

Unlocking Gifts

Second report

Small scale projects addressing educational disadvantage.

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Published April 21



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND
EDUCATION OFFICE

Foreword

This report had been due for publication in the spring of 2020 but as the country was gripped by a global pandemic one of the effects of which was to further heighten educational disadvantage it seemed right to wait and reflect.

The inspiring projects contained in this report all therefore predate the pandemic and its consequences on the young people in our schools. There are now other questions we might want to ask but the work contained here shows what can be achieved and how we might begin to bring about real improvement in life chances through small scale actions. We feel this should not be lost. The pandemic has brought into sharp focus the urgency and need for this work. Much of the debate on educational disadvantage today is framed around the impacts shown through the quantitative analysis of large scale 'strong data'. In *Unlocking Gifts*, we seek to present something that is more holistic as a way of looking at educational disadvantage to sit alongside those important larger studies.

Unlocking Gifts projects do not seek to give the answers to educational disadvantage, they serve to pose more questions. They are not the end of the debate but perhaps a contribution to the start of an increasingly vital conversation. They reflect the deep-rooted and continuing commitment of Church school leaders to challenge and confront disadvantage.

The Church of England's Vision for Education: Deeply Christian, Serving the Common Good states

The worth of each student impels us to work to fulfil their God-given potential, whatever their religious or other tradition with which they identify and with special consideration being given to those who are disadvantaged. Each is to be understood as respectfully and deeply as possible to be encouraged to stretch themselves spiritually, intellectually, imaginatively, and actively..¹

This is flourishing, this is *Unlocking Gifts*.

Derek Holloway School Character and SIAMS Development Manager
Church of England Education Office
April 2021

Introduction

Thanks to the generous support of the Jerusalem Trust we have been able to run the Unlocking Gifts project for a second time. The first round of Unlocking Gifts funding enabled nine different projects involving 22 schools to run throughout the 2015/16 academic year. These projects ended with a final report outlining the successes and challenges of the different projects.¹

The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Justin Welby, has spoken of the Church's vocation of service to the poor and the role of schools in this. His desire to focus resources on those most in need in Church schools has been central to the motivation for this project and for the successful proposal to the Jerusalem Trust to fund this work. Government data shows that deprivation is the key determinant in attainment at every key stage, but research also shows that when children receive intervention then barriers to learning are reduced and their potential is more likely to be realised.

The aim of Unlocking Gifts is to further resource Diocesan Boards of Education in helping schools to narrow the disadvantage gap, address social injustice and enable the flourishing of all children. By investing in innovative and creative projects and showing what can be done with relatively small amounts of funding, we hoped to encourage and inspire further investment in such projects.

Learning from the first Unlocking Gifts, we decided that two years of support would be more effective in establishing projects that were embedded and therefore more likely to be able to continue beyond the initial funding. The sustainability of projects was also further enhanced by ensuring each project was monitored and supported by a diocesan adviser who could continue to support the school after the project period.







Over 40 bids were received from schools and after careful consideration six projects were selected. These projects covered a range of contexts and geographical locations and addressed several different needs and issues. This report sets out the focus of each project as well as their successes, challenges and also how they plan to continue the project and share their learning.

¹ The report from the first Unlocking Gifts can be found on the Church of England website: www.churchofengland.org/more/education-and-schools/education-publications

Where has unlocking gifts helped?

The map below shows the dioceses and number of schools which benefitted from Unlocking Gifts funding.



	Lowton Church of England High School (page 5)		Fishponds Church of England Academy (page 17)
	St Catherine's College (page 10)		Chelsea Deanery of Schools (page 20)
	Market Harborough Church of England Academy (page 14)		The Crompton House Church of England Academy (page 25)

1. Raising attainment and widening horizons.

Improving the life chances of white working class boys through leadership development and mentoring.

Lowton Church of England High School

Dioceses of Liverpool and Manchester

Context

Lowton Church of England High School is a smaller than average secondary school serving a predominantly white working class community in the north west. Lowton became a Church school in 2012 and it is a joint high school between Manchester and Liverpool dioceses.

Since becoming a Church school, Lowton has developed an ethos of 'Caring, Learning and Succeeding', based on Matthew 5:14-16:

‘You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on a stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your father in heaven.’

In spite of this ethos, staff at Lowton recognised that many of the boys in the school were struggling to succeed and aspirations were often low. National statistics show that white working class boys are less likely to move onto further or higher education and this was reflected in the destination data of the pupils at Lowton. Whilst wanting to continue to value vocational routes, the school wanted to change pupils’ mindset, helping them to think about career *pathways* rather short term employment.

Pupil leadership roles at Lowton were also less likely to be taken up by this group, with many of the boys lacking in self-confidence and self-belief to take up these positions. Lowton wanted to initiate a project to try and improve the life chances of these boys – to enable them to see that Further and Higher Education is an option for them and to empower them to take the initiative, believe in themselves and succeed.

