



## Progress Report

2017-18

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## **Purpose**

The purpose of this report is to detail the progress that has been made in developing, implementing and embedding MVP in local authority schools in Scotland. Challenges to the implementation of the programme will be explored and recommendations will be made.

## **Introduction**

### **What is Mentors in Violence Prevention?**

Mentors in Violence Prevention (MVP) is a peer education programme that gives young people the chance to explore and challenge the attitudes, beliefs and cultural norms that underpin gender-based violence, bullying and other forms of violence. It can address a range of behaviours including name-calling, sexting, controlling behaviour and harassment, and uses a 'bystander' approach where individuals are not looked on as potential victims or perpetrators but as empowered and active bystanders with the ability to support and challenge their peers in a safe way. Current concerns related to violence are reflected through the development of the programme, for example the recent piloting of a knife scenario.

Mentors in Violence Prevention was introduced to Scotland in 2012 and has its' origins in America (Katz, 1999). MVP has been embraced in Scottish schools and adapted to the culture of Scotland whilst continuing to retain core features. A strong emphasis has been placed on building healthy, respectful relationships both in the school and in the community. Over 100 schools have now delivered MVP in 22 local authorities from Shetland to the Scottish Borders, in some of our largest and some of our smallest secondary schools.

### **Why is MVP needed?**

Gender-based violence is endemic in Scottish society. In 2016-17<sup>1</sup> there were 58,810 incidents of domestic abuse recorded by the police in Scotland, a small increase (1%) on the previous year; figures have been broadly stable since 2010. These figures are probably only the tip of an iceberg as many of those affected do not report the abuse to the police. The

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<sup>1</sup> Scottish Government (2017) 'Domestic abuse in Scotland: 2016-17 statistics'

potential reach of the problem was indicated by a study<sup>2</sup> in a Scottish school that found that 32% of pupils disclosed anonymously that they were currently experiencing or living with domestic abuse. Reported sexual crimes in Scotland are at the highest level seen since 1971 (the first year these types of figures were recorded in the current way).<sup>3</sup> Work to address gender-based violence is therefore crucial.

A recent study<sup>4</sup> of the attitudes of Scottish young people found that stereotypical views of gender roles exist and those holding those views were less likely to view behaviours related to domestic violence as seriously as those who don't hold these stereotypical views. This reinforces the need for prevention work, such as MVP, which challenges these stereotypical views of gender.

There is evidence that young people, particularly girls, encounter physical, emotional and sexual partner violence. In a study of 1000 young people in England in 2015, 41% of girls and 14% of boys reported that they had experienced sexual violence<sup>5</sup>. One Scottish study<sup>6</sup> of teenagers found that a third of young men and a sixth of young women thought that using violence in an intimate relationship was acceptable under certain circumstances. Seventeen per cent of the young women in this study had experienced violence or abuse in their own relationship with a boyfriend. Intimate partner violence is known to impact negatively on young people's wellbeing, for example it has been found that living with either the threat of violence or actual violence from their partners has been linked to depression in teenagers<sup>7</sup>. It is therefore clear that to improve the wellbeing of young people there is a need to address potential underlying factors such as abuse.

Many young people are exposed to sexual pressures through practices such as sexting<sup>8</sup> and pornography. A UK survey of secondary pupils<sup>9</sup> found that while over half of young people

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<sup>2</sup> Alexander, H, Macdonald, E and Paton, S (2005) 'Raising the Issue of Domestic Abuse in School', Children and Society, Vol. 19, No. 3, p.p. 187-198

<sup>3</sup> Scottish Government (2016) 'Recorded Crime in Scotland 2015-16) National Statistics Publication

<sup>4</sup> Scottish Government (2014) 'Scottish Social Attitudes Survey 2014: Attitudes to violence against women in Scotland'

<sup>5</sup> Christine Barter et al (2015) 'Safeguarding Teenage Intimate Relationships (STIR) Connecting online and offline contexts and risks Briefing Paper 2 : Incidence Rates and Impact of Experiencing Interpersonal Violence and Abuse in Young People's Relationships'

<sup>6</sup> M and Cartmel, F (2005) 'Young People's Attitudes Towards Gendered Violence', Edinburgh: NHS Scotland

<sup>7</sup> Sussex, B., and Corcoran, K. (2005)'The Impact of Domestic Violence on Depression in Teen Mothers: Is the Fear or Threat of Violence Sufficient?' Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention, 5(1), 109-120.

<sup>8</sup> NSPCC (2012) Qualitative study of children, young people and 'sexting'

<sup>9</sup> Martellozzo, E., Monaghan, A., Adler, J., Davidson, J., Leyva R. and Horvath, M. (2017) 'I wasn't sure it was normal to watch it' A quantitative and qualitative examination of the impact of online pornography on the values, attitudes, beliefs and behaviours of children and young people.

had not been exposed to online pornography, many had seen it inadvertently or were purposefully viewing it. A significant minority, particularly of boys viewed the acts as realistic and something to emulate; this is problematic given how consent is portrayed and the level of violence involved.

MVP offers young people a safe place to explore these challenging issues. The process allows young people to know that they are not alone in experiencing difficult situations. It allows young people to have an opportunity to consider what constitutes healthy, respectful relationships and supports an exploration of how they can help friends who are in abusive relationships.

One key aspect to preventing gender based violence in schools, identified by UNESCO<sup>10</sup>, is training education staff to give them the tools to interrupt and prevent gender-based violence. MVP places a strong emphasis on training staff and identifying expert partners to enable practitioners to deliver the programme in schools. Annual evaluations of practitioner training consistently demonstrate a positive shift in attitude in staff and an increased confidence in their ability to tackle gender-based violence.

MVP can make an important contribution in terms of supporting mental health. The Mental Health Foundation lists a number of capabilities of mentally healthy children including the ability to 'initiate, develop and sustain mutually satisfying inter-personal relationships'<sup>11</sup>. MVP supports young people to explore what contributes towards both unhealthy and healthy relationships. MVP also encourages young people to challenge bullying, including the isolation of others. Bullying is known to have a detrimental effect on the mental health of both those bullied and those involved in bullying behaviours<sup>12</sup>. A national survey by *respectme* (2014)<sup>13</sup> found that 30% of the children and young people surveyed had been bullied in the preceding school year. Higher rates of bullying are experienced by young people with additional support needs such as autism<sup>14</sup>. Stonewall's most recent survey (2017)<sup>15</sup> of lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) young people in Scotland found that 48% were being bullied at school with the rate

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<sup>10</sup> UNESCO (2016) 'Global based Guidance on addressing School-related Gender-based Violence' UNESCO and UN Women

<sup>11</sup> Parkinson, J. (2012) Establishing a core set of national, sustainable mental health indicators for children and young people in Scotland: Final Report NHS

<sup>12</sup> Tarshis TP and Huffman LC (2007) 'Psychometric properties of the peer interactions in primary school (PIPS) questionnaire'. *Journal of Developmental and Behavioural Paediatrics*, 28, 125-132

<sup>13</sup> *respectme* (2014) 'Bullying in Scotland 2014 A summary of survey responses by *respectme*, Scotland's Anti-Bullying Service'

<sup>14</sup> Hebron, J and Humphrey, N (2014) Exposure to bullying among students with autism spectrum conditions: A multi-informant analysis of risk and protective factors. *Autism*, 18 (6). pp. 618-630. ISSN 1362-3613

<sup>15</sup> Stonewall Scotland (2017) 'School Report Scotland: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bi and trans young people in Scotland's schools in 2017'

for trans young people at 71%. Tackling bullying is therefore vital to ensure school is a safe place in which all young people can flourish and learn. MVP explores with young people different ways they can respond to bullying, from addressing homophobic name calling to addressing the social isolation of peers.

