



Co-operative Councils

Innovation Network

Covid-19

Hull City Council

Returning to School after Lockdown

Resources to support children and young people's emotional health and wellbeing on returning to school during the Covid-19 pandemic

Context

A primary impact of Covid-19 in Hull has been reduced access to education for children and young people. HeadStart Hull is a city-wide programme led by Hull City Council working with all schools across the city to provide universal and early intervention support on emotional health. The programme offers a range of interventions for children and young people as well as training and support for school-based staff and community services including the VCS, youth services and social care.

Development

One of the HeadStart Hull provider services, Barnardo's, runs the Wrap school-based group work. During lockdown it was not possible to run the usual group work sessions so they worked with schools and pupils to co-produce two resources focused on emotional health. A transition booklet was produced for all primary schools to help prepare year 6 pupils for the move to secondary school; and key stage 2 and 3 pupils were given a life-after lockdown booklet to support them with their return to school in September. The resources help young people identify and talk with a trusted adult about any worries or fears they may have. The resources were co-produced with young people and schools to ensure it met their needs and was age-appropriate. The Council also worked with Local Authority Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) leads and schools to ensure the resource was suitable for SEND pupils. Being a Co-operative Council means working collaboratively with other local organisations to meet the needs of children, young people and families within the city. Although all the schools in Hull are Academies and therefore no longer managed by the Local Authority, it has retained a good working relationship with them. This enabled them to share concerns and work with the Council to find solutions to improve wellbeing and offer mutual benefit.

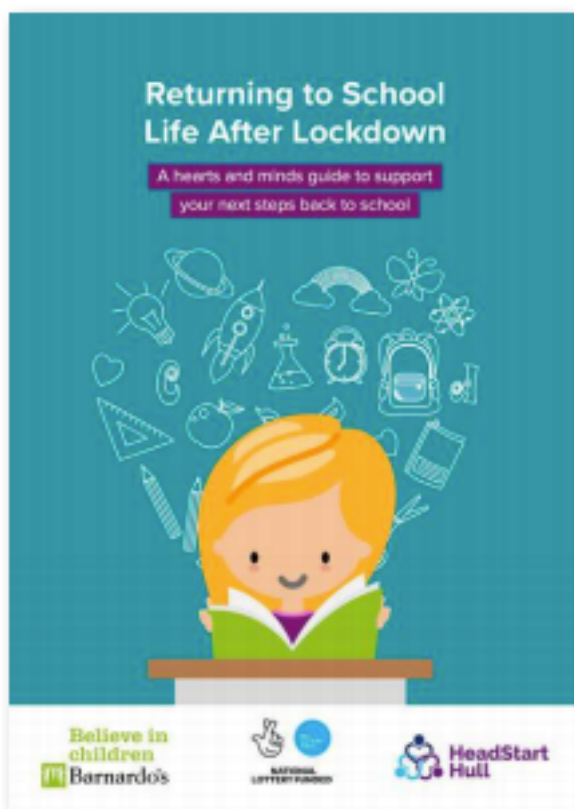
Implementation



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The Council distributed electronic versions to all schools in Hull – along with 13,000 hard copies to schools and other services working with vulnerable young people. These include children’s homes, youth services and mental health services. These hard copies ensured that young people without access to the internet or suitable equipment did not miss out on support. Hull City Council provided additional funding for the hard copies; Barnardo’s contributed the design work and gave its staff time to work with schools and pupils to co-produce the resources. The Council is always keen to explore new ways of meeting a priority need in the community as it emerges – and has found that co-production is a key aspect of this. It also undertook regular surveys with children, young people and parents to gain a good understanding of how lockdown was impacting on emotional health and what support was needed. This helped to identify the need for the resources and meant the Council could respond quickly.



Review

Feedback from schools has been very positive and they plan to incorporate the transition booklets into next year’s city-wide transition plan for schools. Public Health England and the National Children’s Bureau have shared the resources with other areas as an example of good practice and learning. Feedback from organisations who work with vulnerable young people has also been very positive with workers using it as a tool to undertake one-to-one work with young people. This work has strengthened the partnership with schools and communities, aided by a shared sense of responsibility for wellbeing and mutual benefit. The learning is that co-operative working can achieve something that no organisation could easily do alone. The project was able to produce standard resources which met need at a low cost by utilising skills and capacity across the partnership. The alternative would have been each of Hull’s 97 schools duplicating efforts and producing multiple versions of a common resource. Moving forward, the resources will be used (with minor adaptations to

remove reference to Covid-19) in future years as part of the newly agreed City-wide Transition plan for schools.

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