The project

Lowton applied for an Unlocking Gifts grant to work with a selected group of middle attainment boys from disadvantaged backgrounds to raise their attainment and

aspirations. They used the funding to take a multi-faceted approach that incorporated peer mentoring, a growth mindset development programme, leadership development and opportunities for the boys to engage with further and higher education institutions. The project was led first by the head of RE and then by the newly appointed chaplain, as the school wanted the boys to experience working with a Christian leader who could mentor and guide them.

The objectives of the project were to:

- Develop the skills of communication and team-work essential for success in the workplace
- Raise aspiration through career guidance
- Improve self-esteem and self-worth
- Improve attainment to enable success post-16
- Develop relationships with the local Christian community, including local churches and charities.

The first term of the project period was used to carefully select the first cohort, based on analysis of pupil data and consideration of which pupils would best come together to create positive group dynamics. 13 year 10 boys were selected and the project began with an official launch day. Using weekly form tutor time, the Chaplain engaged the group in leadership training, looking at teamwork, communication and what it means to be a good leader. Alongside this, the pupils also took part in outdoor based team building days to develop their resilience and problem solving. They also benefitted from careers meetings and, in the second year of the project, training to become peer mentors to younger pupils.

Using some of the Unlocking Gifts grant, an external provider was brought in to run the first



peer mentoring programme with the first cohort of boys (who were now in year 11). Despite some struggles along the way, mostly due to the provider not being used to working with high energy boys and some of the pupils struggling to engage in the reflective conversations, all the boys completed the training and went on to help train the next cohort. After this external provision the chaplain created a bespoke peer mentoring package to fit the needs of

Lowton's pupils. This not only addressed some of the issues with the external package, but it also helped to ensure the project was sustainable and could be continued beyond the two years of funding.

The project team learnt and adapted their approach as the project progressed. After using a launch event for the first cohort, they decided a 'fanfare' approach was not effective and did not reflect the need to create a bespoke programme that met the diverse needs of the group. The team also recognised the need for each cohort to have leaders who are not part of the group - to act as role models and provide inspiration.

What worked

Lowton have seen a number of positive outcomes from the project. In feeling valued by staff and knowing that they were being invested in, the boys' self-esteem grew and generally their engagement with the programme was strong. The time spent at the start of the project identifying the cohort proved to be time well spent as the boys bonded well as a group and enjoyed being together. As well as becoming a strong



friendship group, the boys' cooperation skills and communication skills improved. Rather than interacting only in short statements, the boys started engaging in longer, more respectful conversations, showing significant improvement in their 'soft skills'. In exit interviews the boys commented that their self-esteem had been helped through the group:

There are people in our group who have really come out of their shell and have gained leadership qualities.

I really enjoyed being one of the few chosen to be a part of Unlocking Gifts. It has improved my role model skills and communication with others. It's given me the sense of being part of a community.

(Quotes from pupils involved in the project)

Whilst the majority of the selected pupils engaged well with the group activities, a few of the boys struggled with this due to a lack in fundamental social skills, low self-esteem and the influence of some outside friendship groups which undermined the aspirant attitude the project was trying to instil. The project team were quick to recognise and address these issues. Determined that nobody would be left behind, they spent time with each individual pupil, working with them to identify their particular issues and barriers, and also their interests, looking for the hook that would help them engage. Bespoke provision was then

created based on their needs, including individual mentoring, career mentoring and pastoral support.

Alongside the challenges, there were also clear indicators of success from early on in the project. Eight of the boys in the first cohort became prefects showing a significant increase in their engagement with school. Furthermore, attendance for the group was very good with three quarters of them having attendance of 97% or above. The attendance of the three boys whose engagement was not as strong was below the target at 94% but it was still an improvement on previous years for those particular pupils.

The Unlocking Gifts project has proved to be life changing for our first cohort. The investment we received through the Church of England gave us the opportunity to invest in the future of young men in our school. Our school ethos is based around the biblical concept of 'letting your light shine' and this project enabled our students to realise that they are worthwhile young people who can make a positive difference to others.

(Miss Clare, Deputy Headteacher)

The most successful part of the project was the careers guidance. The boys developed a strong relationship with the careers team through additional meetings and opportunities to visit local colleges. All the boys in the first cohort gained apprenticeships or college places for their post-16 provision. Five of the group also raised their career aspirations to professional qualification level. One boy commented:

I feel more confident and I believe I can be more successful in the future thanks to the support that I have been given.

(Pupil)

Lowton have learnt from the success of this part of the project and, looking forward, they plan to link chaplaincy and careers provision to develop a unified approach.

The school also progressed towards their aim of improved connections with the local church. The chaplaincy role was shared between the school and church creating effective links between the two and the local vicar took a key role in the strategic elements of the project. Church team workers were also involved in leading sessions, further enabling an effective relationship between church and school.

What next?