Mentors in Violence Prevention also gives young people the opportunity to be involved in a number of arenas of participation including learning and teaching, personal achievement and working to influence the wider community<sup>16</sup>. In MVP, for example, mentors influence the scenarios chosen for delivery to their peers and the format of delivery; many gain accreditation such as Dynamic Youth Awards or SQA leadership awards and some mentors have offered drop in sessions for young people who are struggling to cope in school.

### **Impact of MVP and policy drivers**

Appendix 1 details the impact of the programme and Appendix 2 offers a summary of how MVP contributes to current policy drivers.

### **What was the Plan 2017-18?**

The main aims of the plan for MVP in Scotland 2017-18 were to embed the MVP programme in more Scottish schools and local authorities and to build sustainability.

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<sup>16</sup> Education Scotland (2018) Learner Participation in Educational Settings (3-18)

## Progress from 2017 to 2018

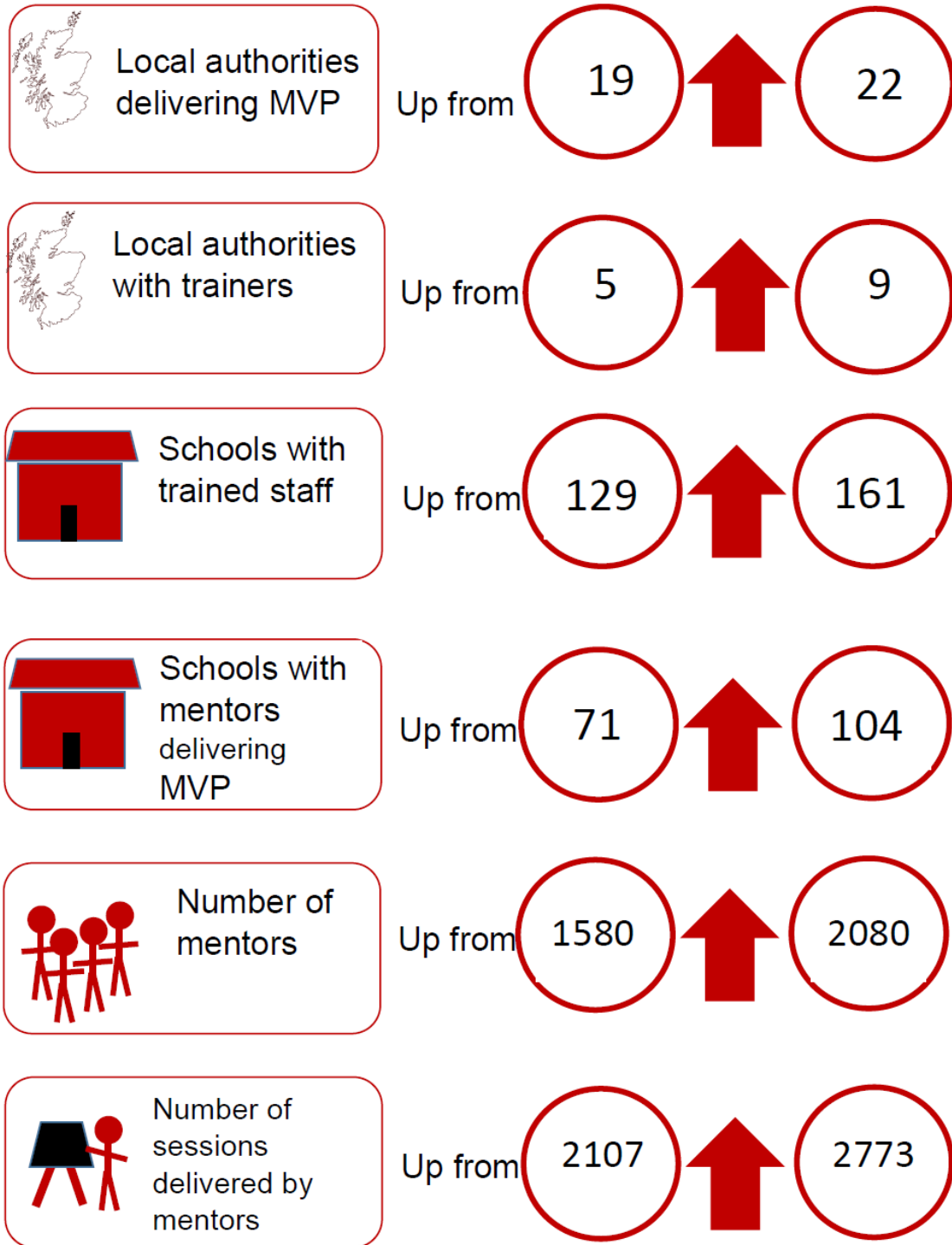


Figure 1 Infographic for progress in 2017-18

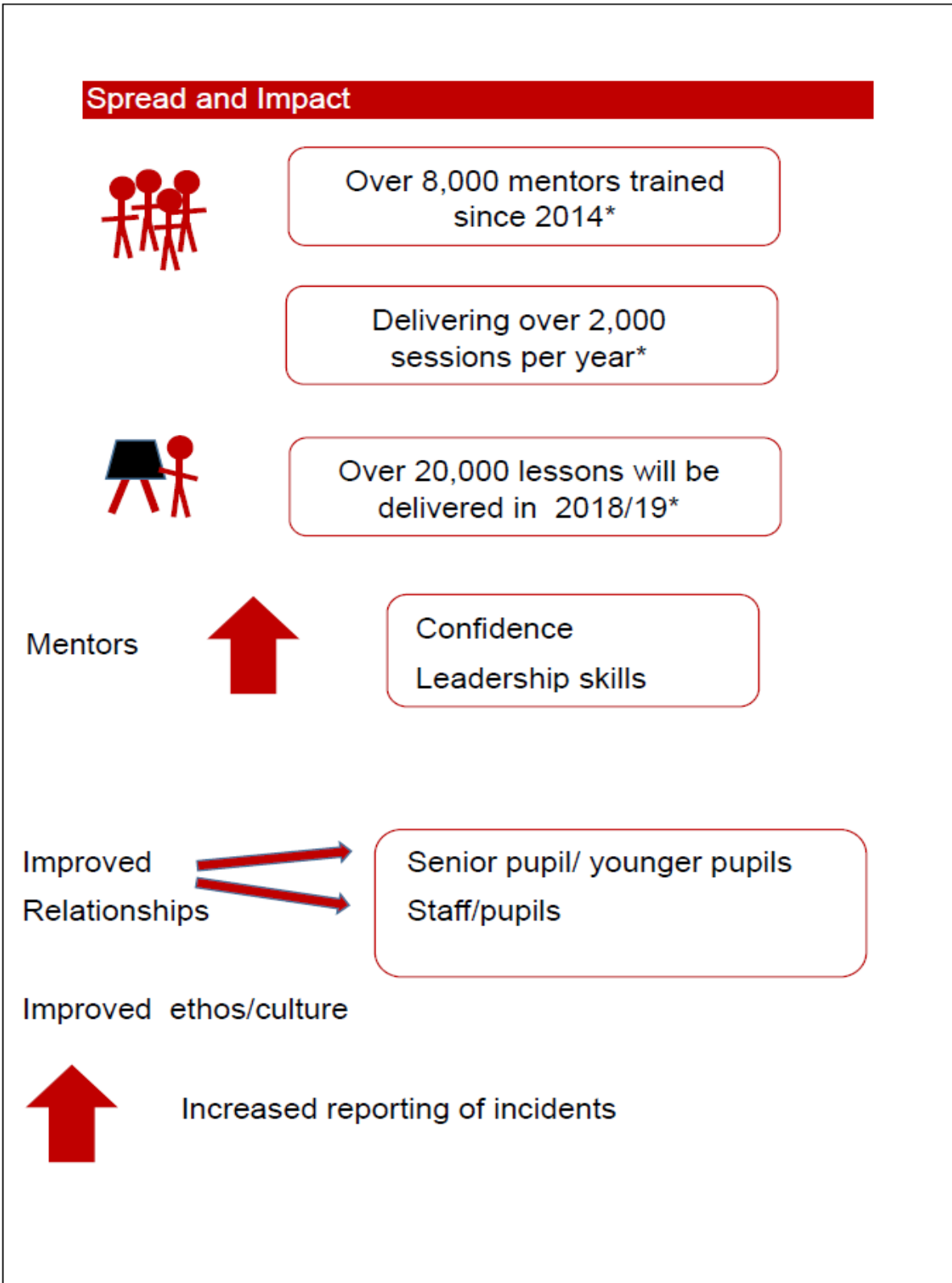


Figure 1 Infographic for progress in 2017-18 (continued)

\*1 Based on an approximation of number of schools each year and an average of 20 mentors per school.

