhelmed by their children's behaviour and unsure of how to set and enforce boundaries. Mum refused additional support to address these issues.

Despite these setbacks, Engage was able to make a small difference in Ben's life. With some support, he was able to start addressing his problems and making positive changes. Ben and Mum voluntarily refused the support from Engage and the sessions stopped. Engage spoke with Ben and Mum to reach out when Ben feels ready and the time is right.

As we are writing this report, Ben has approached us and started to receive support from our Engage Post 16 worker.



# THANKS



<http://meltonlearninghub.org/engage/>



**With special thanks to the players of the National Lottery, without them projects such as Engage could not happen.**