At the end of the funded period, the project was continuing with the year 9 cohort who met with the chaplain in form time once a week. This group was also showing progress, developing their team working and communication skills and they were ready to train to be mentors to the next cohort. Based on his learning from the external mentoring trainer and

the needs of the boys, the chaplain developed his own peer mentoring training package, making the project sustainable into the future.

Whilst some of the provision, resourced by the Unlocking Gifts grant, that the first cohort experienced will not be possible in future, this initial investment allowed Lowton to think creatively about how they can improve the lives of their young people. Through the two



years of the funded project they have been able to try different approaches, learn from the external providers and create their own sustainable package 'in house' on a smaller budget.

2. Unlocking potential on the coastal strip.

Early identification and targeted support for pupils facing mental health issues and deprivation.

St Catherine's College

Diocese of Chichester

Context

St. Catherine's College is a mixed entry secondary school in the coastal town of Eastbourne, East Sussex. The town has more adults diagnosed with depression than any other area in East Sussex and St Catherine's is in the ward with the highest rates. Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) case load rates in the ward are more than four times the average rate across the rest of East Sussex. Alongside the high number of mental health issues, deprivation in the local community is also high, with many of St Catherine's pupils coming from some of the most deprived wards in the country. High crime rates are also recorded in these areas as well as other characteristics associated with poor mental health: people living alone, poor physical health, unemployment, claiming benefits and high levels of divorce or separation.

Within this context St. Catherine's offers a vision of hope with their mission statement that:

'God's children at the heart of everything we do. We listen, learn and achieve together.'

This vision informs the school's approach: to see the potential in every individual and to provide a broad curriculum, rich extra-curricular opportunities and deep support based upon Christian care in order to prepare pupils for a better future. In line with this approach, and in response to the challenges outlined above, St. Catherine's applied for Unlocking Gifts funding to run a project to unlock the potential in their pupils and to try and address issues faced by many schools in coastal towns.

The project

The central aim of the project was to overcome mental health disadvantage through early identification and to targeted support for children with mental health needs. The intended outcomes were for there to be improved rates of attendance, improved progress and wellbeing. Pupils in need of targeted support were identified using an online emotional and behavioural questionnaire, looked at alongside Key Stage 2 SATs results and primary school

attendance data. Using this information St. Catherine's were able to capture individual benchmarks and create bespoke programmes to meet the individual needs of pupils.

The support offered included access to internal mental health support staff and resources, spiritual and pastoral support from the Chaplain, support to improve attendance, as well as input from an educational psychologist or counsellor for higher level needs. Ensuring pupils were known and their needs understood was an integral part of the approach. The data and questionnaire helped with this process, but the college also worked with the local feeder primary schools to understand the needs of those transitioning to secondary education and they also created detailed pupil 'passports' for the target group. These 'passports' were an effective way to share information about pupils with staff in a confidential but accessible way. This helped staff to understand the children's backgrounds before they even joined the school and it could be updated to reflect the progress and continuing needs of pupils.

Key staff members were trained by external experts, helping to develop the internal expertise and capacity to support pupils and to make referrals through the correct systems. This building of the internal resource also helped ensure the continuation and sustainability of the project. The sustainability was also reinforced by the project being designed to sit under the College's overarching Wave programme; a programme designed to overcome a range of barriers to pupils' learning.

In the first year of the project the pupils selected were a pilot group of Year 8 pupil premium pupils and a group of Year 7 pupil premium pupils recently transitioned to the school. For the second year, the project continued to support the pupils identified in the first year and a further 50 pupils were selected from new Year 7 cohort. Once again focusing on the transition from primary to secondary, the College ran a Saturday school day of interactive activities for these selected pupils before they moved to the College. This helped the project team to identify how they could best support the pupils in the transition, with the aim of improving mental wellbeing through this early intervention.

In the second year of the project a further range of activities and services that could be accessed by a range of pupils were developed. A calm room was created, as was a lunchtime mindfulness space and Breakfast Boost Club peer mentoring sessions (in conjunction with YMCA). St. Catherine's also took a whole school focus on mental health across Worship and PSHE and invested in further staff training, including up to date training for the bereavement counsellor so they could better support pupils dealing with death and grief and help them to stay in school.

What worked?

By collecting data at key points throughout the project, St. Catherine's were able to measure any changes in academic achievement and attendance levels. They tracked progress and attendance data for the selected pupils and also use further emotional and behavioural questionnaires during and at the end of each year to measure outcomes. The College felt that the results were not wholly conclusive of the impact of the interventions, however the data did show a slight increase in achievement and attendance in the target groups across the two years. For example, in one Year 7 focus group, average attainment 8 scores increased from 41.6 to 44.89. Whilst a comparison between primary attendance levels and end of year 7 levels showed that attendance in this group only improved for three pupils, nearly three quarters of the group were above the 95% threshold for attendance. The project team believe that this may not have been the case without the additional support that scaffolded the pupils in their transition to secondary.