\*2 based on school roll and lessons being given to 1<sup>st</sup> year only accounting for on average 18% of total roll

\*3 Based on each school delivering the recommended 4 sessions to class sizes of 30



## A. Progress in the implementation of MVP across Local Authorities

### 1. Number of schools with staff trained in MVP

The cumulative number of schools, year on year, which have had staff trained in MVP, is illustrated in the graph below.

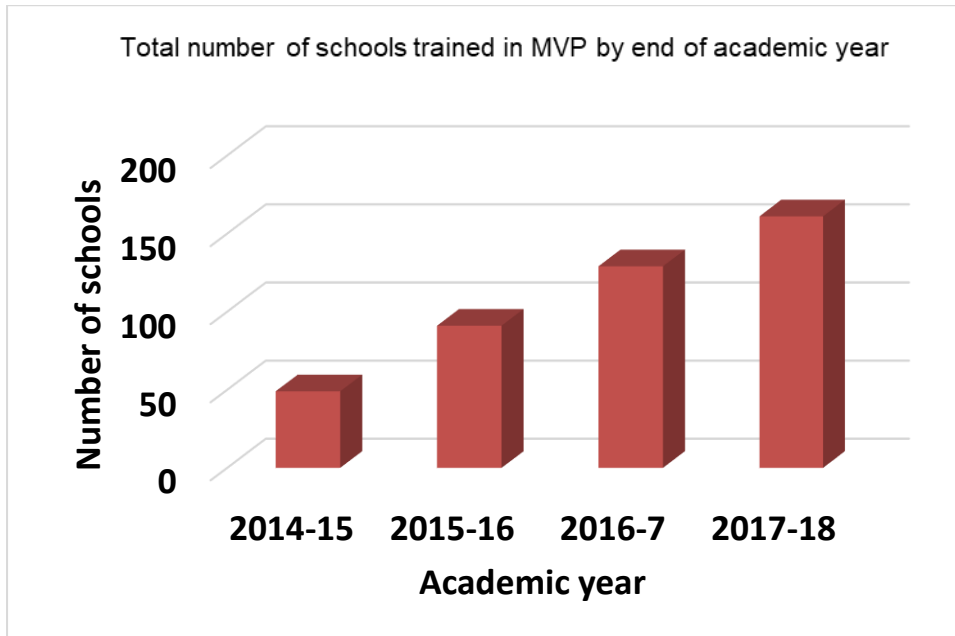


Figure 2

### 2. Number of schools actively delivering the programme

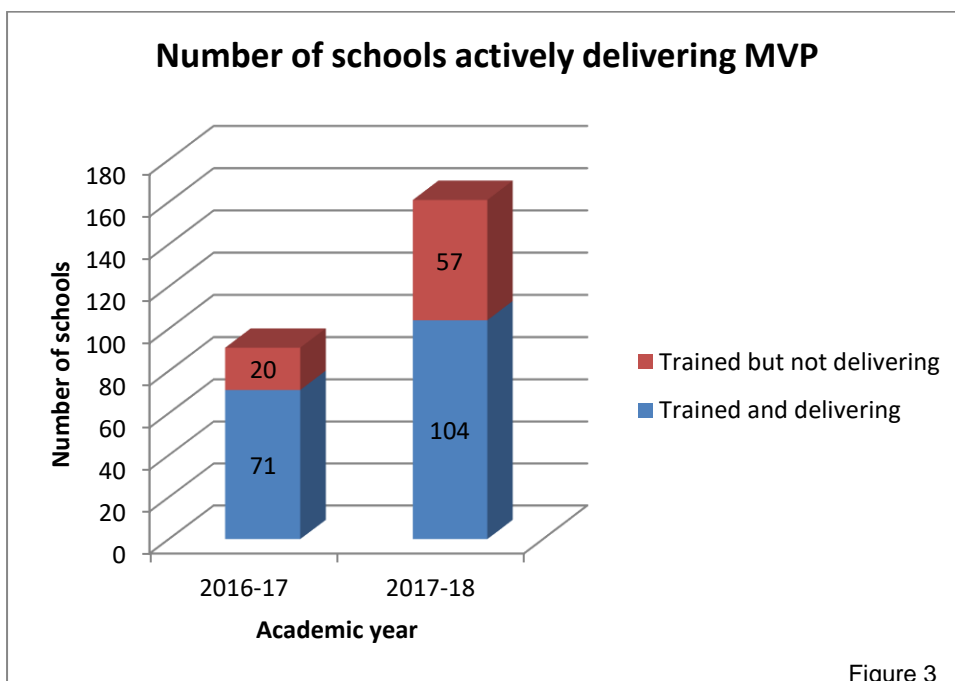


Figure 3

2016-17	Seventy-one <sup>17</sup> out of the 91 trained schools actively delivered (78%).
2017-18	One hundred and four out of 161 schools actively delivered in 2017-18. (65%)

In terms of the 57 schools which are not delivering MVP, there are three groups.

1) Schools newly trained between April and June 2018 which are not expected to deliver until 2018-19 (17 schools).

2) Another group of schools which did not deliver were some of those newly trained in autumn 2017 (15 schools). Due to the gap in staffing following this period they potentially did not receive the timely support required. Many of these schools have been brought back on board and are committed to delivering in session 2018-19.

3) In another group of schools there are staff changes/changes to priorities and MVP has slipped off the agenda. (25 schools).

### **3. Number of mentors trained in 2017-18**

In 2017-18 it is estimated that 2080 mentors were trained<sup>18</sup> up from 1580 mentors in 2016-17.

### **4. Sustainability in Local Authorities**

A traffic lights system was created to help Local Authority staff have clarity about the steps involved in building sustainability for MVP. The steps involved were identified from the practice developed in the first years of the programme in Scotland. The key to the system is outlined in Appendix 4. The aim is for all authorities to eventually have their own trainers in place and a plan for implementation.

Figure 4 overleaf illustrates the number of authorities in June 2018 at each step towards sustainability.

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<sup>17</sup> Please note this was incorrectly reported as 79 in last year's report although the correct figure was noted on the graph.

<sup>18</sup> Twenty is the average number of mentors trained annually by schools based on available figures. The number of mentors per school does vary widely and reflects different delivery models as well as the variation in school population.

