

SO WHAT?

HeadStart 2017- 2018



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# What is it like to grow up well in Wolverhampton?

**Our evaluation of the HeadStart programme looks at the impact that the various interventions have on children, people, schools, families and communities.**

In this first year of evaluation we have been looking at where people are in terms of resilience, wellbeing and self-efficacy – establishing a baseline of evidence so we can look at any future changes.

Being resilient and building resilience in individuals and communities is a way of growing up healthily.

This means developing assets - any resource, skill or knowledge which enhances the ability of individuals, families and neighbourhoods to sustain their health and wellbeing.

*Foot (2012).*



## Our approach draws on Michael Ungar's (2011) definition of resilience

1. The capacity of individuals to navigate their ways to resources that sustain wellbeing;
2. The capacity of individuals' physical and social ecologies (e.g, home , family community) to provide those resources; and
3. The capacity of individuals, their families and their communities to negotiate culturally meaningful ways to share resources.

**We are looking for evidence that HeadStart is developing and enhancing those assets or people's ability to develop them.**



## Our objectives

- To **evaluate** the outcomes required by The Big Lottery Commissioners.
- To **assess** whether young people within their home, school and community are developing protective mechanisms that help them to achieve a life that they value including health and wellbeing.
- To **create** a sustainable research tool that combines key data sets around mental health and wellbeing in the city that can be used beyond HeadStart.
- To **provide** an iterative assessment of programme/project efficacy and processes so that these can be developed, improved and or discontinued as required.
- To be **inclusive** and use participative approaches as a matter of choice.

## So what?

- **Resilience** – both boys and girls in both year groups were more resilient compared to the normative group in all areas of resilience, except for girls' sense of belonging. Overall, girls were more resilient than the boys in both year groups.
- **Quality of life** – both boys and girls in both year groups had higher self-esteem than the norm. However, both were lower than the norm for emotional wellbeing and in family relationships.
- **Self-efficacy at school** – girls demonstrated higher self-efficacy than boys across both year groups, especially in Year 7.
- **Emotions and behaviours** – 75% of children in both year groups were either average or above average in being able to control their emotions or behaviour in social

situations. 81% of Year 6 children and 74% of Year 7 children were average or above average in feeling competent at school.

- Overall, resilience was higher than the norm in HeadStart schools, although attention needs to be given to children's relationships with their

## What we did

**Surveyed 775 year 6 children in 20 primary schools and 893 year 7 children in 7 secondary schools (1668 children in total), using validated ratings to evaluate resilience (CYRM), quality of life (KINDL), self-efficacy (belief in ability to achieve) (Academic Self-Efficacy), and emotion and behaviour (BERS) at school.**

**The Children and Youth Resilience Measure (CYRM) was used to see if there was any statistical significance when compared with a range of other indicators using multilevel modelling.**

**Two levels were used, significance among all participants (pupil level) and at the level of schools (across all school results).**

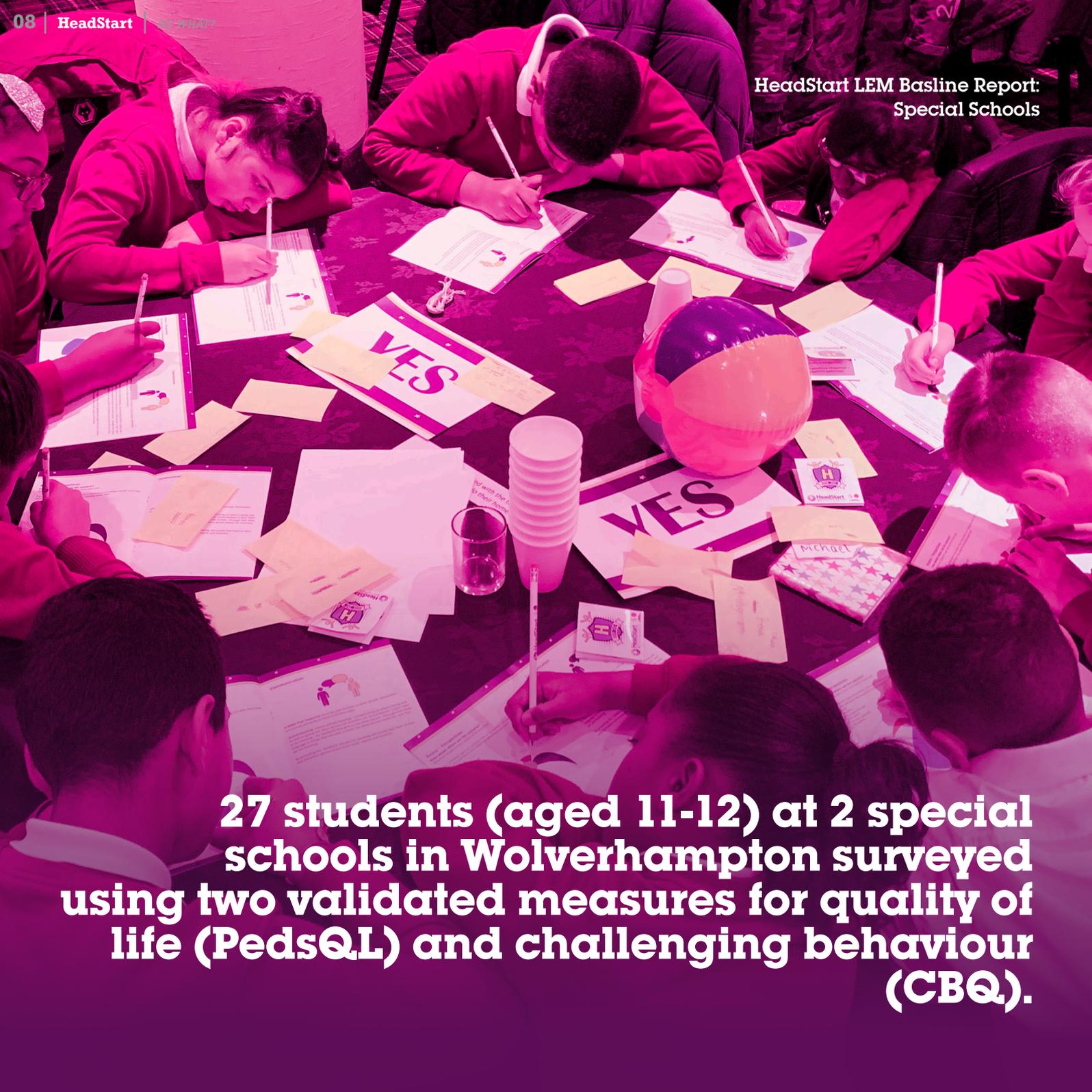
- Differences between other ethnic groups were not significant.
- At the school level CYRM outcomes were tested against deprivation and other measures. No significant correlations were found.
- High levels of academic self-efficacy were associated with high levels of resilience.