Despite the focus on information gathering to help staff support the individual needs of pupils, the project team recognised that there were still considerable barriers to providing support. This included learning that whilst the additional staff training was certainly valuable, when pupils were not already diagnosed with a mental health issue, it was beyond the ability of the staff to identify particular issues. Furthermore, where there was an official mental health diagnosis, the school may not have the full information from the CAMHS. The project team also recognised that staff couldn't always identify the full levels of deprivation faced by a child without intrusive questions and so were not always able to offer the help that was perhaps required.

In evaluating the project, the College also recognised that there is not always a direct correlation between mental health and wellbeing support and attainment and attendance, disrupting the premise upon which the project was planned. They also noted that it should not be assumed that there is always a connection between difficulty at home and mental health issues. These reflections show the complexity in trying to provide bespoke support to pupils – patterns cannot be assumed and for every child the picture will be different.

This reflective approach enabled St. Catherine's to adapt their strategy throughout the project. For example, the project team were able to adapt their mentoring approach, focusing on pupils' emotional wellbeing and addressing their worries and anxieties that affected their attitude to learning rather than trying to diagnose mental health issues beyond their professional capabilities. This approach enabled the project team to identify individual struggles as well as recurrent issues across the cohort that they could then try to address more generally.

What next?

After two years developing this project, St. Catherine's are now looking at the new Year 7 intake and how they can learn from the work undertaken to date. The College ensured the project was sustainable through the emphasis on staff training and by taking a reflective approach that has allowed them to adapt and develop their approach throughout the period of the Unlocking Gifts grant. The project team have developed effective methods of support to use with each new intake of pupils and they have also identified key areas to develop over the next year. This includes the creation of wellbeing groups for staff, parents and pupils, developing links with local church support groups, additional resources for pupils, parents and staff and further training for both staff and for pupil mentors.

3. Culture and creativity improving oracy.

Building parental engagement and improving the learning of GRT pupils through a creative and cultural curriculum

Market Harborough Church of England Academy

Diocese of Leicester

Context

Market Harborough Church of England Academy is a primary school within the Learn Academies Trust. The school has a small number of pupils (5-9% of all pupils) from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller (GRT) communities, some of whom are from financially disadvantaged families. The school identified that this group of pupils often felt isolated within the local community and that the social divides were becoming wider as they progressed through the school. Furthermore, whilst Key Stage 1 data was presenting an improving picture, disadvantaged pupils and pupils from GRT communities were not a part of that picture and further work was needed to develop their early literacy and oracy. The school also recognised a need to improve the attendance of these pupils and to engage more effectively with parents.

The project

Based on this context the key aims for Market Harborough were to:

- Engage effectively with parents
- Develop oracy and promote better literacy development
- Improve attendance, particularly of pupils from the GRT communities
- Raise standards in reading and writing in Key Stage 1

The project was designed to improve pupils' academic achievement by increasing parental engagement in their children's learning and developing the cultural and creative opportunities within the curriculum. Based on educational research and the experience of other schools within the Learn Academies Trust, Market Harborough designed a project involving cultural opportunities such as choral singing, story telling, art and poetry. The original idea was to involve all the pupils and help them work towards special performances to which parents and carers would be invited, helping to improve parental engagement.

To prepare for these performances some of the Unlocking Gift grant was used to bring in a Leading Music Practitioner from within the academy trust. Two events were planned and themes chosen – Key Stage 1 created an event called 'Once Upon a Rime', linked to story

and song and Key Stage 2 focused on local characters and personalities, called 'Made in Market Harborough'. Both events involved singing, presenting and acting and Key Stage 2 also created a printed book with biographies written by the pupils about the local people featured in the performance. These events created a focal point for the children's hard work as well as providing a key opportunity for parental engagement.

Early Years and Foundation Stage (EYFS) pupils were also included in the project with some of the grant being used to buy Storytelling Schools resources and training for teachers. This enabled the school to extend the creative approach to their youngest pupils. A storytelling expert was also brought in to help all the children to develop their presenting and storytelling skills.

The sustainability of the project was developed through a strong focus on teacher professional development. At the start of the programme, participating teachers had a professional development session and they also attended sessions led by the Leading Music Practitioner. This enabled the teachers to lead rehearsals and it allowed them to learn the skills they needed to continue the project beyond the input of the Leading Music Practitioner. Some of the grant was used to release staff so that they could engage with research-evidence around vocabulary, oracy and reading development in the context of the project. This gave staff valuable time to collaborate, carry out quality planning and continue the research-informed approach of the project.

What worked?

The central aim of this project was to improve the literacy and oracy of disadvantaged pupils, particularly Gypsy, Roma and Traveller pupils, through increased parental engagement and the development of the curriculum. The use of expertise within the Learn Academy Trust and the focus on staff professional development gave the project a solid grounding but the impact on the pupils, particularly those from the GRT communities was not as strong as the school had initially hoped.