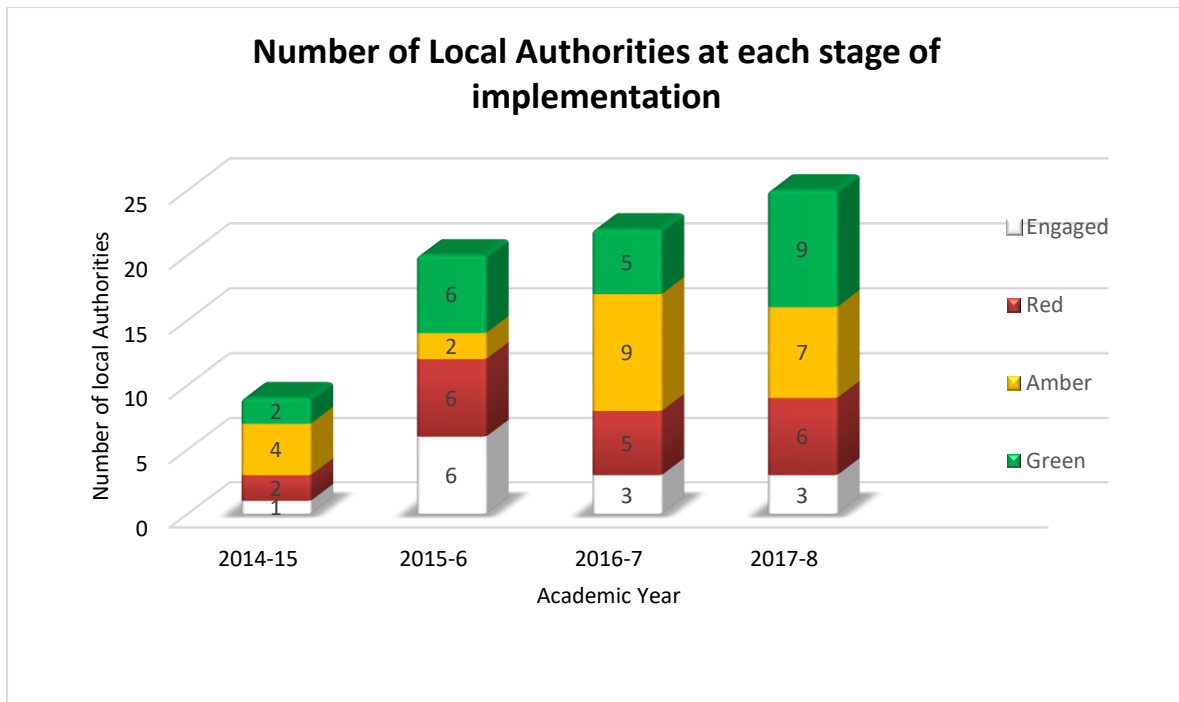


Figure 4

The graph below demonstrates the rise in local authorities with trainers and an implementation plan. In some smaller authorities, trainers may be shared across authorities (e.g. this is the plan for Perth and Kinross/ Dundee/ Angus).

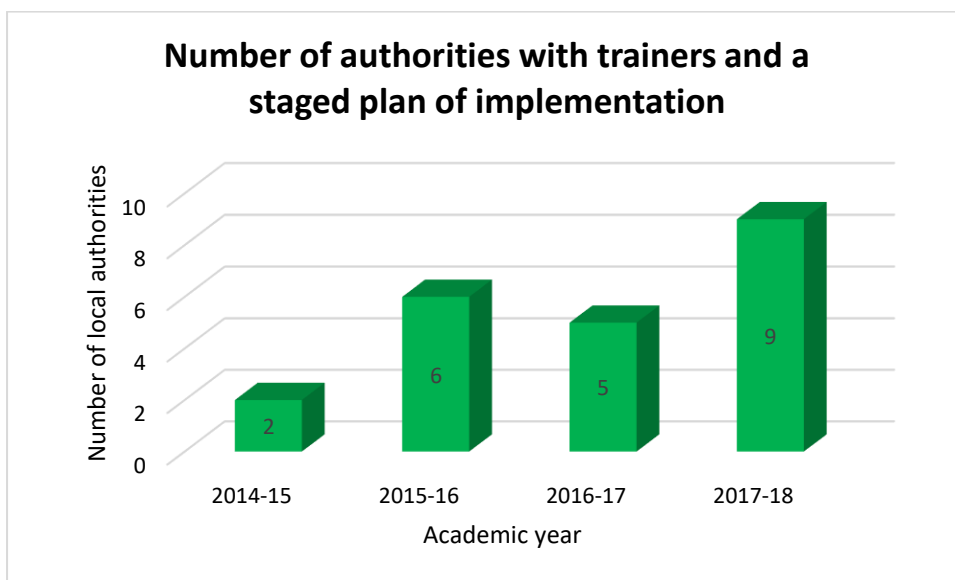


Figure 5

Table 1 overleaf shows the progress of each Local Authority towards sustainability.

## Local Authority Progress towards Sustainability

Local Authority	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
Aberdeen City			E	
Aberdeenshire		E		
Angus		E		
Clackmannanshire		E	N/E	E
Dumfries and Galloway				
Dundee City			E	
East Ayrshire				
E. Dunbartonshire		E		
Edinburgh				
Falkirk	E			
Fife		E		
Glasgow				
Highland		E		
Inverclyde				
Midlothian				
North Lanarkshire				
Orkney				
Perth and Kinross				
Renfrewshire				
Scottish Borders				
Shetland				
Stirling				E
S. Lanarkshire				
West Lothian			E	
Western Isles				E

N/E=no longer engaged

E=Engaged

Table 1

The key to the colour coding is given in Appendix 4.

Table 1 illustrates the impact of the wide ranging support and training which took place following the accelerated expansion of the programme. It also demonstrates the steps which still need to be made to bring all authorities involved to a level of sustainability. It is therefore important to ensure that authorities in the earlier stages of embedding the programme can access the support required to progress towards sustainability.

It is acknowledged that systems to ensure data collection and quality assurance need to be developed further in all authorities and these two indicators were not required to be in place to designate an authority as 'green'

Table 2 below demonstrates that most local authorities involved made progress towards sustainability or retained sustainability.

<b>Authorities moving up a stage or more</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Authorities moving back a stage</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Authorities remaining at same stage (but not yet at green)</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Green authorities</b>	<b>5</b>

Table 2

## **B. Staff Opportunities for Development**

Initial staff training sessions were held across the country. 'Refreshers' were held by local staff and by national staff.

### **1. Impact of staff mentor support team training**

Pre and post training questionnaires were given to participants who received training by national MVP staff during a one or two day training. The data gathered consisted of 173 pre-training questionnaires and 166 post-training. The sample covered participants from 13 local authorities.

Nearly all participants found the training worthwhile and would recommend the training to others. Of 166 respondents, 96% agreed or strongly agreed that the training was worthwhile and 95% would recommend the training to friends or colleagues. Ninety-nine percent of participants stated that they had achieved the goals they set for themselves at the start of the training. Most participants felt that their awareness of gender-based violence had increased (97% agreed or strongly agreed). Nearly all participants felt that the training had been a safe space in which to explore this topic.

*relaxed atmosphere, safe place to share ideas*    Falkirk participant

Table 3 below illustrates the shift in responses pre and post training in the areas of bystander attitude and self-assessment of skills in this area.

Question topic	Statement	% of participants who agreed or strongly agreed	
		Before the training	After the training
Bystander attitude	There are several ways for a bystander to prevent or stop someone from behaving abusively toward their partner	68	97
	Regardless if I know them or not, if I see someone behaving abusively toward their partner, I can prevent it from escalating or stop it.	40	91
	I would likely speak up or take action if I saw someone I don't know threatening to harm their partner.	68	91
Skills	I have the necessary skills to educate others about sexual harassment, dating violence and sexual assault in my work and social circles.	34	94
	I have a good idea of how to integrate knowledge about gender violence into my work and social circles.	33	98

Table 3

Following training many more participants felt that bystanders could make a difference and there was also an increase in the proportion of participants who thought that they would intervene on witnessing gender based violence. The table illustrates that, as in previous years, there was a sharp rise in the percentage of participants who felt that they had the skills and knowledge to educate others in the field of gender violence. The graph overleaf in Figure 6 gives more detail.