#### **Significant and non-significant findings.**

- Girls scored higher than boys on CYRM
- Individuals with a SEN statement or receiving SEN support scored significantly lower on CYRM than individuals without SEN
- Asian/Asian British children scored significantly higher on CYRM than children categorised as White



# **Local Evaluation (Survey) Key Findings. Quantitative Evaluation**



**27 students (aged 11-12) at 2 special schools in Wolverhampton surveyed using two validated measures for quality of life (PedsQL) and challenging behaviour (CBQ).**

# So what

- **Quality of life** – all students scored below the norm in terms of overall quality of life and psychosocial quality of life, although 12 year olds were above the norm for physical quality of life.
- **The majority** of students had not been involved in any challenging behaviour in the previous month. Challenging behaviour – aggression was the most frequent behaviour identified (4 students), along with destruction of property (3 students).
- **Overall**, it was recommended that focus is placed on improving students' psychosocial quality of life in order to improve their quality of life overall.



What we did

**We worked with four primary schools who have been involved the programme. At each school we interviewed the member of senior management with overall responsibility for PSHE, SUMO and/or the integration of HeadStart into the schools.**

**The questions were based on a framework that was created by the research team from a series of theoretical and evaluative models.**

### So What?

- Schools stated programmes which were embedded within the school practice had greater impact. In these cases HeadStart activities were seen as complementary rather than an add-on.
- All participants stated that the HeadStart programmes they had used and run seemed to have had a positive effect on the mental health, wellbeing and resilience of the children involved.
- Schools reported that children are involved in learning essential skills for life, coupled with greater self-esteem and resilience. Raising the self-esteem of children was a key driver for schools getting involved – allowing children to see themselves in a more positive light, particularly as learners, now and in the future.
- The development of a shared language has been highlighted as positive, but schools are clear on the need for high quality training for all members of staff, which needs to be maintained as staff move key stages or new staff join the school.

## Local Evaluation: Qualitative Perspectives from Schools

- School leaders noted the positive impact on engagement, behaviour and attitudes to learning that interventions such as the Getting Ahead programme had had on the participating children: “Children are better in class and in themselves, taking part and being confident to do so.”  
“I personally have seen a positive difference and I’m sure it is tied to stuff they’ve done through HeadStart”.
- Although not all children are directly involved in HeadStart, all respondents noted that there has been a whole school impact on behaviour. Where there is a whole school focus, this supports other children not directly involved in HeadStart through the development of greater empathy and a shared language.
- The most common, and possibly the most important, concern was around parental concerns about equality – why some children were chosen or given extra support and not others.



# HeadStart

Q Sort: Qualitative evaluation of Resilience and Response to HeadStart programmes.