Towards the end of the first year there were positive signs. An oracy and wellbeing questionnaire used with the pupils before and after the first year of the project showed improved scores for the majority of the target group of pupils. Feedback from parents about the performances was also generally positive and teachers reported an increased confidence in pupils and a greater willingness to present and discuss in class. However, the school also recognised that there was still an issue with school attendance in the target group and more needed to be done to ensure pupils from disadvantaged or GRT backgrounds were included in the out of school activities.

Market Harborough took a very reflective, evaluative approach throughout the project, allowing them to recognise these issues. This approach also enabled the school to make the decision in the first year of the project that the second year Unlocking Gifts funding should be deferred. Due to significant staff changes and external pressures, the headteacher decided that the grant would be better used at another time when they could ensure the project was properly developed based on their learning from the first year.

Despite this gap in the project, the school was able to show further positive outcomes of their initial work. Pupils' oracy continued to improve across the year following the first year of funding, and in EYFS 50% met GLD (Good Level of Development) and 25% were close to this threshold. Pupils tracked using a language score measure also made good progress and national data showed that outcomes in literacy were at least at national average. In addition, attendance for the pupils from the GRT communities improved and a Culture Club specifically for the development of singing and poetry for quieter, less confident disadvantaged pupils was developed.

What next

Despite the challenges, the headteacher had a clear vision for the way forward to develop the project when it was reinstated. Learning from the first year of work, the school adapted their approach in order to increase the engagement of GRT pupils and focus on improving oracy and vocabulary across the school. Whilst the performance focus of the first year had a good impact on the pupils involved, the project team realised that it was not so successful at engaging the target group and the labour-intensive event approach was not sustainable. Rather than focusing on a few large-scale performances, the school has developed a cross-curricular approach, trying to ensure that performance and creativity are included across the school day, for example in assemblies or presentations within the classroom. The focus on staff development will also continue through the training of Oracy Leads who will deliver regular CPD to teachers to secure a positive change in teaching.

4. Confidence building through pupil conferencing.

Addressing underachievement of EAL and BME pupils through pupil conferencing.

Fishponds Church of England Academy

Diocese of Bristol

Context

Fishponds Church of England Academy is a large primary school based in the Fishponds suburb of Bristol, a socially and ethnically diverse community. The school's population reflects this diversity with approximately 35% of children for whom English is not their first language and around 70% of pupils from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds. The school catchment area contains wards within the 10% most deprived in England and approximately 35% of children are in receipt of Pupil Premium.

Within this context, the school identified a particular issue of under-achievement amongst some EAL (English as an Additional Language) and BME boys. A combination of low self-esteem and low resilience, particularly with boys in Key Stage 2, was leading to low attainment in writing. At the start of the project only 15.9% of boys in Year 5 and 29% of boys in Year 4 were predicted to meet the expected standard in writing by the end of the academic year, compared to 29% and 44% of girls respectively.

Staff could see that if the boys left the school with this low attainment and low confidence they would struggle to make up progress at secondary school. Fishponds applied for an Unlocking Gifts grant so that they could help improve the life chances of these boys.

The project

Fishponds wanted to achieve four main outcomes: for BME and EAL boys in Year 4 and Year 5 to have increased self-esteem and resilience; to narrow the attainment gap between boys and girls; for behavioural incidents among the target group of boys to decrease; and for relationships within the class to improve. To achieve these aims Fishponds built a programme based on pupil conferencing. This method involved one-to-one sessions where the class teacher could work with small groups of boys who were identified as below age related expectations in writing. The pupils were also selected based on who would benefit most from the pastoral support that the conferencing process enabled.

By working one-to-one with their trusted class teacher, the boys were able to build their resilience and focus on their individual academic needs. The teachers helped them review their work and identify the next steps they needed to take to improve their learning.

Due to the absence of a key teacher the programme started later than originally planned because the school recognised how important it was that teachers known and trusted by the pupils carried out the conferencing. When the programme was able to commence, the Unlocking Gifts grant was used to release the class teachers from ordinary lessons for one afternoon per week to carry out these individual sessions. Across the two funded years the school ran the programme four times, working with 15 pupils in the first year and 19 pupils in the second year of the funding.

What worked?

All the pupils who took part in the first year of the project made progress, with many moving to 'expected levels' and some not quite reaching expected levels but still making rapid progress. For example, one pupil from the first year of the project made four years' progress in the space of 12 weeks. The school recognised from the start that a key element in the success of the project was the involvement of the pupils' regular class teachers. Despite the programme starting later than planned, the existing pupil-teacher relationships meant the teachers could offer immediate support rather than needing to first spend time developing trust and rapport. They also had a pre-existing understanding of the motivations and individual needs of the pupils that meant they were best placed to help improve the boys' self-esteem, confidence and academic progress.

The success of working with the class teacher in a small group setting came out in the pupils' own comments as they reported feeling supported by their peers and their teacher.