The responses to victim blaming statements showed a trend where, following MVP training, more participants strongly disagreed rather than merely disagreed with victim blaming statements. There was a drop post-training in the extremely small number of participants who agreed with these statements pre-training.

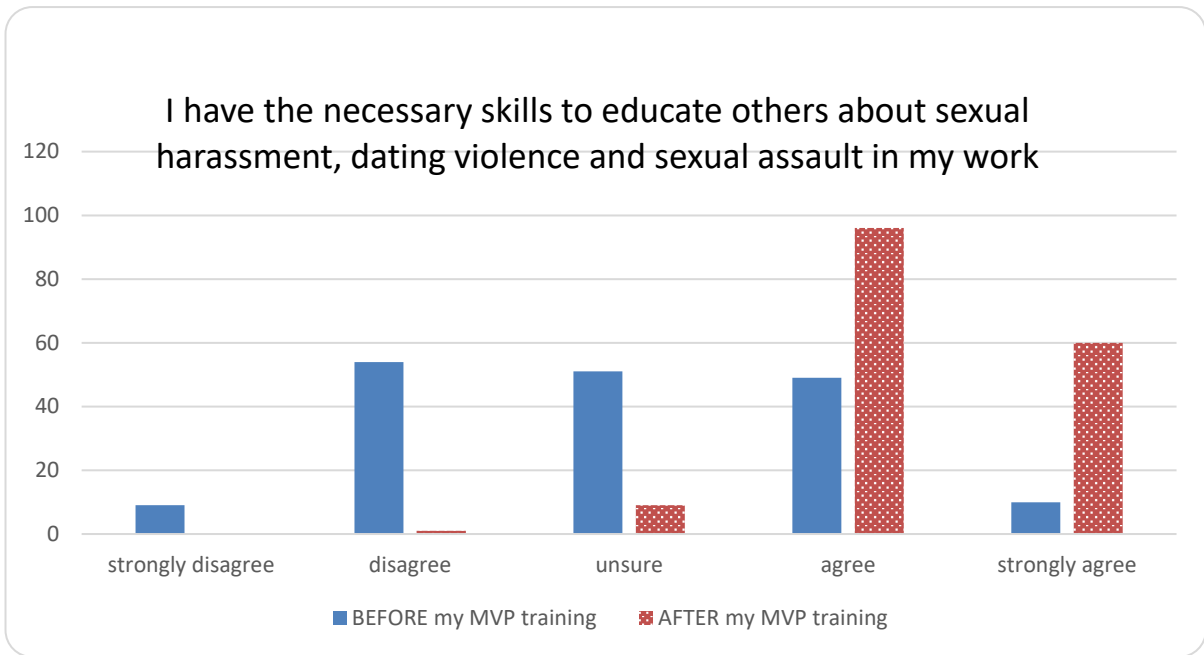


Figure 6

When participants were asked to comment on what had been best about the training 132 participants responded. The main themes were the opportunity for discussion with peers and the quality of the training. A sample of responses are given below.

**Sample responses from participants to the question ‘What was best about the training?’**

*Good practical hand on activities Glasgow      The confidence to challenge Fife*

*Learning how to think and encourage others to think about situations in a different way. Emphasis on clearly identifying unacceptable behaviour. Excellent the most worthwhile training session I have ever completed. Dundee*

*Built on my existing knowledge and gave me the skills to facilitate groups to address current issues Dundee*

*That it is about empowering young people Falkirk*

*The thought provoking nature of the activities South Lanarkshire*

*Collaboration with other schools to see their systems of utilising MVP Midlothian*

*How others have similar values/ideas re abuse West Lothian*

*Breadth of subjects covered. Meeting new people and gaining knowledge from them. Very interesting subject Glasgow*

A text analysis of these 132 responses by an MVP team member (not involved in the training) led to the pattern of responses illustrated in Figure 7.

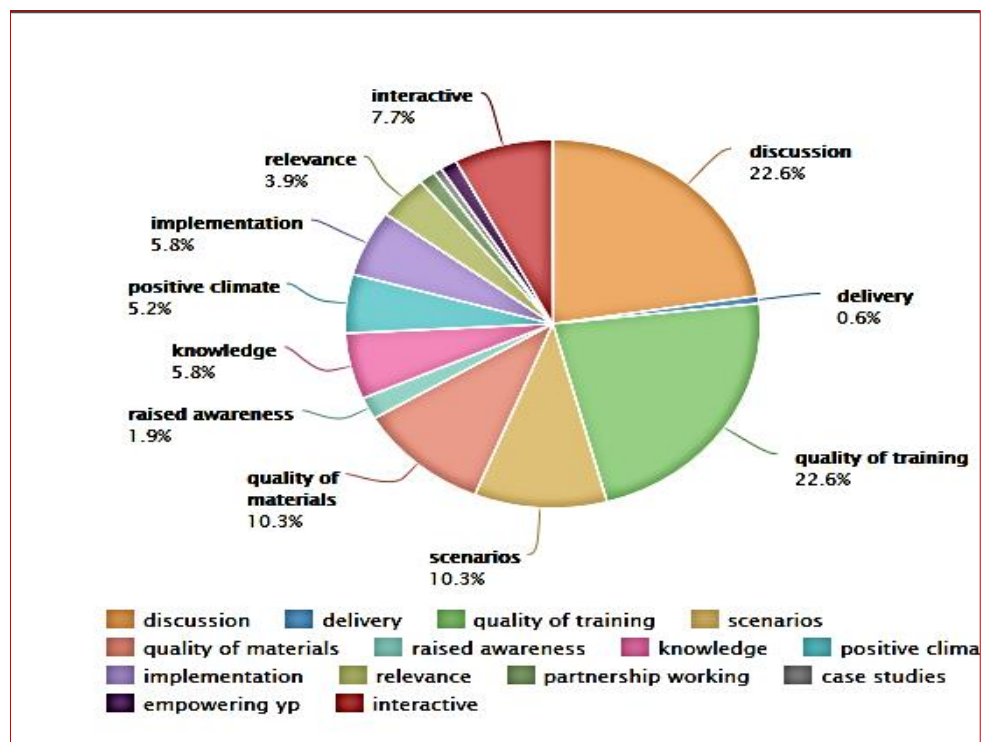


Figure 7

When participants were asked to discuss possible changes to training there were 48 replies. The main theme was that there should be less scenario's delivered to the whole group: one idea was that the group should be divided into two and each half should see half of the scenarios. This feedback needs to be balanced against the evidence from previous years which is that school staff are more likely to choose scenarios to use in their schools that they have already practiced. It is therefore important to introduce a wide range of scenarios to participants.