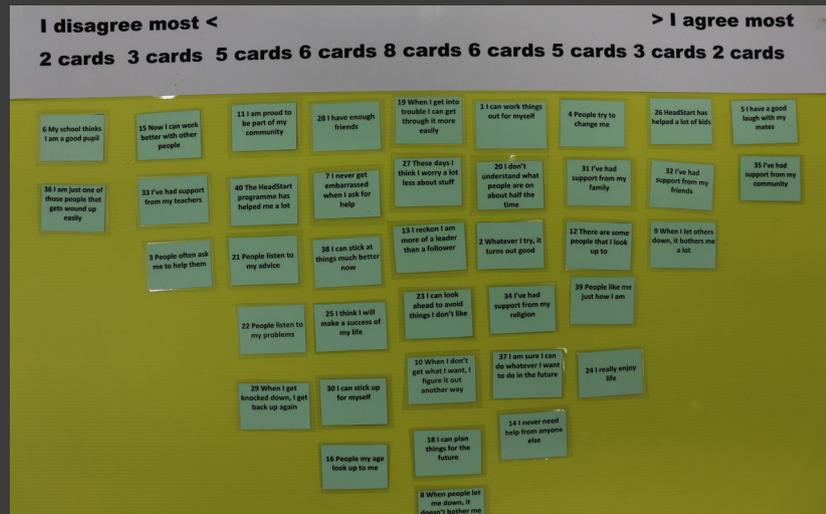
## What we did -

- Q methodology has no requirement to use large numbers of participants.
- Q data does not measure people's subjective opinions so much as measure the strength of their shared perspectives on a topic.
- In measuring this, it does so with statistical outputs rather than by words alone, giving the process both a numerical and a verbal dimension ready for interpretation.

the method



The study used Q methodology to investigate young people's perspectives on their resilience. Q methodology is a useful tool to investigate the complexity in different participants' positions on a given subject. Participants Q sort a set of statements onto a distribution grid, shaped as a reversed pyramid.



Participants sort the cards based on how much they agree or disagree with each statement. There is no right or wrong response in sorting the cards.

In this study the set of statements did not discuss resilience as such. Instead, it asked participants about aspects of resilience, such as bouncing back in the face of adversity and asked them to consider their own self-perception and the support they receive from others.

## So What?

- The degree of family support influenced children's perception of themselves and their resilience.
- Children whose card sort choices indicated that they had limited family support sought support elsewhere, usually from friends and HeadStart. It is important to note that this in itself is a recognisably resilient behaviour.
- All of the participants felt that HeadStart had benefitted either themselves and/or other children, especially children who appeared to have had less support from their family.

## Community Q & Sort



## What we did

**The education and community Q sort team explored the perspectives of 55 children aged 9-16 and six parents or grandparents involved in HeadStart on their resilience and relationships with friends, family and others that supported them. We used Q methodology to examine the complexity of different participants' positions to investigate children's and young people's perspectives on their resilience.**



- All of the children had experienced worries and adversity in their lives, including those who felt well supported by their families.
- Children valued support they receive from others more than their own resilience, especially when the child did not feel supported by their family. These children tended to not believe that they could work things out for themselves.
- Children tended to focus on their present circumstances rather than the future. This could mean that their aspirations to achieve well in the future are less important than current experiences.
- Parents/grandparents also believed that their child would focus on present circumstances.
- Several of the parents involved thought that the programme had helped them as well as their children and supported them to feel part of an active, supportive community.

# What **now**

HeadStart could develop activities in the following areas:

- Activities that discuss varying worries (in and out of school) and provide advice where children can go to get support.
- Activities that support children to reduce their anxieties (e.g. mindfulness activities).
- Activities that enable HeadStart to identify children who have limited or no family support.
- HeadStart could engage further with these children to ensure that they can access support when necessary. Many of these children also identified a lower self-perception and enjoyment of life that could be supported further with appropriate activities.



## Responses

- The HeadStart commissioned providers have been trained in the Early Help Assessment (EHA) process and have access to Eclipse. Children who present with limited or no family support are subject to an EHA assessment in order to make these families known to either the Strengthening Families Hubs or Troubled Families teams.
- The Work with Parents offer in the HeadStart areas is designed to improve relationships between children and their parent/carers.
- The Place to Go activities are designed to listen to the needs of the children and activities are planned around the feedback from the children and young people.
- HeadStart support and guidance platform holds information and advice that children can access in and out of school.
- The Clinical Commissioning Group have commissioned Kooth – a support and advice platform that children can access in and out of school.
- The Clinical Commissioning Group, the City of Wolverhampton Council and HeadStart have commissioned Wolverhampton Beam that offers a drop in service and 1:1 support to children and young people to discuss varying worries.
- The HeadStart commissioned providers offer activities that are focussed on different issues such as bullying and school transitions.

## What Next?

- **Local Evaluation Measure:** second year currently being conducted.
- **Multimedia case studies:** co-produced films on growing up well in Wolverhampton.
- **Design-based research;** co-constructed area studies.
- **Next phase** of Q-sort evaluation, and qualitative work with schools started in January 2019. Briefing reports for all activities are available.
- **There may be** scope for HeadStart to commission activities (e.g. using problem-based learning) where children are encouraged to develop skills and value the role they play in dealing with adversity in their lives.
- **HeadStart** could organise specific activities that enable children and parents to consider the child's future plans and realise their aspirations.

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