Your friends help you in the group and if you make a mistake nobody laughs - they support me.

(Pupil)

In the first year the programme was run twice over two twelve-week periods with a fixed group of boys. In the second year a more flexible approach was taken with the teachers working with pupils across an extended period of time (September to Easter), selecting small groups depending on the needs at the time. At the end of the second year, the results again showed that all the participating pupils made progress. 31% of pupils in the project group made accelerated progress compared to 16% of the rest of the pupil cohort. A comparison between the project group and the rest of their cohort also showed that the conferencing had narrowed the attainment gap between the target group and their peers, thereby achieving one of the main aims of the project.

Interviews with the pupils before and after the programme also showed that their self-esteem and confidence had improved. Pupils said they enjoyed writing and they felt they could write and use punctuation well.

The group helps you with your writing. It helps me achieve my targets...and it's basically really helpful in general.

I like writing. I like a challenge. I have learnt how to do relative clauses, subordinate clauses, main clauses - I've learnt all of my targets.

I feel more engaged as I find it easier to just get on and write.

(quotes from pupils involved in the project)

The intervention with pupils also led to wider benefits both within the small groups and when back together as a whole class. The selected pupils benefited from being introduced to concepts in advance of them being taught to the whole class and teachers also noticed that they became more confident to volunteer answers in class. Their peers also benefited as, due to the target pupils having the additional input they needed, they did not require so much attention and the teachers were able to spend more time with other pupils not in the project group.

What next?

Fishponds felt that the project had been so valuable they continued the programme using their own funds for the rest of the 2018/19 academic year. The school has shown that it is possible for the programme to be mainstreamed to some extent, although it does require considerable funding in order to release the class teachers to work with the small groups. For this reason, Fishponds cannot offer the same amount of time for teachers out of class, but they do hope to release the class teacher for at least some time to carry on the coaching model for some of the children.

Furthermore, the school has learnt valuable lessons about engaging pupils and providing them with specific targets and they have also been able to spread this good practice to other schools. In the autumn term 2018, the headteacher and diocesan adviser showcased the project at the Bristol Diocesan Education conference, sharing their method and helping to establish the legacy of this effective programme.

5. Telling tales to aid integration.

Using intergenerational storytelling to support social integration and overcome educational disadvantage in mixed ethnic communities.

Chelsea Deanery Partnership of Schools

Diocese of London

Context

The Chelsea Deanery Partnership of Schools is a group of three Church of England primary schools in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea: Christ Church, Chelsea; Holy Trinity, Sloan Square; and St Cuthbert with St Matthias, Earl's Court. The schools formed the partnership in 2017 with an aim to raise educational standards, promote staff development and achieve greater financial efficiency by working together.

The schools have differing cohorts with many pupils with special educational and other needs, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and many from refugee backgrounds or those for whom English is not their first language. The number of EAL (English as an additional language) pupils at Holy Trinity and St Cuthbert with St Matthias are well above average with 52% and 83% respectively when the project was proposed. Each of the schools serves a diverse community with pupils of different faiths and ethnicities.

The schools recognised that they all had children who could benefit from further societal integration and from opportunities to learn about different people and build respect for other faiths, ethnicities, cultures, languages and customs.

The project

The Chelsea Deanery Partnership used their Unlocking Gifts grant to fund an intergenerational story telling project, bringing in a story teller and artist to help facilitate story sharing and art to reflect the schools' community tales. Year 5 or 6 pupils spent time with local elders – grandparents of pupils, members of the local church community and care home community. Prompted by an artefact, photograph, personal experience, music or poetry the elders and pupils spent time sharing stories about themselves and their lives.

In hearing about each other's experiences, the pupils were able to learn from and grow in respect for the older members of their community. Similarly, the elders were able to learn about the young people and in this way greater cross-generational links were created. Alongside this benefit, the pupils also developed their story telling and interpersonal skills,

as well as their reading, writing, the depth of their vocabulary and their typing skills through the drafting and redrafting process which was supported by the professional story teller.



A professional artist helped each school to create a piece of artwork to reflect the community tales. Pupils at Christ Church learnt about artist Grayson Perry and took part in mark making and portrait drawing workshops. They then created a papier-mâché urn decorated with illustrations based on the tales. Holy Trinity also drew portraits and sketched illustrations that were then used to create a large class canvas using acrylic

paint. St Cuthbert with St Matthias created an acrylic painting on a large wooden background.

To celebrate the end of the first year, the Partnership held an event at St Cuthbert Church, involving the pupils, artists, elders, parents, staff and governors. Special guests from the diocese also attended as well as author Sir Michael Morpurgo who is a former pupil of St Cuthbert with St Matthias. At the event, children and elders from each school were presented with copies of the books created from the stories. Some of the stories were read out by pupils and elders, including Sir Michael who enthralled the audience with a story of his life in the 1950s when he lived on the very street where the event was held. The printed books have been a huge source of pride for all involved, with pupils and elders alike sharing them with friends and family.