The staff questionnaire, completed by 75 staff, also explored the fitness for purpose of the staff training. The questions related to this area asked how well the training prepared participants to implement MVP and train mentors. The responses are detailed in the graphs overleaf:



**On a scale from 1 (very unprepared) to 5 (very prepared) please rate how well the training prepared you to: implement MVP?**

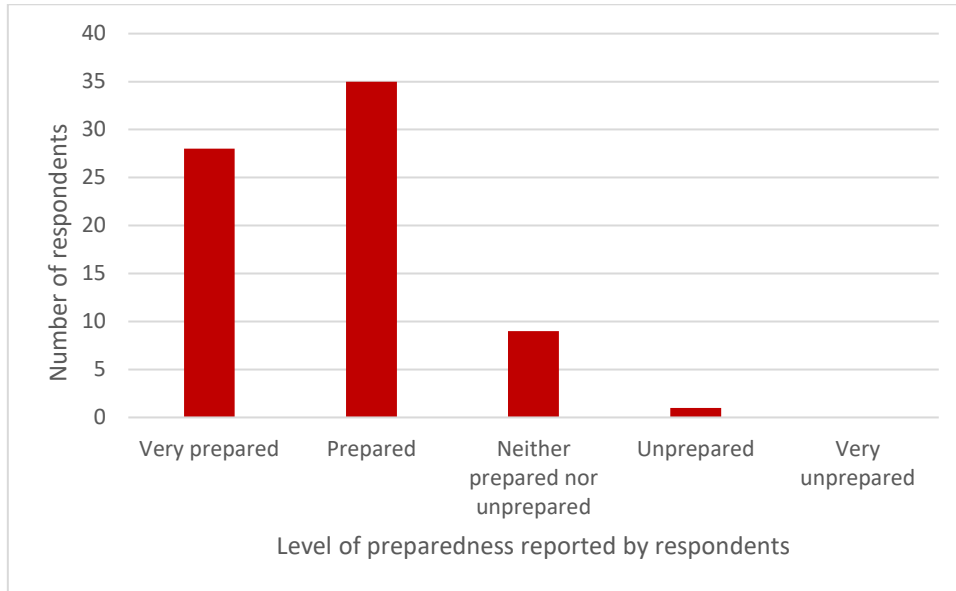


Figure 8

The percentage of respondents who said they were prepared or very prepared to implement MVP following training (4 or 5 on the scale where 0 = very unprepared and 5 = very prepared) was 86% (compared to 85% in 2017, and 75% in 2016).

**On a scale from 1 (very unprepared) to 5 (very prepared) please rate how well the training prepared you to: train mentors?**

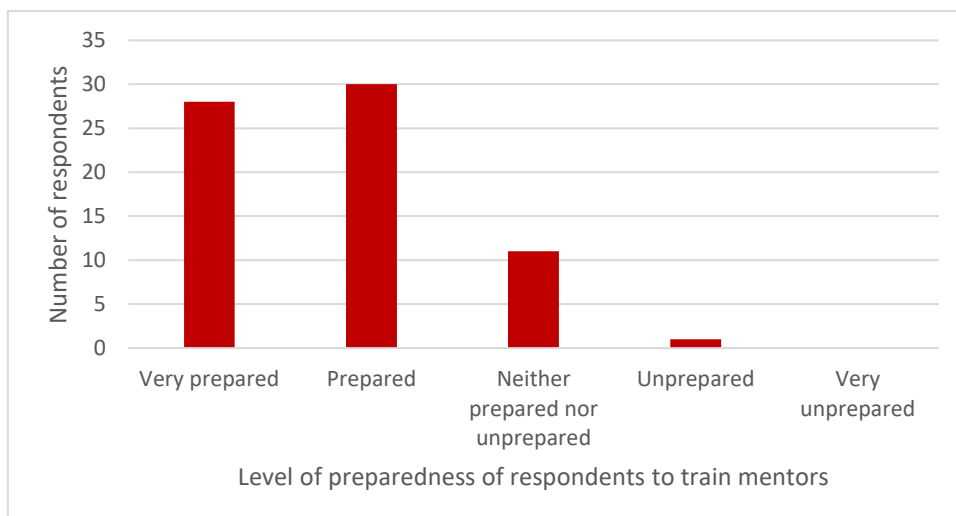


Figure 9

Five participants skipped this question. The percentage of respondents who said they were prepared or very prepared to train MVP mentors following training (4 or 5 on the scale where 0 = very unprepared and 5 = very prepared) was 83% (the same as last year, and compared to 76% in 2016). From August 2018 there are new mentor training materials available for staff, including a mentor training PowerPoint, accompanying training guide and handouts/activity sheets.

## 2. Impact of Practitioner Development Day

Twenty out of 22 authorities were represented at the day by 131 practitioners. The only MVP local authorities which were not represented were Orkney and Shetland suggesting distance/expense is likely to have been a barrier. Film of parts of the day will be made available on the website to give learning opportunities to those who couldn't attend.

In terms of overall rating of the event sixty-five percent of respondents rated the professional learning as excellent, 31% as good and 4% as average with no one rating the event poor or very poor.

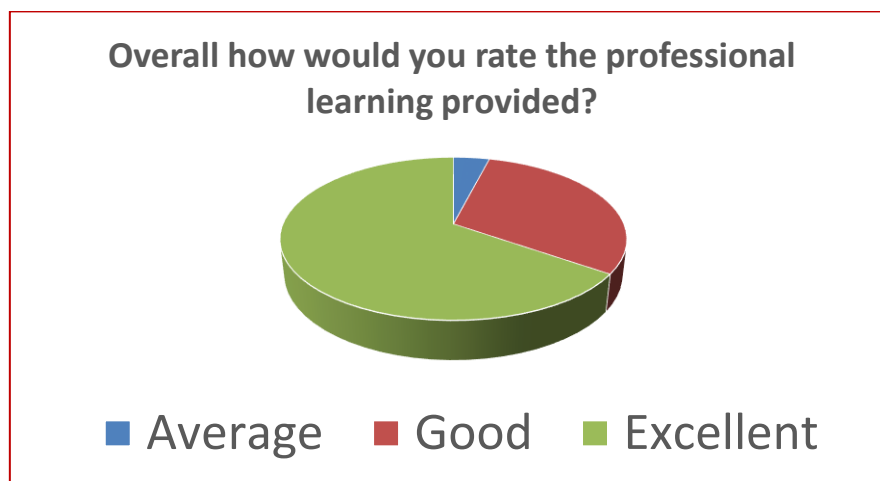


Figure 10

The most frequently cited aspect of the programme that was found to be particularly useful was the input on Child Sexual Exploitation (22 responses). This was closely followed by workshops (particularly those demonstrating how to implement the programme) and discussion and networking with colleagues.

A variety of actions were chosen when participants were asked what plans did they have to ensure their professional learning had an impact.

## Actions participants planned to take to ensure that this professional learning had an impact

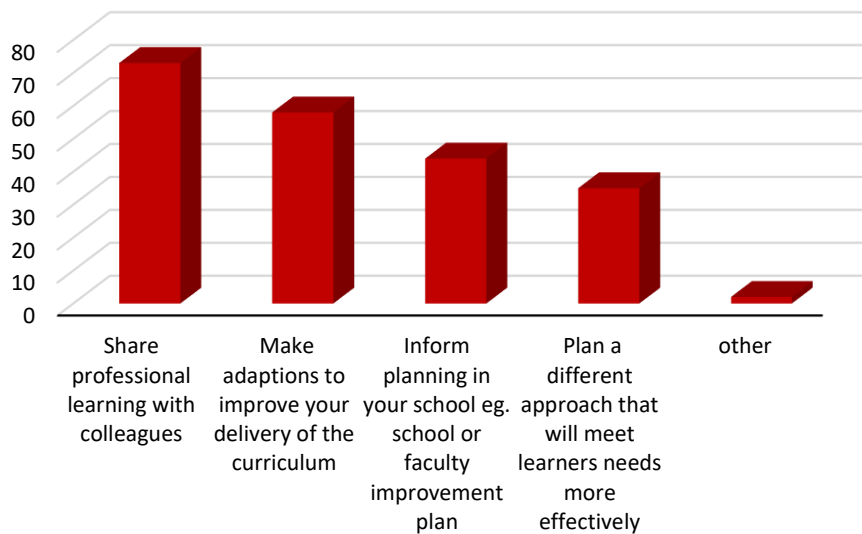


Figure 11

Two respondents chose 'other' and indicated that they were going to visit other schools.