What worked?

Each school in the partnership saw an improvement in the reading and writing of pupils. Teachers reported that pupils are implementing the drafting skills they learnt from the project across their work, improving presentation standards and enabling them to attain well written final pieces of work.

Progress in reading and writing has been very strong in this year group and we do feel the Tales project and the oral to writing to the redrafting process has been an important contributing factor in this success...The celebration event and the related art project was also brilliant and really deepened the learning.
(Headteacher, Christ Church)

Even more important and longer lasting than any academic progress, pupils have developed a love of story telling and pupils and elders have built life enhancing relationships.

Arguably even more important than the reading and writing outcomes are the relationships developed between elders and children and those strengthened across the Partnership. Through sharing stories and exploring with art, a mutual understanding across generations has blossomed.

(Kate Roskell, London Diocesan Board for Schools)

The pupils took great joy in their stories being shared and celebrated, both in the book and at the celebration event.

Everybody made a story. It made me so very happy to see my story in the book because the book is so great.

(Pupil)

The inter-generational links have been strengthened through the project and the children have responded extremely positively to their meetings with the elders, enjoying their time together and growing in understanding and empathy. Listening to the stories of the elders, and hearing about past times in their community, pupils have gained local knowledge and history. In line with one of the aims of the project, this has helped pupils to grow in respect for the older members of their community and to develop greater understanding of difference.

I enjoyed telling the story of my object to James (elder). He was wearing red. He told us about the wars. I learned some new things. It was a long time ago and he was on a ship and he created some bombs to test. He told me he still has a teddy-bear!

(Pupil)

I spoke about when I was young and it was interesting to see the children's reactions to how we lived then.

(Kim, Elder)



In working with the elders, story teller, artists and pupils from the other schools, all the pupils have developed their collaborative working and interpersonal skills through both the creation of the published book and the group artwork. This culminated in the celebration event in which all involved came together and pupils were able to hear the stories from each of the schools.

The project has brought community members of different generations together, enabling each to value the other a little more and learn from each other by listening to the shared personal stories.

(Quote from the 'Tales from our Community' project book)

Tales from the community has been an inspirational project for all involved.

What next?

The Chelsea Deanery Partnership has already repeated the project with the second year of Unlocking Gifts funding. For the second year the celebration was held in one of the other



churches connected to the schools. In this way the Partnership have been further cementing community relationships and the schools have already been developing and improving the way the project is carried out. In the second year, pupils used iPads to record the discussions, enabling them to listen back when transferring the stories into writing. They also published a combined book for all three schools and images of the artwork produced have also been incorporated into the book.

The Partnership has also been successful in securing another source of funding which will allow them to continue the project. This project has been extremely successful in enabling a wide range of benefits and there is no doubt it will continue to have a positive impact on the pupils and wider community of the Chelsea Deanery Partnership of Schools.

6. Closing the disadvantage gap through tutoring.

Improving the academic progress of Looked After Children through a tutoring scheme.

Crompton House Church of England School

Diocese of Manchester

Context

Crompton House Church of England School was founded 90 years ago for the benefit of the children of Crompton and Shaw, within the borough of Oldham in Greater Manchester. The Christian values and ethos of the school, together with the school's excellent academic attainment has made it one of the most popular and oversubscribed schools within the area. The quality of care offered by the school has been recognised locally and has resulted in Crompton becoming the school of choice for social workers and carers of looked after children. This has led to high numbers of significantly disadvantaged pupils in some school years and consequently the growth of a social, emotional and academic gap between these vulnerable pupils and the more advantaged pupils in the school.

Progress for the looked after children (LAC) was significantly lower than the non-LAC pupils. In Year 7, 50% of LAC pupils made expected progress in maths opposed to 83% of non-LAC pupils and in English 17% opposed to 70%. Cognitive Ability Tests also showed a significant gap and around a third of the pastoral issues dealt with by the school came from this group of young people.

In line with their foundation principle, *Loving God - Caring for Each Other - Achieving Excellence*, Crompton applied for Unlocking Gifts funding to help them reduce this gap and enable these looked after pupils to flourish in school.

The project

The project was based around tutoring for the disadvantaged pupils, to help them in their academic progress and support them through mentoring. The grant enabled the school to buy in two tutors for two days per week for the duration of the two-year Unlocking Gifts project. The tutors were provided through Yipiyap, a tutoring model that uses students who have recently gained good A Level results and who have particular interest or expertise in the subjects where additional support is needed for some pupils.

Being closer in age to the pupils, the young tutors were able to engage with the pupils on their level. This engagement was also supported by the fact that tutors weren't traditional

authority figures – pupils could relate to them but also look up them. A gradual introduction to each pupil and tactful support from the tutors promoted acceptance, trust and positive relationships which allowed the tutors to provide valuable academic support. The project also developed additional pastoral support through a newly appointed chaplain and chaplaincy team from local churches.