### C. Impact of MVP

Several questions in the staff survey pertained to impact. Staff were asked the following questions:

#### 1. What has been the impact of MVP on your senior mentors and the wider school community? Please give examples.

There were 43 responses to this question, from a possible 75 participants. In line with previous years, most responses noted increased mentor confidence (44%), and leadership within school (23%). A further 23% also commented on the positive impact the programme has had on building relationships within school – both between senior and younger pupils, and between staff and pupils.

*'The personal and social development the senior mentors encounter is amazing. It is awesome to see how they grow in skills and confidence. The relationship between SM, YP and staff is excellent.'*

*'Senior mentors... much more aware and involved within school.'*

*'Younger pupils have another friendly face in the corridors and more younger pupils are more confident to speak to older pupils.'*

Six respondents (14%) commented that MVP has led to an increase in bystander intervention or reporting of incidents.

*'... has resulted in pupils coming forward and telling staff about incidents.'*

*'Mentors have intervened in fights/arguments between younger pupils.'*

*'Extra layer of intervention added in bullying related incidents (senior mentors).'*

Five participants identified that MVP is helping to change the ethos / culture in their school.

*'... has reduced violence in school.'*

*'... an increase in pupils feeling safer ... feeling much more confident.'*

*'Helped to establish a sense of community within the school.'*

In contrast, one participant commented they felt that whole school impact was limited.

Other comments made, related to an increased awareness and understanding of the issues covered and empowerment of pupils.

## **2. In what ways, if any, has MVP contributed to the ethos and culture of your school?**

There were 38 of 75 participants answered this question. Of these, 7 (18%) commented on the way that MVP contributes to implementing their school values, with one participant suggesting that through MVP, pupils were empowered to challenge these.

*'It has helped raise the implementation of the school values. It has also changed the attitudes and morals of the school.'*

*'Relates to school values but has also encouraged pupils to question school values and their relevance to our school community.'*

There were positive comments about the perception of programme impact on wider school ethos and culture.

*'We are able to reference it in a variety of discussions with pupils as they go through the lessons. Pupils are inclined to challenge behaviour (most often by telling an adult).'*

*'... is beginning to change the ethos. I think as this continues to become embedded it will completely change the ethos.'*

*'MVP is firmly becoming a part of the school ethos. We are using MVP as a platform to work towards Rights Respecting Schools and build on existing good practice.'*

*'Played a big role in the building blocks of turning a school around, and putting the safety and wellbeing of a pupil at the centre. The school has a very calm atmosphere and pupils are not afraid to stand up for others, or discuss things which are concerning them.'*

Three respondents felt it was too early to identify whole-school impact, and two felt that wider impact was limited.

**3. Mentors and mentees are encouraged to be active bystanders. Please give an example of a time a young person took action which you attribute to the influence of MVP.**

Twenty-six participants gave an answer to this prompt. The following are examples reported:

*'Pupils reported racist behaviour.'*

*'As I'm not in a school, I can speak of an experience my son encountered where he was slapped over the head on the school bus. This was witnessed by a senior pupil who reported what he'd witnessed to his Head of Year, who then sought out my son to support him, and reprimanded the boy who had hit him. Without the support of the bystander, my son wouldn't have disclosed what had happened.'*

*'A young person prevented a fight by talking to both parties and sorting out a small friendship issue that had escalated.'*

*'We see pupils who have been exposed to MVP, saying no to poor behaviour in school.'*

*'My social ed class pupil said 'snitches get stitches'. Rest of class told him he was wrong and he had a responsibility.'*

*'Child Protection concern - Family based sexual abuse. S1 pupil given confidence to seek help. Lots of examples but above is one of the most recent examples.'*

*'Senior mentor recognised that her friend was in a coercive/controlling/abusive relationship and was able to point her in the direction of support.'*

*'There was an incident on a school bus that was witnessed by a MVP mentor who dealt with it there and then. She felt really pleased she had the MVP knowledge to sort it out.'*

*'We have been advised by other pupils of concerns someone carrying a weapon. We have been advised of bullying behaviour witnessed by other pupils.'*

*'Pupils now coming forward and telling staff of incidents before they even happen.'*

*'Many pupils expressed that they felt empowered to intervene when they felt someone was being treated badly in the social dining area.'*

## Mentor Feedback

“Before MVP I didn’t think about what I said and how it might affect people, a lot of the time I could just say stupid and I actually hurt people’s feelings but I feel now that I am better in censoring what I say to not hurt people anymore.”

*(Mentor, Port Glasgow High)*

“S1 trust in me more, that I know what to do to help more than other buddies. I feel much more confident to know what to do to help”

*(Mentor, Balwearie High)*

“I think S1 and S2’s are more inclined to talk to people rather than just keeping it to themselves because of what we share in our lessons... I think that’s a lot better”

*(Mentor, Port Glasgow High)*

“I feel it has matured me a bit better because you obviously can’t go into a class and be immature and have a pure laugh ‘cause they’re never going to take you seriously and you’re not going to get anything done”

*(Mentor, Port Glasgow High)*

“it’s made me more aware of what’s right and what’s wrong and why that shouldn’t happen in the school”

*(Mentor, Braes High)*

“Since I started MVP I have managed to meet up and help young people. I developed relationships with the S1 and the other mentors this has helped me communicate and be more organised. I also helped S1 feel safer.”

*(Mentor, Balwearie High)*

#### **4. Staff identification of the strengths of the MVP programme**

This was one of the discussions during table-top activities at the practitioner development day. The strengths identified were:

1. Pupil led programme which is well received by young people
2. Provides leadership opportunities for pupils and staff
3. Good materials & resources, structured lesson plans etc... effective media
4. Topics/issues relevant and up to date, current issues #MeToo etc...
5. Quality of training offered and the opportunities for staff to up-skill
6. Improved relationships among pupils and between staff and pupils
7. Opportunities to share good practice/ideas

#### **D. Challenges to the implementation of MVP**

##### **1. At practitioner level**

Practitioners were asked during the staff survey to identify challenges to implementing MVP. Forty-six of 75 responded. Of these, 70% (32) cited that time, timetabling and/or getting pupils out of class to deliver were challenges; this was the most common challenge in both 2016 and 2017 also.

*'Simply the timing. Support from D and G and from Education Scotland has been fantastic but finding the time to train and support mentors has been challenging.'*

Fourteen respondents (30%) mentioned that staff changes and/or limited MST capacity was a challenge.

*'Challenges have been staff moving on and staff shortages so now we have a plan.'*

One participant mentioned that trained staff commitment to the programme was a challenge. This member of staff had been tasked to reintroduce MVP in a school where it had previously stalled.

*'Staff who have previously been trained have either left or no longer wish to do it as feel it wasn't done 'properly' or supported in the past.'*

A fifth of respondents (9 of 46) cited that a lack of strategic leadership and support had been a barrier to implementation.

The following were also identified as challenges:

- Teacher buy-in / staff attitudes / backlash removing pupils from class (4)
- Balance and confidence of senior mentors (4)

- Mentor commitment / motivation (vs national commitments) (3)
- Getting boys involved as mentors (2)
- Challenging opinion / male attitudes (2)
- Staff costs – covering classes / money (2)
- Knowing when / how to deliver mentor training
- Pupils affected by the subject matter
- Involving partners
- Accreditation – needs to be an official MVP accreditation

Staff were asked how these challenges could be overcome.

There were 45 responses to this question. As was identified from the 2017 staff survey, support and leadership of senior management has been important in overcoming challenges and this was identified by 16 staff this year (36%).