Each term subject data was gathered and analysed for progress. This analysis then informed the next term's tutoring programme. The school also held half termly core group meetings to discuss the progress of the project and to plan next steps, ensuring that they were adapting the provision to ensure the best outcomes.

Responding to the need to make the project sustainable after the grant ended, Crompton developed their own mentoring scheme, working with their own sixth form students. Students who wanted to develop their own soft skills were encouraged to volunteer to become a mentor. The school facilitated the passing over of skills from the Yipiyap tutors to their own sixth form pupils by buddying them up, helping the sixth formers to learn the skills they would need to continue the work.

What worked?

Data was collected from the target group and from a group of non-LAC pupils. At the end of the first and second year of the project the data showed that, on average, the LAC pupils made better progress as a cohort in maths and English than their peers and their progress in other subjects was also significantly better than their peers. In the second year of the project the reading gain of LAC pupils in the 8 months between assessments was 12.6 months, compared to a gain of 8.11 months for non-LAC pupils. The project showed that through this intervention looked after children could make better progress than their non-LAC peers.

End of year impact reports by the Yipiyap tutors also showed there was significant improvement for the targeted pupils.

[Pupil name] has shown significant improvement in his ability to form PEE (point, example, explanation) analysis paragraphs which is a key skill in English. His reading skills have also improved significantly and he is much more confident when asked to read aloud in class. He has said he now enjoys reading at home a lot more.

[Pupil name] is making more progress as his behaviour has improved over the past few months. I have seen him more often so have been able to build rapport with him and now we know each other better, he is more likely to accept help. When first introduced to the support he wasn't as responsive and refused help

as he wanted to either complete the work independently or avoid it completely. He is making good progress as his English skills are improving and he now recalls work learnt from previous sessions, which is great to see.

What next?

Now that the funding has ended Crompton will continue the programme with their own volunteer sixth form mentors. Starting the project with the intention of bringing it 'in house' enabled the school to create a smooth transition to their own scheme, drawing upon the expertise of the Yipiyap tutors whilst they were there and preparing the sixth formers to continue the work. In order to develop this volunteering opportunity, Crompton plan to link it to the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, enabling the sixth form volunteers not only to gain vital skills but also to help them achieve a significant award that will help them in their own progress.

Crompton have been proactive in identifying and improving any problems in the approach. Any outlying data was investigated to aid their understanding of the barriers. For example, the project team noted that the application of some boys in the second test was not as positive as it could have been, resulting in regression. Looking into this issue, they found that the lack of effort in the final test was linked to end of year apathy. In response to this they plan to ensure that the second test is carried out at a time that aids positive engagement and they are also exploring the use of reward to reduce apathy.

The success of the project will also be shared with other schools at the Diocese of Manchester annual secondary conference. Crompton also want to consider sharing their learning more widely to help other school communities benefit from their experience and similarly reduce their disadvantage gap.

Closing reflections

All six projects in this second round of Unlocking Gifts funding have succeeded in addressing issues and challenges in their local context and they have made a difference to their pupils. Each project reduced the disadvantage gap and improved the life chances of some of the most vulnerable children in their schools. Academic performance and progress certainly improved in all the projects, but it was the growth in confidence, self-esteem, interpersonal skills and wellbeing that were perhaps even more valuable. All the schools found that the pupils who were the focus of their projects grew in their soft skills and became more confident in school, better enabling them to reach their potential and flourish.

Through these positive gains the schools have shown what can be achieved with the investment of relatively small amounts of money. More importantly, through their evaluative and reflective approaches each of the schools improved their projects over the two years and developed sustainable ways to continue the work. Different approaches to building this sustainability were taken by the schools. As we have seen, some projects used the funding to bring in external expertise with the view to building internal knowledge and capacity. Both Lowton High School and Crompton House School brought in an external mentoring service which then enabled them to create their own mentoring programmes. Building sustainability also came through professional development, including at Market Harborough Academy where staff were able to learn from experts from within the academy trust. Rather than investing in external expertise, Fishponds Academy utilised the expertise already present in their school, showing another way in which the funding could be used to great effect.

The variety in approaches, based on local context and need, is what is so striking in this range of projects. There are similarities between some of the projects, but each one took different measures to address the specific needs of their pupils and their communities. The schools found new and innovative ways to meet the needs of their pupils and it is the reflective evaluation that enabled them to propose such successful methods and continuously adapt their approach to achieve their aims and unlock the gifts of their pupils. These Unlocking Gifts projects lay down the challenge to other schools to learn from these case studies and find their own ways to address educational disadvantage in their school community.

Acknowledgements

Thank you to the diocesan advisers who monitored, supported and reported on all the projects. This report is only possible because of the valuable information and insights that you were able to provide.

Thank you to the Jerusalem Trust for providing the funding that enabled these projects to take place.

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