*'Now MVP, as part of the School Improvement Plan, has been given priority.....'*

*'I am a member of the SMT so I have been in a position to overcome challenges such as staff cover and timetabling easily.'*

Support, and learning from others including colleagues within the Mentor Support Team, other schools, central education staff, the local authority co-ordinator or the national team were also identified as helpful (13).

*'Listening to ideas from other schools and strategies suggested by MVP trainers.'*

*'We have created a regional training programme where all high schools come together.'*

It is notable that 8 respondents felt their commitment to the programme was helpful in overcoming barriers.

*'I have carried on regardless...'*

*'Persistence.'*

*'Belief in the programme.'*

The following were also regarded as helpful:

- Creativity with the timetable (7)
- Reflection / change of approach (7)
- Widening the pool of adult supporters (2)
- Resources



- Feedback from pupils

## 2. At national level

During 2017-18 there was a significant period when there was only 0.5 staff. The reasons for the understaffing were early recall of staff and slow release of staff from local authorities. While secondments present challenges, fixed term positions also lead to staffing issues as staff in short-term positions naturally seek longer term positions.

### Responding to Challenges

Challenges	What can we do?
<p>1. There are a number of schools which have stopped delivering MVP.</p> <p>How do we support schools to re-engage and see the potential relevance of the programme for their current aims?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage local authorities to have MVP in their improvement plan</li> <li>• Strengthen school readiness conversations</li> <li>• Emphasise the need for senior leaders in schools to attend the training</li> <li>• Intensify support to schools in Year 1 and 2</li> <li>• Encourage steering groups to strengthen/improve communication enabling early identification of schools that are struggling to implement</li> <li>• Work with local authority implementation teams to identify the particular barriers to implementation in the identified schools</li> <li>• Work to support local authority or regional networks for schools to keep schools motivated and fresh in their approach to MVP</li> <li>• Continue to gather evidence of impact to build the case for MVP in schools</li> <li>• Raise profile of MVP nationally to raise status of programme</li> <li>• Write a short paper underlining how MVP can support the drive to reduce the attainment gap</li> </ul>
<p>2. Nearly all schools which have adopted MVP are mainstream schools. There has been recognition that the programme has a lot to offer specialist provision both within and out with mainstream schools. How can MVP be developed in specialist provision?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify existing practice in specialist provision. Work with practitioners to identify what is needed to embed MVP in specialist provision.</li> <li>• Where there is no existing practice then support piloting of the materials and generate learning to inform future developments</li> </ul>
<p>3. Staff movement leading to programme falling away</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasise the need for wide access to the capacity training to ensure a good knowledge base for staff in the school which is likely to help recruitment when staff move on</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Widening the number of staff trained in schools also increases the likelihood of a whole school approach being adopted</li> </ul>
4. Time for MVP/timetabling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask schools to share examples of how they timetable for MVP</li> </ul>
5. Increasing the opportunities for Area Co-ordinators to attend the network meeting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rotate where national network meetings occur</li> <li>• Localise network meetings</li> <li>• Local authority agreement given to staff attending network</li> <li>• Encourage area co-ordinator to send a representative if unable to attend (ideally a member of the training team)</li> </ul>
6. Staff release for training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasise this as a readiness factor</li> <li>• National and local training teams to be flexible about minimum numbers for training events</li> <li>• Encourage local authorities to plan training further in advance and add to LA training calendar</li> </ul>
7. Short-term funding agreements for national programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Out with project scope</li> </ul>
8. Improving quality control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intensive support Year 1</li> <li>• Explore potential for steering groups to conduct mapping exercise to ensure key components of programme are being covered</li> </ul>
9. Keeping a focus on gender-based violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasise the importance of delivering core introductory sessions</li> <li>• Continue social media outlets focusing on current gender-based issues arising in society</li> <li>• Promote delivery of the wider range of sessions by school staff trained in MVP</li> </ul>

## **Appendix 1 Impact of the Programme**

Following MVP, both mentors and mentees are more aware of the issues related to violence, gender based violence and bullying and there is a positive increase in the percentage of young people who report that they would act if they saw particular behaviours occurring. Staff report an increase in pupils who alert them to safety concerns: from a fight brewing, or a friend self-harming, to someone carrying a sharp object into school. This increased communication allows staff to be proactive and to put support in place as necessary. Pupils and staff have also related examples of pupils intervening on the school bus or in the community when they have witnessed violence or bullying. Pupils report that they are now aware of a variety of ways that they can intervene when witnessing behaviours that are detrimental to wellbeing and are more aware of the need to ensure their own personal safety when intervening.

Both pupils and staff refer to an improved ethos within school and a reduction of barriers between older and younger pupils. Mentors and staff identify a positive impact on mentors' confidence and the enhancement of a range of skills such as leadership, team-work and presentation skills.

Following staff training in MVP, there is a significant increase in the number of staff who feel that they have the necessary skills to educate others about gender-based violence and a rise in the number of staff who thought that they would challenge gender-based violence.

## **Appendix 2    How does MVP contribute to current policy drivers?**

Please see the document below which contains the current links between MVP and key policy and guidance.



Education Scotland  
Policy links to Ment

### **Appendix 3     How is MVP introduced in a Local Authority?**

When a local authority is interested in exploring the programme, initial readiness conversations are held and the national MVP team hold awareness raising sessions for strategic leads, partnership agencies and school leadership teams. If a decision is taken to take on MVP, a steering group is established, pilot schools are identified and school staff and community partners are trained. School mentor support teams are then created and an implementation plan for the school drawn up. These teams raise awareness with staff and pupils, train mentors and support mentor delivery of sessions to younger learners. As more schools are brought on board within the authority, experienced members of the Mentor Support team are invited to become trainers in the programme, thereby facilitating sustainability within the authority.

See traffic light key overleaf:

## Traffic Light Key

	<b>Engaged</b> (Stage 1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• National MVP team in initial discussion with L.A. representatives</li> <li>• L.A. agrees to identify and liaise with key partners (police, sexual health, CLD, vol. sector, psychological service)</li> <li>• Head of Service or equivalent leads and supports on programme strategically</li> <li>• Identification of local co-ordinator</li> <li>• Identification of education lead</li> <li>• Awareness session at local DHT /HT meeting to identify interested schools for first phase</li> <li>• 2-6 schools to be identified depending on size of authority</li> <li>• L.A. to arrange an awareness raising session with identified schools and their relevant authority and community partners (National MVP team to deliver this session)</li> </ul>
	<b>Red</b> (Stage 2)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Schools are supported by area co-ordinator to form MVP teams</li> <li>• Initial schools and partners are trained</li> <li>• Coordinator, if required, arranges one day capacity building training for school staff and community partners from the initial schools</li> <li>• One day training is delivered if required</li> <li>• Co-ordinator has a key person in the authority with strategic overview to whom they give update reports and who can help to trouble-shoot when there are barriers</li> <li>• Co-ordinator updates national MVP team</li> <li>• Members of steering group are identified and first meeting has taken place</li> </ul>
	<b>Amber</b> (Stage 3)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initial schools are training mentors and working towards or delivering the programme</li> <li>• Steering group has a long term plan in place to include:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staged plan to train remaining authority schools</li> <li>• Training and support to build and sustain capacity in all schools</li> <li>• Identification and training of trainers</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Agreed evaluations are being completed</li> </ul>
	<b>Green</b>	<p>MVP is sustainable within the L.A.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Local identified mentor support staff are trained as trainers</li> <li>• Training team is in place</li> <li>• Staged plan to train remaining schools and build capacity is actioned</li> <li>• CPD/support system is in place</li> <li>• Agreed data is collected and reported</li> <li>• Steering group meets as agreed</li> <li>• Coordinator attends National MVP co-ordinators meeting</li> <li>• Quality assurance system is in place</li> </ul>